



Early Childhood Assistant Program Standard

The approved program standard for Early Childhood Assistant programs of instruction leading to an Ontario College Certificate delivered by Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (MTCU funding code 41211).

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
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Introduction

This document is the Program Standard for the Early Childhood Assistant programs of instruction leading to an Ontario College Certificate delivered by Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (MTCU funding code 41211).

Development of system-wide program standards

In 1993, the Government of Ontario initiated program standards development with the objectives of bringing a greater degree of consistency to college programming offered across the province, broadening the focus of college programs to ensure graduates have the skills to be flexible and to continue to learn and adapt, and providing public accountability for the quality and relevance of college programs.

The Program Standards Unit of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has responsibility for the development, review and approval of system-wide standards for programs of instruction at Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology.

Program standards

Program standards apply to all similar programs of instruction offered by colleges across the province. Each program standard for a postsecondary program includes the following elements:

- [Vocational standard](#) (the vocationally specific learning outcomes which apply to the program of instruction in question)
- [Essential employability skills](#) (the essential employability skills learning outcomes which apply to all programs of instruction)
- [General education requirement](#) (the requirement for general education in postsecondary programs of instruction).

Collectively, these elements outline the essential skills and knowledge that a student must reliably demonstrate in order to graduate from the program.

Individual Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology offering the program of instruction determine the specific program structure, delivery methods and other curriculum matters to be used in assisting students to achieve the outcomes articulated in the standard. Individual colleges also determine whether additional local learning outcomes will be required to reflect specific local needs and/or interests.

The expression of program standards as vocational learning outcomes

Vocational learning outcomes represent culminating demonstrations of learning and achievement. They are not simply a listing of discrete skills, nor broad statements of knowledge and comprehension. In addition, vocational learning outcomes are interrelated and cannot be viewed in isolation from one another. As such, they should be viewed as a comprehensive whole. They describe performances that demonstrate that significant integrated learning by graduates of the program has been achieved and verified.

Expressing standards as vocational learning outcomes ensures consistency in the outcomes for program graduates, while leaving to the discretion of individual colleges, curriculum matters such as the specific program structure and delivery methods.

The presentation of the vocational learning outcomes

The **vocational learning outcome** statements set out the culminating demonstration of learning and achievement that the student must reliably demonstrate before graduation.

The **elements of the performance** for each outcome define and clarify the level and quality of performance necessary to meet the requirements of the vocational learning outcome. However, it is the performance of the vocational learning outcome itself on which students are evaluated. The elements of performance are indicators of the means by which the student may proceed to satisfactory performance of the vocational learning outcome. The elements of performance do not stand alone but rather in reference to the vocational learning outcome of which they form a part.

The development of a program standard

In establishing the standards development initiative, the Government determined that all postsecondary programs of instruction should include vocational skills coupled with a broader set of essential skills. This combination is considered critical to ensuring that college graduates have the skills required to be successful both upon graduation from the college program and throughout their working and personal lives.

A program standard is developed through a broad consultation process involving a range of stakeholders with a direct interest in the program area, including employers, professional associations, universities, secondary schools and program graduates working in the field, in addition to students, faculty and administrators at the colleges themselves. It represents a consensus of participating stakeholders on the essential learning that all program graduates should have achieved.

Updating the program standard

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will undertake regular reviews of the vocational learning outcomes for this program to ensure that the Early Childhood Assistant Program Standard remains appropriate and relevant to the needs of students and employers across the Province of Ontario. To confirm that this document is the most up-to-date release, please contact the [Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities](#).

Vocational standard

All graduates of Early Childhood Assistant programs have achieved the [nine vocational learning outcomes \(VLOs\)](#), in addition to achieving the essential employability outcomes and meeting the general education (GE) requirement.

Preamble

The Early Childhood Assistant certificate program prepares graduates to work with **children*** aged 0-12 years and their **families*** in **early years and child care*** settings including centre-based and home-based care and child and **family*** programs.

As members of the early learning team, graduates work collaboratively and communicate effectively with colleagues, early childhood educators, supervisors and other professionals and **children's*** service partners to support and maintain quality **early learning environments***.

Graduates engage in and maintain caring, **responsive relationships*** with **children*** and **families*** that respect diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds including **Indigenous*** peoples' worldviews and Francophone identity.

Under the direction of early childhood educators and other learning professionals, graduates engage with **children*** in **inquiry and play-based*** early learning strategies, to support their learning and **holistic development***. Using **observation strategies***, documentation and communication skills, graduates contribute to collaborative practice in **early learning and child care settings***.

Early Childhood Assistants have knowledge of the [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014](#) and other relevant legislation and can relate regulations to current policies and procedures in **early years and child care*** settings. Graduates recognize the importance of the protection of **children*** and identify, report and document when a child is at a perceived risk for abuse or neglect in accordance with legislation, policies and procedures.

Graduates maintain health and safety practices and contribute to practices aimed at providing quality, safe, equitable and accessible **early learning environments*** for **children*** and **families***.

Early Childhood Assistants are committed to ongoing **professional learning*** and

develop plans to enhance their knowledge and skill in the **early learning and child care setting***.

There are opportunities for graduates to pursue further educational qualifications. Graduates should contact individual colleges for further details.

[*See Glossary](#)

Endnote: The [Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer \(ONCAT\)](#) maintains the provincial postsecondary credit transfer portal, ONTransfer and the Ontario Postsecondary Transfer Guide (OPTG).

Synopsis of the vocational learning outcomes

Early Childhood Assistant (Ontario College Certificate)

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

1. engage in caring, **responsive relationships*** with **children*** and **families*** that value and respect social, cultural and linguistic **diversity*** including **Indigenous*** peoples' worldviews and Francophone identity.
2. participate in **inquiry and play-based*** early learning and care strategies that respond to **children's*** capabilities, interests, ideas and experiences.
3. implement **inclusive*** early learning and care strategies that support equitable, accessible and meaningful learning opportunities for all **children*** and their **families*** in **early years and child care*** settings.
4. follow established procedures and policies to maintain health and safety practices in **early years and child care*** settings that support healthy development and well-being in **children*** and **families***.
5. use established **observation strategies***; documentation and communication skills when interacting with **children***, **families***, colleagues and employers in **early years and child care*** settings.
6. comply with current legislation, regulations and agency policies and procedures in daily work within **early years and child care*** settings.
7. identify, report and document when a child is in a situation of perceived risk for, or actual neglect or abuse, in accordance with legislation, policies and procedures.
8. work collaboratively with others to maintain quality **early years and child care*** settings.
9. develop and implement an ongoing **professional learning*** plan to enhance performance as an early childhood assistant in **early years and child care*** settings.

[*See Glossary](#)

Note: The learning outcomes have been numbered as a point of reference; numbering does not imply prioritization, sequencing, nor weighting of significance.

The vocational learning outcomes

1. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: engage in caring, **responsive relationships** * with **children** * and **families** * that value and respect social, cultural and linguistic **diversity** * including **Indigenous** * peoples' worldviews and Francophone identity.

Elements of the performance

- a. engage in caring and **responsive relationships** * with **children** * and their **families** * as fundamental to early childhood assistant practice
- b. view **children** * and **families** * as capable, competent, curious and rich in potential and experiences
- c. identify **children's** * abilities and interests by interacting positively with **children** *
- d. identify the valuable input that **families** * contribute as experts and as first teachers, in their **children's** * abilities, interests and ideas
- e. engage with **families** * and support their sense of belonging to their **children's** * **early learning environments** *
- f. respect and honour the uniqueness and **diversity** * of **children** * and **families** * including **family** * structure, language, cultural values and practices, ethnicity, socio-economic status, spirituality, gender, age and sexual orientation
- g. respect and honour the uniqueness and **diversity** * within **Indigenous** * **families** * including the integral role of extended family*, community and relationship with the natural and spiritual world
- h. discuss the history of **Indigenous** * peoples and the impact of colonization experiences on **families** * and communities
- i. engage with **children** * to model and support their successful interactions in groups and to support their sense of belonging and connectedness
- j. foster an atmosphere of mutual respect among all **children** *
- k. model respectful relationships which are trustworthy and **inclusive** *
- l. support **children's** * transitions between daily routines

[*See Glossary](#)

2. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: participate in **inquiry and play-based*** early learning and care strategies that respond to **children's*** capabilities, interests, ideas and experiences.

Elements of the performance

- a. observe **children*** to understand and respond to their learning interests and approach to learning
- b. assist with the planning of **inquiry and play-based*** learning strategies based on **children's*** emerging skills, interests and ideas
- c. identify how early learning strategies are guided by current provincial **curriculum*** guidelines or program/pedagogical documents
- d. participate in established early learning strategies that provide for the **holistic development*** and well-being of **children***
- e. engage in learning with **children*** in natural settings that foster an understanding and appreciation for the environment
- f. use a variety of **inquiry and play-based*** learning strategies that promote **children's*** sense of belonging, well-being, expression and engagement
- g. participate in learning opportunities to foster in **children*** their development and appreciation of creative arts, including music, dance, visual, dramatic and literary arts
- h. use and create learning materials that support the development of investigation, creativity and problem solving in **children***
- i. share observations of the effectiveness of early learning and care strategies

[*See Glossary](#)

3. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: implement **inclusive*** early learning and care strategies that support equitable, accessible and meaningful learning opportunities for all **children*** and their **families*** in **early years and child care*** settings.

Elements of the performance

- a. provide a welcoming and nurturing environment for all **children*** and their **families***
- b. promote a sense of belonging and acceptance in all **children*** and their **families***, including **children with special needs***, within **early years and child care*** settings
- c. implement **inclusive*** learning strategies that ensure full participation of all **children*** considering ability, cultural and linguistic diversity and **Indigenous*** identity
- d. support **inclusive*** learning experiences based on observation of **children*** and guidance from the early learning team
- e. engage in the learning, interests and skills of all **children***
- f. use learning materials and opportunities that are culturally **inclusive***, **diverse*** and reflect anti-bias
- g. use assistive technology tools to support all **children's*** **holistic development*** and learning
- h. contribute to **early years and child care*** settings that support **inclusive*** practices for **children*** and **families***

[*See Glossary](#)

4. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: follow established procedures and policies to maintain health and safety practices in **early years and child care*** settings that support healthy development and well-being in **children*** and **families***.

Elements of the performance

- a. complete safety checks of indoor and outdoor environments and identify risks to **children's*** health and safety
- b. supervise **children*** in indoor and outdoor learning environments and during transitions in daily routines
- c. implement preventive health and safety measures while acting in accordance with current health and safety legislation, regulations and agency policies
- d. act in accordance with health and safety requirements outlined in the [**Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014**](#)
- e. comply with regulations of the [**Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1990**](#) in **early years and child care*** settings
- f. support the development of **children's*** physical and mental health and well-being by promoting healthy patterns of eating, physical activity, sleep and personal care
- g. contribute to the creation of safe and accessible learning environments for all **children*** and others
- h. respond to unsafe and emergency situations following policies and procedures
- i. report and record all accidents or incidents according to agency procedures
- j. identify health and safety risks for **children***, **families*** and colleagues in **early years and child care* settings**

[*See Glossary](#)

5. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: use established **observation strategies***, documentation and communication skills when interacting with **children***, **families***, colleagues and employers in **early years and child care*** settings.

Elements of the performance

- a. use active listening techniques and professional communication with **children***, **families***, colleagues and employers
- b. be respectful, positive and open in all communication, recognizing one's own personal bias
- c. show respect for **diversity*** by monitoring and modifying interpersonal interactions where necessary
- d. communicate effectively as a member of the **early years and child care*** team
- e. share **observations*** of **children's*** daily activities with **children***, **families*** and other professionals
- f. encourage **families'*** active participation in the **early years and child care*** setting
- g. convey accurate information in a timely way to members of the **early years and child care*** team
- h. maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries with **children***, **families*** and colleagues
- i. communicate information comprehensively, concisely, accurately and objectively
- j. maintain confidentiality in all written, verbal and electronic communications
- k. follow all required documentation policies and procedures
- l. safeguard and protect the privacy and confidentiality of **children's*** and **families'*** information in all written, verbal, and electronic communications
- m. ensure that the use of technology and social media is consistent with expectations of professional boundaries and guidelines

[*See Glossary](#)

6. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: comply with current legislation, regulations and agency policies and procedures in daily work within **early years and child care*** settings.

Elements of the performance

- a. relate the current regulations of the [*Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*](#), or any successor legislation, to the policies and procedures of the early learning setting i.e., staffing ratios, safety, programming, record keeping, schedules
- b. discuss the accountability and responsibilities that an early childhood assistant has towards **children***, **families*** and employers in **early years and child care* settings**
- c. engage in behaviours that support the dignity and rights of **children*** and **families*** and all members of the early learning community in compliance with standards, policies, procedures and practices covered by the [*Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982*](#), the [*Ontario Human Rights Code, 1989*](#), and the [*United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990*](#)
- d. assist with quality assurance practices in **early years and child care settings***
- e. maintain physical environments, equipment and health and safety practices that meet legislative and regulatory requirements

[*See Glossary](#)

7. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: identify, report and document when a child is in a situation of perceived risk for, or actual neglect or abuse, in accordance with legislation, policies and procedures.

Elements of the performance

- a. discuss the concept of child abuse¹ to include physical, emotional and sexual abuse and/or neglect along with patterns of abuse and risks of harm
- b. discuss the impact of early childhood trauma on **children's* holistic development***, including stress responses and the development of resiliency and learning
- c. identify signs of possible child abuse, neglect and family violence
- d. determine reasonable grounds to suspect when a child is at risk for abuse or neglect and may need protection
- e. acknowledge the early childhood assistant's legal duty to report suspected or actual incidents of abuse and neglect in accordance with the [Ontario Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017](#)
- f. document and report incidences of actual or suspected abuse or neglect in accordance with the [Ontario Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017](#) and **early years and child care setting*** policies and procedures
- g. identify the inherent imbalance of power in relationships between a professional and a child or **family*** and ensure that they are protected from coercion, improper influence, harassment, abuse or exploitation

[*See Glossary](#)

¹ Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. What is abuse? Retrieved from <http://www.oacas.org/childrens-aid-child-protection/what-is-abuse/>

8. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: work collaboratively with others to maintain quality **early years and child care*** settings.

Elements of the performance

- a. protect and promote the rights of **children*** in their care in **early years and child care*** settings
- b. identify and describe the roles and contributions of members of the early learning team including early childhood educators, supervisors, special needs professionals and **children's*** service partners
- c. collaborate with **families***, colleagues and other early learning professionals to optimize the learning opportunities for **children*** within the **early years and child care*** setting
- d. co-operate and contribute actively as a member of the early learning team
- e. participate in quality assurance activities in **early years and child care*** settings

[*See Glossary](#)

9. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: develop and implement an ongoing **professional learning*** plan to enhance performance as an early childhood assistant in **early years and child care*** settings.

Elements of the performance

- a. conduct self-assessments to identify personal learning needs
- b. seek out feedback on performance and integrate constructive criticism into practice
- c. develop and implement a **professional learning*** plan
- d. seek out opportunities and resources to enhance one's knowledge and skill in **early years and child care*** settings
- e. participate in workshops, courses and ongoing learning related to **early years and child care*** settings
- f. maintain training and certifications e.g., Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), First Aid, anaphylaxis training, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)
- g. adapt to changing workplace demands and trends in the **early years and child care*** settings
- h. assess personal health and well-being and develop self-care strategies to maintain a healthy work-life balance

[*See Glossary](#)

Glossary

Advocate/advocacy - Actions to influence others, to champion change, to extend or improve early years and child care programs and services which improve the lives of children, families and supports professionals in the early years and child care sector.

Children - Refers to all persons from birth to twelve years within the context of their individual family, social, economic, cultural, linguistic, spiritual and diversities.

Children/child with special needs - Refers to any child whose cognitive, physical, social, emotional or communicative needs or whose needs related to holistic development are of such a nature that additional assistance, adaptations, accommodation and/or supports are required for the child to access, actively participate in, and contribute to early learning opportunities and social interactions (adapted in part from Ontario Regulation 137/15 made under the [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014](#)).

Culture - The understandings, practices and values shared by a group of people. The children, families and staff in early years and child care settings may identify as belonging to more than one culture (CECE, 2017 Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, p.23).

Curriculum - The sum total of environments, experiences, activities and events that occur within an inclusive environment designed to foster children's well-being, learning and development and to ensure meaningful participation for every child and their family (2007) Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings, ELECT.

Diverse/diversity - Uniqueness that each person or groups of people brings to the early learning and child care setting including values and beliefs, culture and ethnicity, language, abilities, knowledge and interests, life experiences, socio-economic status, spirituality, religious affiliation, gender, age and sexual orientation (CECE, 2017 Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, p.23).

Early learning environments - Physical, social and emotional contexts in which children, families, communities, early childhood educators and other colleagues collaborate to nurture, provide care and education with the goals of fostering children's curiosity, communication, engagement, sense of belonging and well-being. It includes relationships, experiences, the physical and non-physical space, place and materials, activities and routines.

Early years and child care – Encompasses a range of settings where early learning and child care programs and services are offered, including child care centres, home-based child care, preschool programs, kindergarten programs in school boards, before and after school programs, EarlyON child and family centres and a range of child and family programs and services.

Early years sector - A distinct collective of programs, services and supports designed for children from birth to 12 years and their families. This includes research, policy development, education and training, advocacy and system management in the planning and delivery of early childhood education, early learning, child care, family supports, early intervention and children's services (CECE, 2017. Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, p.23).

Family/families - A group of children and adults who are related by affections, kinship, dependency or trust, and includes two or single-parent families, same-sex families, adoptive, multi-generational families and foster families (CECE, 2017. Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, p.23). Extended family includes persons to whom a child is related, including through a spousal relationship or adoption and in the case of an Indigenous child includes any member of a band or community of which the child is a member ([Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017](#)).

Holistic development - Describes an understanding of a child's development placing relationships first, and which considers the interrelationship among a child's physical, emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual and communication development, with recognition that development happens within the context of the child's own and family's life experiences, relationships with others and the socio-economic environment.

Inclusive/inclusion - An approach to policies and practice in early years settings where all children, families and colleagues are accepted and celebrated within a program and where each child and family experiences a sense of belonging and is supported to actively contribute to and participate fully in all aspects of the program or service. Inclusive practice includes being attentive to the capabilities, learning styles, vulnerabilities, personalities and circumstances of all children and families and understanding the diversity of children's development. Inclusion also encompasses inclusive attitudes and beliefs, policies, resources and supports (adapted from College of Early Childhood Educators, CECE.2017 Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, p. 24).

Indigenous - A collective name for all the original peoples of North America and their descendants. The Canadian constitution recognizes three groups of Indigenous peoples; First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Indigenous peoples are diverse in their histories, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs (adapted from Government of Canada, 2018. Indigenous Peoples and Communities).

Inquiry and play-based - Inquiry-based is an approach to teaching and learning that places children's questions, ideas and observations at the center of the learning experience. Play-based is an educational approach which builds upon children's

natural inclination to make sense of the world through complex and diverse play, where early childhood educators engage as co-learners with children, parents, caregivers, and colleagues. Together these pedagogical approaches inform early childhood educators' understanding of the thinking and learning of children to create learning opportunities and to design learning environments (adapted from CECE, 2017. Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, p. 24-25).

Observation strategies - A systematic strategy for collecting qualitative and subjective understandings of the behaviour, responses, interests, abilities and patterns of development and social interactions of an individual child or a group of children within a learning environment. Techniques may include participant observation, pedagogical documentation, portfolios, learning stories, developmental screening tools, anecdotal records, photography and diary recordings.

Pedagogical documentation - Representations (e.g., visual artistic, audio) that reveal children's thoughts, feelings, and values and creates a basis for educators, children and families to co-learn, to study events and to interpret their meaning together. Pedagogical documentation as a process provides the opportunity for educators to reveal their own delights, questions, assumptions and learning.

Professional learning - Ongoing formal and/or informal activities undertaken by an individual to improve and broaden their knowledge, skills, and critical reflection to practice professionally and to assure high quality professional practice throughout their careers (CECE, Dec. 11, 2017, Report: recommendations for program standards for Ontario college programs in the early childhood cluster).

Responsive relationships - Positive and meaningful connections between children and adults that occur when adults observe and read children's signals and communication and respond with understanding to support children's sense of belonging. Engaging in responsive relationships that give children and families a feeling of being cared for and cared about contributes to their well-being, enabling them to be engaged in learning and comfortable expressing their thoughts, feelings and ideas.

Essential employability skills

All graduates of the Early Childhood Assistant program of instruction must have reliably demonstrated the essential employability skills learning outcomes listed below, in addition to achieving the [vocational learning outcomes](#) and meeting the [general education requirement](#).

Context

Essential Employability Skills (EES) are skills that, regardless of a student's program or discipline, are critical for success in the workplace, in day-to-day living and for lifelong learning.

The teaching and attainment of these EES for students in, and graduates from, Ontario's Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology are anchored in a set of three fundamental assumptions:

- These skills are important for every adult to function successfully in society today.
- Our colleges are well equipped and well positioned to prepare graduates with these skills.
- These skills are equally valuable for all graduates, regardless of the level of their credential, whether they pursue a career path, or they pursue further education.

Skill categories

To capture these skills, the following six categories define the essential areas where graduates must demonstrate skills and knowledge.

- Communication
- Numeracy
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Information Management
- Interpersonal
- Personal

Application and implementation

In each of the six skill categories, there are a number of defining skills, or sub skills, identified to further articulate the requisite skills identified in the main skill categories. The following chart illustrates the relationship between the skill categories, the defining skills within the categories and learning outcomes to be achieved by graduates from all postsecondary programs of instruction that lead to an Ontario College credential.

EES may be embedded in General Education or vocational courses, or developed through discrete courses. However these skills are developed, all graduates with Ontario College credentials must be able to reliably demonstrate the essential skills required in each of the six categories.

Skill category	Defining skills: Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:	Learning outcomes: The levels of achievement required by graduates. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing • Speaking • Listening • Presenting • Visual literacy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience. 2. respond to written, spoken or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning • Analyzing and using numerical data • Conceptualizing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. execute mathematical operations accurately.
Critical Thinking & Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing • Synthesizing • Evaluating • Decision making • Creative and innovative thinking 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. apply a systematic approach to solve problems. 2. use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.

Information Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering and managing information • Selecting and using appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project • Computer literacy • Internet skills 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. locate, select, organize and document information using appropriate technology and information systems. 2. analyze, evaluate and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.
Interpersonal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Relationship management • Conflict resolution • Leadership • Networking 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems and contributions of others. 2. interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing self • Managing change and being flexible and adaptable • Engaging in reflective practices • Demonstrating personal responsibility 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects. 2. take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions and their consequences.

General education requirement

All graduates of the Early Childhood Assistant program must have met the [general education requirement](#) described below, in addition to achieving the [vocational](#) and [essential employability skills](#) learning outcomes.

Requirement

The General Education Requirement for programs of instruction is stipulated in the Credentials Framework (Appendix A in the Minister's Binding Policy Directive Framework for Programs of Instruction).

In programs of instruction leading to either an Ontario College Diploma or an Ontario College Advanced Diploma, it is required that graduates have been engaged in learning that exposes them to at least one discipline outside their main field of study and increases their awareness of the society and culture in which they live and work. This will typically be accomplished by students taking 3 to 5 courses (or the equivalent) designed discretely and separately from vocational learning opportunities.

This general education learning would normally be delivered using a combination of required and elective processes.

Purpose

The purpose of General Education in the Ontario college system is to contribute to the development of citizens who are conscious of the diversity, complexity and richness of the human experience; who are able to establish meaning through this consciousness; and who, as a result, are able to contribute thoughtfully, creatively and positively to the society in which they live and work.

General Education strengthens students' essential employability skills, such as critical analysis, problem solving and communication, in the context of an exploration of topics with broad-based personal and/or societal importance.

Themes

The themes listed below will be used to provide direction to Ontario Colleges in the development and identification of courses that are designed to fulfil the General Education Requirement for programs of instructions.

Each theme provides a statement of Rationale and offers suggestions related to more specific topic areas that could be explored within each area. These suggestions are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. They are included to provide guidance regarding the nature and scope of content that would be judged as meeting the intent and overall

goals of General Education.

Arts in society:

Rationale:

The capacity of a person to recognize and evaluate artistic and creative achievements is useful in many aspects of his/her life. Since artistic expression is a fundamentally human activity, which both reflects and anticipates developments in the larger culture, its study will enhance the student's cultural and self-awareness.

Content:

Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the importance of visual and creative arts in human affairs, of the artist's and writer's perceptions of the world and the means by which those perceptions are translated into the language of literature and artistic expression. They will also provide an appreciation of the aesthetic values used in examining works of art and possibly, a direct experience in expressing perceptions in an artistic medium.

Civic Life:

Rationale:

In order for individuals to live responsibly and to reach their potential as individuals and as citizens of society, they need to understand the patterns of human relationships that underlie the orderly interactions of a society's various structural units. Informed people will have knowledge of the meaning of civic life in relation to diverse communities at the local, national and global level and an awareness of international issues and the effects of these on Canada, as well as Canada's place in the international community.

Content:

Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the meaning of freedoms, rights and participation in community and public life, in addition to a working knowledge of the structure and function of various levels of government (municipal, provincial, national) in a Canadian and/or in an international context. They may also provide an historical understanding of major political issues affecting relations between the various levels of government in Canada and their constituents.

Social and cultural understanding:

Rationale:

Knowledge of the patterns and precedents of the past provide the means for a person to gain an awareness of his or her place in contemporary culture and society. In

addition to this awareness, students will acquire a sense of the main currents of their culture and that of other cultures over an extended period of time in order to link personal history to the broader study of culture.

Content:

Courses in this area are those that deal broadly with major social and cultural themes. These courses may also stress the nature and validity of historical evidence and the variety of historical interpretation of events. Courses will provide the students with a view and understanding of the impact of cultural, social, ethnic or linguistic characteristics.

Personal Understanding:

Rationale:

Educated people are equipped for life-long understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological and psychological entities. They are aware of the ideal need to be fully functioning persons: mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually and vocationally.

Content:

Courses in this area will focus on understanding the individual: his or her evolution; situation; relationship with others; place in the environment and universe; achievements and problems; and his or her meaning and purpose. They will also allow students the opportunity to study institutionalized human social behaviour in a systematic way. Courses fulfilling this requirement may be oriented to the study of the individual within a variety of contexts.

Science and technology:

Rationale:

Matter and energy are universal concepts in science, forming a basis for understanding the interactions that occur in living and non-living systems in our universe. Study in this area provides an understanding of the behaviour of matter that provides a foundation for further scientific study and the creation of broader understanding about natural phenomena.

Similarly, the various applications and developments in the area of technology have an increasing impact on all aspects of human endeavour and have numerous social, economic and philosophical implications. For example, the operation of computers to process data at high speed has invoked an interaction between machines and the

human mind that is unique in human history. This and other technological developments have a powerful impact on how we deal with many of the complex questions in our society.

Content:

Courses in this area should stress scientific inquiry and deal with basic or fundamental questions of science rather than applied ones. They may be formulated from traditional basic courses in such areas of study as biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology or agriculture. As well, courses related to understanding the role and functions of computers (e.g., data management and information processing) and assorted computer-related technologies should be offered in a non-applied manner to provide students with an opportunity to explore the impact of these concepts and practices on their lives.

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