



**SKILLSIQ**

CAPABLE PEOPLE MAKE CLEVER BUSINESS

**Children's Education and Care**  
**Industry Reference Committee**  
**Industry Skills Forecast – 2020 Update**



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## Introduction

### *Annual Update to Industry Skills Forecast and Proposed Schedule of Work 2020*

In 2019, the Children's Education and Care Industry Reference Committee (IRC) submitted a detailed and comprehensive Industry Skills Forecast (ISF) to the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC). A copy is available on the [SkillsIQ's website](#). Detailed ISFs are required once every three years, and annual updates covering key research questions instead are prepared in the intervening years.

The information and evidence provided in this *2020 Annual Update* is based on:

- Consultation with the Children's Education and Care IRC members, and their wider networks (see Section B)
- Desktop research (drawing on key government, industry and education publications and statistics)
- Evidence and feedback collected through Training Package review project consultations
- Insights gathered via SkillsIQ's *2020 Future Skills Survey* (conducted during February and March 2020).

Note: The preparation of this document commenced prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore many of the trends and sources shown will not reflect the true impact of COVID-19 on the Australian job market and the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. Whilst the economic and social impact of COVID-19 is currently unprecedented and unknown, all industries/sectors across Australia are being affected. Future *Annual Updates* and ISFs are expected to capture the impact of the pandemic across Australia as up-to-date sources and databases are made available.

It is worth noting that early childhood education and care was considered an 'essential service' during the first wave of COVID-19 shutdowns. Educators in the sector were not given the same recognition as other workers remaining at work, such as nurses and aged care workers. Whilst school and universities were essentially 'closed', early childhood services continued to operate and educators were, potentially put at greater risk than many others in the workforce. In addition, Federal government support for services was rapidly scaled back, and JobKeeper payments were withdrawn from early August 2020, whilst remaining in place for all other areas of employment.

A continued undervaluing of those working in this sector, particularly in early childhood education and care, may have implications for the future workforce as people may be even more reluctant to enter the field because of the potential health risks, alongside the poor pay and conditions endured by the sector.

## IRC Sign-off

Sign-off of this Annual Update has been confirmed by the Children's Education and Care IRC.

Brian Newman, Chair, Children's Education and Care IRC

## Section A Industry, Workforce and Training Developments

1. Inform the AISC of any new industry workforce, skills developments or trends to emerge since the submission of a full ISF.

### **National Quality Framework (NQF) Review**

The National Quality Framework (NQF) has provided a national approach to the regulation of the quality of education and care services across Australia since 2012. The NQF is currently being reviewed and Phase One consultation activities were conducted during 2019. The Consultation Summary Report outlining the findings of Phase One were released in December 2019.<sup>1</sup>

Although the review is not yet complete, sector workforce issues raised to date confirm that the challenges which have been noted in previous ISFs remain. These challenges include staffing shortages and the need for skills development, challenges in regional and remote areas, quality of initial teacher education and wages, conditions and professional status.<sup>2</sup>

The NQF Review is expected to finish in 2023, although due to COVID-19 it has been delayed.

### **Staff Shortages**

The longstanding staff shortages in this sector make it difficult for some providers to meet the NQF staffing requirements, which are essential to continuing to lift quality in the sector.

Recent changes to the legislation make it more imperative that greater action is taken to address these shortages so that policy objectives related to quality can be realised

From 1 January 2020, providers of Long Day Care services and Preschools/Kindergartens need to have a second early childhood teacher (ECT) or, alternatively, a 'suitably qualified person', when 60 or more children of preschool age or under are being educated and cared for. The Diploma qualification, in conjunction with a primary or secondary teaching qualification and Australian teacher registration (Accreditation in NSW) is recognised for this purpose. Services located in New South Wales were unaffected by these changes, as additional ECT staffing requirements have been in place for several years.<sup>3</sup>

In some jurisdictions, transitional provisions have been extended multiple times in response to ongoing workforce challenges and concerns. In June 2019, Education Ministers agreed to extend a number of transitional provisions that relate to early childhood teachers. However, whether the provisions were extended and for how long varied by jurisdiction.<sup>4</sup>

State Preschool programs vary and there are recent changes in some states which are adding pressures for an increase in qualified ECTs.<sup>5</sup> Structured Preschool programs and access to them is in recognition of the importance of school readiness and strong foundations for future

<sup>1</sup> NQF Review 2019. *National Quality Framework Review 2019 Consultation summary report* [Available at: <https://www.nqfreview.com.au/44855/documents/123998/download>]

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-workforce-strategy> Accessed November 2020

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/qualification-requirements/additional-staffing-requirement-1-january-2020>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/ChildrensEducationandCareNationalWorkforceStrategy\\_0.pdf](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/ChildrensEducationandCareNationalWorkforceStrategy_0.pdf), page 10

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/parents/kindergarten/allaboutkinder.pdf>

learning.<sup>6</sup> Access to early childhood education for all three year olds has been a critical reform theme advocated in national forums.

The development of a new children's education and care national workforce strategy was endorsed by Ministers in late 2019 to support the recruitment, retention, sustainability and quality of the early childhood services workforce. The strategy will be developed as a joint partnership between governments and the sector with ACECQA leading the development of the strategy and supporting action plan. The final strategy and action plan is expected to be endorsed by Education Ministers in mid-2021.<sup>7</sup> A workforce report has been published based on the preliminary research and analysis used in support of progressing a national strategy.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Impact of the new Child Care Subsidy***

The impacts of the Child Care Package introduced in July 2018 is currently being evaluated throughout 2020 – 2021 as impacts are now able to be assessed.<sup>9</sup> There are substantiated and increasing concerns about the impact of requirements on disadvantaged families. These concerns were amplified during the initial stages of the COVID-19 crisis. The Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) has reported that the package is impacting accessibility in two main ways, by:<sup>10</sup>

- reducing the hours of access of many of the most vulnerable children through the introduction of the Activity Test; and
- introducing a restrictive administrative burden that discourages participation for families and impacts operational capacity for services.

### ***Regional and Remote communities***

As outlined in the 2019 ISF, challenges in recruiting and retaining appropriately qualified staff and access to training are magnified in regional and remote communities. Facilitating both learning and work pathways for people within regional and remote communities is advocated by stakeholders, and challenges with current qualification structures have been highlighted specifically in the Children's Education and Care Training Package review currently in progress.<sup>11</sup> The key challenges faced by the communities include poor access to quality training providers, difficulty in fulfilling work placement and assessment requirements including difficulty in accessing experience in services regulated under the NQF, Education and Care National Quality Law and Education and Care National Regulations.

Access to quality early childhood education and care services for families can also be limited despite specific studies and reports highlighting the importance of access for a child's development.

In November 2019, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training adopted a new inquiry on 'Education in Remote and Complex Environments'. It is focusing on the role of culture, family and community in delivering better

<sup>6</sup> <https://thesector.com.au/2019/03/06/one-year-on-has-the-game-been-lifted-in-conversation-with-deborah-brennan/>; and *Lifting our Game; Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools through Early Childhood Interventions, 2017* available at <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/documents/about/research/liftingourgame.PDF>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-workforce-strategy>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/ChildrensEducationandCareNationalWorkforceStrategy\\_0.pdf](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/ChildrensEducationandCareNationalWorkforceStrategy_0.pdf),

<sup>9</sup> <https://aifs.gov.au/publications/child-care-package-evaluation-early-monitoring-report>

<sup>10</sup> SNAICC submission to remote and complex education environments inquiry (2020)[Available at:

<https://www.snaicc.org.au/snaicc-submission-to-remote-education-inquiry/>]

<sup>11</sup> Further information on the Children's Education and Care Training Package Review is available at:

<https://www.skillsiq.com.au/FeedbackForum/TrainingPackages1/CHCCCommunityServices/ChildrensEducationandCareDraft3>

education outcomes for individuals in remote Australia and complex environments. For example, the topic areas include a child's journey through early childhood, primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary education, key barriers to the education journey, and the role of culture and country in a child's learning.<sup>12</sup> The Committee is currently finalising its report.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children under 15 years account for 43% of all children in remote and very remote areas in Australia<sup>13</sup> and therefore are more likely to experience a lack of access to appropriate services. SNAICC has made a submission to the inquiry specifically raising the need to focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.<sup>14</sup> The new National Agreement on Closing the Gap (which was formally engaged in 2019) has established 'Priority Reforms' regarding the way governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure lives and outcomes improve for these communities. Early childhood education and care services can play a broader role in the community and the importance of culturally appropriate content and community trust is especially important in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.<sup>15</sup>

### **Skills Gap - Leadership Skills**

The Children's Education and Care sector is facing a shortage of professionals with leadership skills to fulfil leadership and management roles. There has been an established awareness of the importance of management skills for those in senior positions in Children's Education and Care services, and requirements vary based on the structure of services and how responsibilities are assigned within an organisation. In addition, there is now a growing emphasis on operational leadership skills for all job roles within services. Contrasting to finance and administration, and skills in leading staff, there is a value being placed on the ability of people working effectively as part of a team, exercising leadership in the day to day routines and logistics to enable the smooth operation of services.

An additional type of leadership in the sector is pedagogical leadership. Every service under the NQF is required to have a designated Educational Leader, and there is an emerging need for education and training with a focus on the development and application of these skills. SkillsIQ and the Children's Education and Care IRC will continue to liaise with the sector to measure the need and nature of such future training products.

### **Outside School Hours Care Specific Issues**

There is a growing demand for Outside School Hours Care services and changes in family expectations of services. The proportion of children aged 5–11 using before and after school care has increased noticeably from 8% in 1999 to 15% in 2017.<sup>16</sup> The Department of Education, Skills and Employment estimates children spend an average 11.9 hours per week

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<sup>12</sup> Parliament of Australia. *Education in Remote and Complex Environments*. Terms of Reference available at: [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/House/Employment\\_Education\\_and\\_Training/RemoteEducation/Terms\\_of\\_Reference](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Employment_Education_and_Training/RemoteEducation/Terms_of_Reference)

<sup>13</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2016. Cat. No. 3238.0.55.001, Released 13 September 2018. Canberra.

<sup>14</sup> SNAICC submission to remote and complex education environments inquiry (2020)[Available at: <https://www.snaicc.org.au/snaicc-submission-to-remote-education-inquiry/>]

<sup>15</sup> Coalition of Peaks. Priority Reforms. Available at: <https://coalitionofpeaks.org.au/priority-reforms/>

<sup>16</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2019) Childcare and early childhood education [Available at: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/childcare-and-early-childhood-education/>] [Accessed 9 September 2020]

in this type of care.<sup>17</sup> The workforce is sizeable representing 27,490 Outside School Hours Care educators. There are different service models and variables in locations which impact the roles and responsibilities of staff. Programs can be managed by schools (Government and non-Government), parents and citizens associations, for-profit providers, and not-for-profits.

To date however, the labour market discussions uniquely focused on the requirements of this sector have been rare and have promoted references to invisibility.<sup>18</sup> Fundamental training and workforce development issues have been raised through the current Children's Education and Care Training Package Review project in respect to the Outside School Hours Care sector. These include:

- There is no single mandated national qualification.
- The nature of the work can mean staff are required to do split shifts (i.e. before and after school hours).
- It is difficult to find Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) delivering school age care qualifications and low enrolments in the qualifications may be an indication that training providers tend to be focused on Long Day Care rather than Outside School Hours Care services.

Some stakeholders have a view that there is a significant difference between Outside School Hours Care and Long Day Care roles and responsibilities, particularly with Diploma qualified staff. This view highlights the need for skills for negotiation upwards with parents, principals, and business planning. Alternative views have also been expressed which highlight similarities between the services particularly in respect to theoretical frameworks of child development play and recreation, and learning. In addition, training funding models can mask workforce development and broader labour market issues which need to be addressed.

The Children's Education and Care Training Package Review project has highlighted the need to reconsider the relationship between the qualifications which cater to Outside School Hours Care and early childhood as well as education support, as job roles and related skills and knowledge requirements appear to have shifted since the last review. The Review project has also been an opportunity to clarify the education support job role and strengthen the alignment of the qualifications with contemporary skills, knowledge and responsibilities as well as recognise the growing significance of these roles in the school systems.

### **Future Skills Needs**

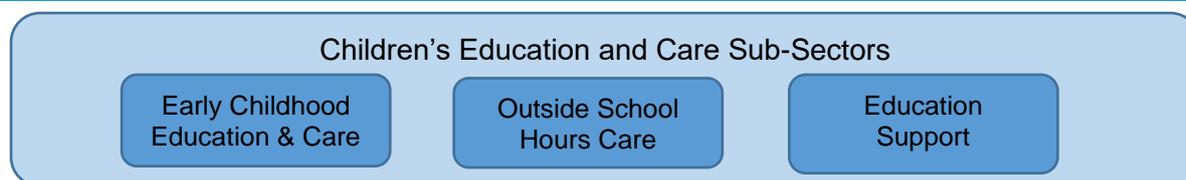
SkillsIQ's *2020 Future Skills Survey*, in addition to consultation with sector stakeholders, has revealed that the top five short-to-medium term skills considered extremely important across the Children's Education and Care sector include:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Capacity to learn
- Resilience or stress tolerance
- Emotional intelligence.

<sup>17</sup> Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2019) *Child Care data for September quarter 2019*, <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-australia-report-september-quarter-2019> Accessed May 2020

<sup>18</sup> The Sydney Morning Herald (26 January 2020) 'Cinderella' childcare sector seeks leg-up [Available at: <https://www.smh.com.au/education/cinderella-childcare-sector-seeks-leg-up-20200121-p53teq.html>] Accessed 9 September 2020]

2. Qualification utilisation:
  - Identify circumstances in which employers employ people with VET qualifications
  - Identify circumstances in which employers do not employ people with VET qualifications.



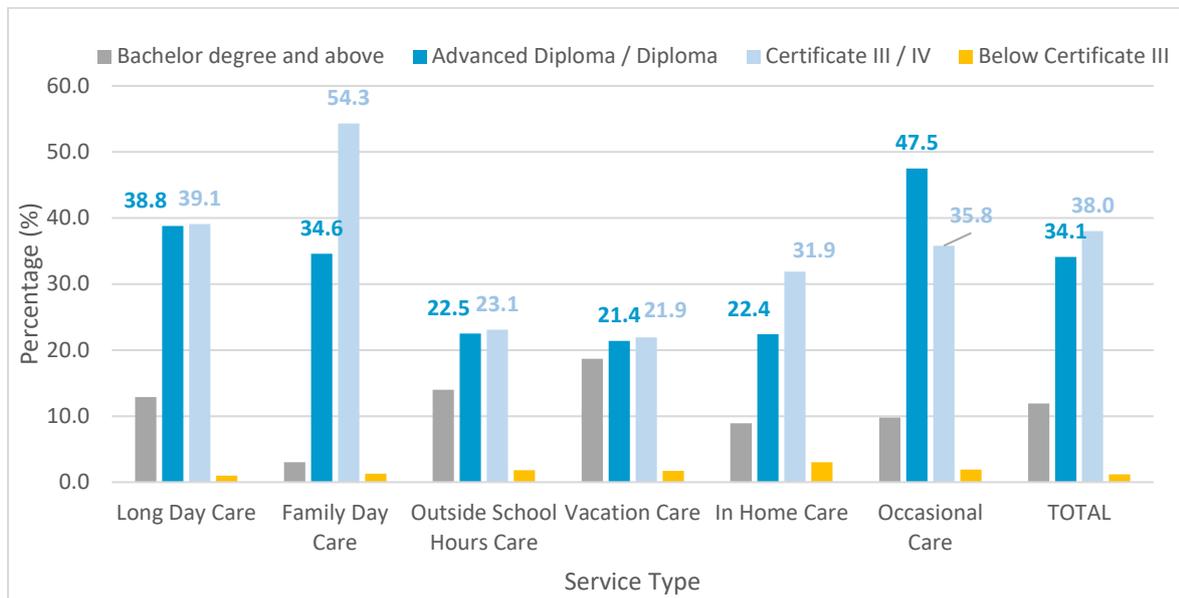
**The Children's Education and Care sector has minimum qualification requirements prescribed for its workforce under the National Quality Framework (NQF).** Various state and territory legislative frameworks can also prescribe additional minimum qualification requirements for staff. The Education and Care Services National Regulations prescribes staff to child ratios and mandate required minimum qualifications for educators working in early childhood services including Long Day Care and Family Day Care.<sup>19</sup> Vocational education qualifications are the minimum requirements for educators working in the Early Childhood Education and Care sector. There are no national qualification requirements for educators educating and caring for school age children in Outside School Hours Care services. State and territory specific qualification requirements apply in Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and Northern Territory. Education support workers are not part of this national regulated framework although they play a critical role in the sector educating children, primarily in a school environment. Pre-schools/Kindergartens in some jurisdictions, for example WA and Tasmania, do operate under the NQF, and the Education Support qualification is currently recognised within these settings as an approved qualification. The minimum qualification level for a teacher in Australia is a bachelor's degree, and currently VET qualifications can be used as pathways into degree-levels of study.

The latest Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census data (2016) shows that 174,010 paid staff were employed, with **nearly three-quarters having a VET qualification equivalent to a Certificate III or higher** (i.e. Certificate IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma). Only a minority of ECEC sector staff (11.9%) held a bachelor's degree (See Figure 1). This Census was due to be repeated in 2020 however this has been postponed. There have been opportunities identified to improve the quality of national workforce data to strengthen accuracy and support for decisionmaking.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> ACEQA Educator to child ratios <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/educator-to-child-ratios> [Accessed May 2020]

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/ChildrensEducationandCareNationalWorkforceStrategy\\_0.pdf](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/ChildrensEducationandCareNationalWorkforceStrategy_0.pdf), page 17

Figure 1: Total percentage (%) of ECEC staff by highest level of qualification and service type of employment – 2016



Source: Table 5, 2016 Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census

Across relevant job roles, the proportion of workers with VET-based qualifications is also high. For example, **57.4% of [educators] have a Certificate III or higher VET qualification**. Just **over half (51.7%) of Education Aids also have a Certificate III or higher VET qualification**.<sup>21</sup>

General cross-industry research and NCVET studies indicate that the main reasons for employing people with VET qualifications are that the qualifications provide the skills required for the job, or that the qualifications are required to meet industry/sector standards, and/or legislative requirements.

### 3. Are employers using training outside the national system and if so, why?

Across the Australian workforce, the use of informal and non-accredited training by employers is prominent. The latest national figures available show that in 2019, approximately half (49%) of employers used non-accredited training and 74% provided informal training to their employees.<sup>22</sup>

Insights from SkillsIQ's *2020 Future Skills Survey* indicated that overall, employers in the Children's Education and Care sector **use internal training**, as well as **other types of external training for specific sector accreditation requirements**. Online training that is not part of a university or VET qualification is increasingly being used to meet specific and short-term skills development requirements.

<sup>21</sup> Australian Government, The 2016 Early Childhood Education and Care National Workforce Census, accessed from <https://docs.education.gov.au/node/45126>

<sup>22</sup> NCVET (2019) Survey of employer use and views of the VET system 2019 [Available at: <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/infographics/employers-use-and-views-of-the-vet-system-2019>]

In this sector, reasons provided by employers in the survey for using training outside the national system (that is not part of a university or VET qualification) included the **need to meet highly specific training needs**, and for **ongoing professional development** to align theory and practice. For example, there is specific health-related content required by policies and procedures for various responsibilities such as safe sleep, child mental health, and child safety and protection. Some employers have structured internal staff development programs to ensure organisational procedures and standards are understood, implemented effectively and improved with structured feedback and shared experience.

Quality professional development opportunities are necessary to ensure the sector's workforce skills remain up to date and relevant. Workplace environments can include the need for professional learning specific to family needs or contemporary issues.

**Family Day Care** stakeholders have reported that the development and maintenance of up to date skills and knowledge pertaining to the service as a small business can be challenging and there are difficulties in finding courses that are suitably contextualised for Family Day Care. These services are regulated within the NQF and do offer a career path within the sector, however, some operators argue that this level of professionalism is not always recognised and it would be useful to have resources and training to better market FDC as a professional service operating in accordance with same regulatory standards as centre based services.

**Education Support** roles within the school system are meeting an increasing breadth of circumstances and needs of students. Additional skills and knowledge relating to supporting students with specific needs are often provided outside the VET system to target specific information and requirements. This is often dependant on the management structure and resources of the school and coordination of education support provided.

4. Identify qualifications with low and no enrolments. Provide reasons and evidence for the need to retain/delete these qualifications.

The six qualifications overseen by the Children's Education and Care IRC have in general experienced consistently high levels of enrolments (i.e. above 400 enrolments) across the years reported (see Table 1). The School Age Care qualifications compared to the ECEC and Education Support qualifications have attracted lower numbers. Funding does vary and can influence enrolments particularly where a range of qualifications are recognised in meeting the needs of a sector such as School Age Care. Demand for the qualifications is therefore not as high as qualifications in ECEC which are aligned to job roles in regulated service work environments.

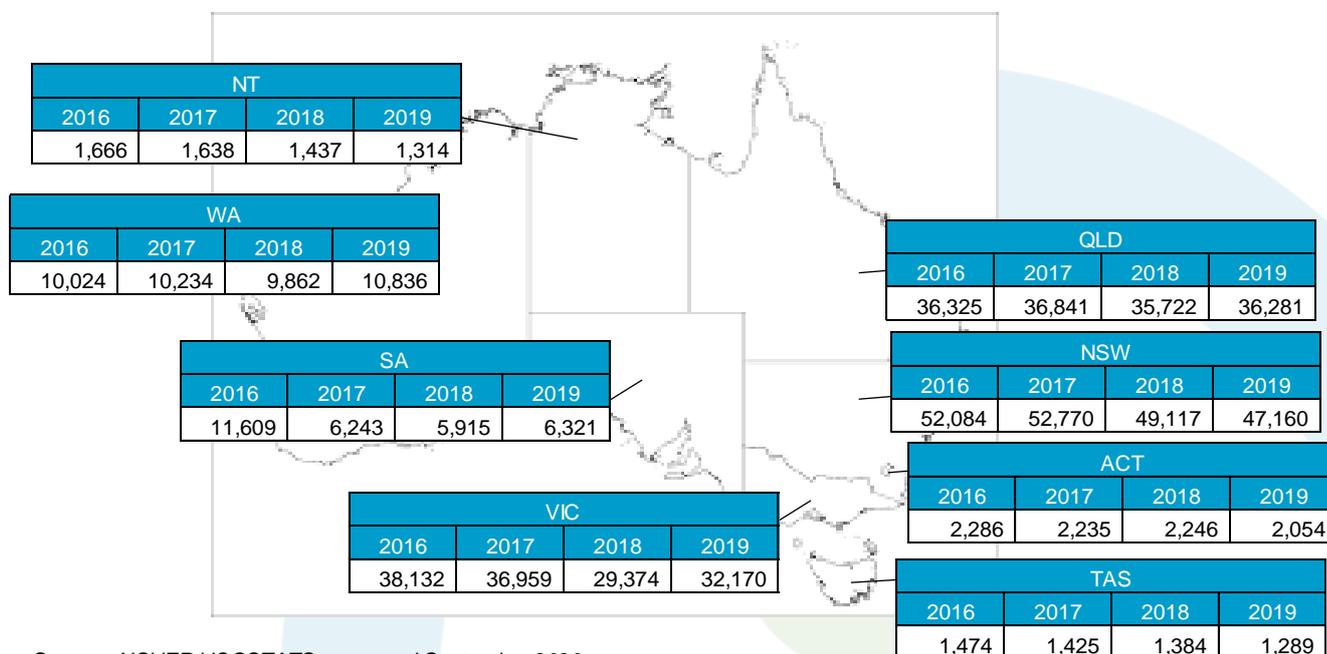
Table 1: Total number of enrolments (Total VET Activity [TVA]) by nationally recognised qualifications on scope – Children's Education and Care Training Package Products on scope, 2016-2019

Qualification	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Early Childhood Education and Care</b>				
CHC30113 - Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care	53,941	53,796	52,839	54,879
CHC50113 - Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care	74,952	67,284	52,238	48,105
<b>Education Support</b>				
CHC30213 - Certificate III in Education Support	17,715	18,187	17,842	18,558
CHC40213 - Certificate IV in Education Support	6,101	7,948	10,396	14,078
<b>School Age Education and Care</b>				
CHC40113 - Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care	435	479	477	523
CHC50213 - Diploma of School Age Education and Care	842	995	1,567	1,518

Source: NCVET VOCSTATS, accessed September 2020.

Note: 1. From 2018 onwards, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) were required to submit enrolment and completion data for all qualifications to NCVET. Thus 2018 and 2019 represent a more complete set of data, compared to previous years where data may underrepresent the true counts of enrolments and completions for a qualification. 2. Public RTO and private RTO data is included in the enrolment and completion data.

Map 1: Total number of enrolments (Total VET Activity [TVA]) by RTO delivery location - Children's Education and Care Training Package Products on scope, 2016-2019



Source: NCVET VOCSTATS, accessed September 2020.

Note: Less than 0.5% of enrolments were categorised as 'Overseas' or 'Unknown' locations.

5. Reasons for non-completion of qualifications and skill sets (including micro-credentials).
- Where students complete qualifications or skill sets, what was the purpose of undertaking them (e.g. finding employment, upskilling)?

**Note:** Completion and non-completion rate (%) data for individual qualifications is not available via NCVER VOCSTATS. The number of completions across qualifications is therefore provided instead however please note they should not be compared to enrolment counts in Table 1. NCVER enrolment counts include first year commencements (new students) and continuing enrolments in their second or higher year undertaking the qualification, and this means the comparison of enrolments to completions in one year may make the completion level look artificially low (for qualifications where the student is likely to be enrolled for more than one calendar year).

Table 2: Total number of completions (Total VET Activity [TVA]) by nationally recognised qualifications on scope – Children's Education and Care Training Package Products, 2016-2019

Qualification	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Early Childhood Education and Care</b>				
CHC30113 - Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care	15,688	15,581	15,719	15,105
CHC50113 - Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care	15,573	13,976	13,532	11,676
<b>Education Support</b>				
CHC30213 - Certificate III in Education Support	4,944	5,648	5,494	6,213
CHC40213 - Certificate IV in Education Support	2,358	2,878	3,676	4,589
<b>School Age Education and Care</b>				
CHC40113 - Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care	144	123	145	145
CHC50213 - Diploma of School Age Education and Care	178	225	425	343

**Source:** NCVER VOCSTATS, accessed September 2020.

**Note:** 1. From 2018 onwards, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) were required to submit enrolment and completion data for all qualifications to NCVER. Thus 2018 and 2019 represent more complete sets of data, compared to previous years where data may underrepresent the true counts of enrolments and completions for a qualification. The 2016 and 2017 data is shown for indicative purposes only. 2. Public RTO and private RTO data is included in the enrolment and completion data. 3. The 2019 completion data is preliminary based on what was available at the time of reporting and may not represent final outcomes for the full calendar year.

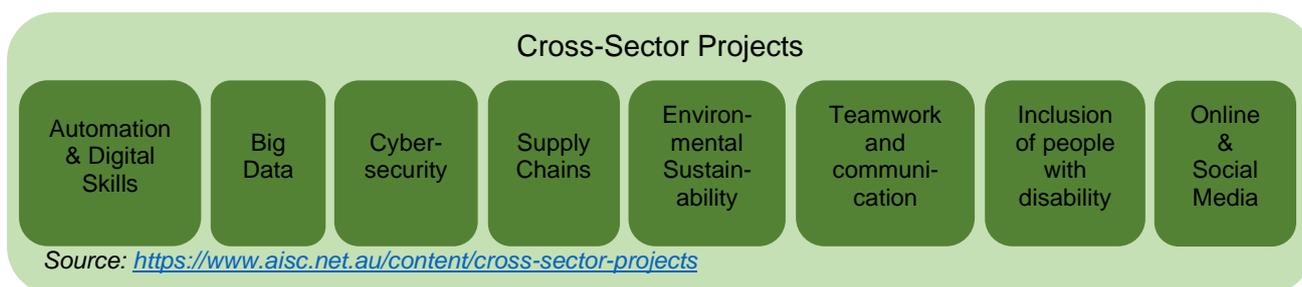
A study published in 2018 indicated that the main reason for undertaking training for graduates of the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care was to **get a job** (44%), or to **change careers** (17%). By contrast, graduates of the Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care also indicated they undertook training mainly to get a job (29%), but also to gain **extra skills for their job** (22%). This reflects the job status of students as a higher proportion of the Diploma graduates were already employed an educator in the sector before completing their training (61% compared with 30% of the Certificate III graduates).<sup>23</sup> This study also supported evidence of strong pathways from the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care to the Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care and then to further study in related areas including early childhood teaching. More recently there is evidence that although

<sup>23</sup> Korb P 2018, High-use training package qualifications: childcare, NCVER, Adelaide.p9 [Available at: [https://www.ncver.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0026/2237714/High-use-training-package-qualifications\\_childcare.pdf](https://www.ncver.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0026/2237714/High-use-training-package-qualifications_childcare.pdf)]

the pathways exist there are other factors which influence the extent to which they are implemented.<sup>24</sup>

In this sector, some employers in SkillsIQ's *2020 Future Skills Survey* noted their employees had undertaken micro-credentials on subjects covering education and first aid, and the range of reasons for doing so included that they **provided the skills needed for the job**, the training was for **legislative requirements**, to **meet industry standards**, to **meet highly specific training needs**, or to **improve the quality of service**.

6. Identify, where possible, opportunities for use of cross-sector units developed by the AISC.



Throughout the year, ongoing consideration for using cross-sector units is given by the Children's Education and Care IRC. Currently the packaging rules for the qualifications in scope align to the specialised nature of requirements within the Children' Education and Care sector and cross-sector units are considered where applicable.

A range of units are currently imported into the qualifications covering **work health and safety, first aid and diversity**.

7. If there are jobs that have experienced changes in skill requirements, provide evidence for these changes and their impact.

It is clear from low enrolments relative to other qualifications recognised in the Children's Education and Care sector, that the School Age Care qualifications are not valued highly by the Outside School Hours Care sector, and that the range of qualifications recognised for the purpose of working in the sector, while accommodating flexible needs, do not provide a minimum national qualification requirement. Unlike the early childhood services regulated under the NQF, the school age care sector has prescribed ratios but no mandated national qualification requirements. Instead, state and territory specific qualification requirements apply in Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and Northern Territory. The sector has broader workforce challenges as previously outlined, such as attraction and retention of staff and recognition as an attractive career choice. In addition, funding arrangements tend to focus on the early childhood qualifications. Increases

<sup>24</sup> [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/ChildrensEducationandCareNationalWorkforceStrategy\\_0.pdf](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/ChildrensEducationandCareNationalWorkforceStrategy_0.pdf)

in the demand for school age care services and the need for a core stable workforce have highlighted the need for a specific workforce strategy.

8. Identify barriers to employers hiring apprentices and trainees. Are employers using alternative pathways/labour strategies to address these barriers?

Employers in the Children's Education and Care sector have experienced difficulties recently when recruiting a trainee due to **limited applicants, unattractive work and wages being considered to be too low.**

Traineeships are a significant employment option in the ECEC sector with an average of 5,400 trainees in training in the *Certificate III* and 5,000 enrolled in the *Diploma* in 2019.

Table 3: Average number of in training apprentices / trainees (Apprentice and Trainee Collection) by nationally recognised qualifications on scope – Children's Education and Care Training Package Products, 2017-2019

Qualification	2017	2018	2019
<b>Early Childhood Education and Care</b>			
CHC30113 - Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care	4,998	4,986	5,392
CHC50113 - Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care	5,373	4,995	4,949

Source: NCVET VOCSTATS Apprentice and Trainee Collection – In training, accessed September 2020.

Traineeships can be effective in progressively addressing the practical application of skills and knowledge throughout the course as well as the workplace development and assessment requirements. Traineeships can enhance customisation to organisational and workplace policies and procedures and promote mentoring opportunities within the workplace which many employers see as an advantage. A fully inducted and qualified employee is a valued outcome of traineeships.

Attrition is also considered an issue, with factors including inappropriate recruitment practices and a lack of support for trainees in the workplace. Employers and sector stakeholders identified support in the workplace as a key driver of quality in traineeships and called for improved marketing and promotion of traineeships for their sector.

## 9. Other relevant activities.

The Children's Education and Care Training Package Products are currently being updated. This update includes the following six qualifications and associated Units of Competency:

- CHC30113 Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care
- CHC50113 Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care
- CHC40113 Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care
- CHC50213 Diploma of School Age Education and Care
- CHC30213 Certificate III in Education Support
- CHC40213 Certificate IV in Education Support.

## Section B Ongoing Consultation

A widespread multi-channel consultation involving the stakeholders tabled below has been conducted to identify key developments across the Children's Education and Care sector reported in this *Annual Update*. Stakeholders listed represent members of the Children's Education and Care IRC.

Consultation activities involved:

- A. ongoing engagement and validation with industry and stakeholders
- B. collection of industry intelligence
- C. promotion of the VET system
- D. cultivating and maintaining networks and partnerships with industry including engagement in rural and regional areas.

Entity Name	Sector	State	Rural / Regional / Remote (RRR)	Activity
<i>Stakeholder name</i>	<i>Stakeholder Organisation</i>	<i>State, multi-state or national?</i>		<i>SSO activity as per dot points above</i>
Brian Newman	Australian Community Children's Services	National		A, B, C & D
Kim Hawkins	Charles Darwin University		Yes	A, B, C & D
Jan Faulkner	KU Children's Services	National		A, B, C & D
Anna Frisch	Gowrie Victoria	VIC		A, B, C & D
Dawn Benjamin	TAFE SA	SA		A, B, C & D
Danni Moore	Department of Education and Care (NT)	NT	Yes	A, B, C & D
Sue-Anne Hunter	Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) - National Voice for our Children	National	Yes	A, B, C & D
Michael Farrell	Family Day Care Australia (FDCA)	National	Yes	A, B, C & D
Kylie Brannelly	National Outside School Hours Services Association	National	Yes	A, B, C & D
Ann Marie Chemello	Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA)	National / WA		A, B, C & D
Annette Barwick	Early Childhood Australia	National / Tas		A, B, C & D
Michael Petrie	Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)	National	Yes	A, B, C & D
Emma Cannen	United Voice	National	Yes	A, B, C & D
Sue Kealy	United Services Union	National	Yes	A, B, C & D

**Note:** 1. Over 1,100 stakeholders participated in national consultation activities across the Children's Education and Care Training Package Review project such as workshops and webinars. An additional 2,800 pieces of feedback were received via SkillsIQ's Feedback Forum.

2. A total of 43 stakeholders representing the Children's Education and Care sector participated in SkillsIQ's *2020 Future Skills Survey*. The survey was administered as a research tool to provide stakeholders with a confidential and anonymised channel to input their views and opinions on the topics questioned. In accordance with the Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) Privacy Principles regarding anonymity of participation in survey research, the individual names and organisations of respondents are not disclosed.

## Section C Proposed New Work

No new projects are proposed in this update.

