

# What can I do with a degree in Early Childhood Teacher Education?

# Early Childhood Teacher Education.



## What is Early Childhood Teacher Education?

Working in early childhood education offers a challenging and rewarding career. It provides an opportunity to enhance the lives of ngā pēpi (infants), ngā pēpi nohinohi (toddlers) and ngā kōhungahunga (young children) and provide support for whānau in the important task of parenting/caregiving.

From conception, the early years of the lives of tamariki mokopuna have a critical impact on their lifelong development; high-quality learning experiences within those years lay the foundations for all later learning.

Early childhood teacher education can lead to opportunities contributing to childhood policies, management and community engagement.

Early Childhood Teacher Education is a professional educational pathway that meets the requirements of the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand. For those interested in enrolling in Teacher Education programmes, search for available TeachNZ scholarships.

## Learn more

It is important to do some research when planning a future career. Speak with, ask questions of, and follow relevant professional bodies, organisations, companies, thought leaders and teachers to learn more about:

- Career opportunities, work environments and salary information
- Education and training requirements.

### Examples of professional bodies

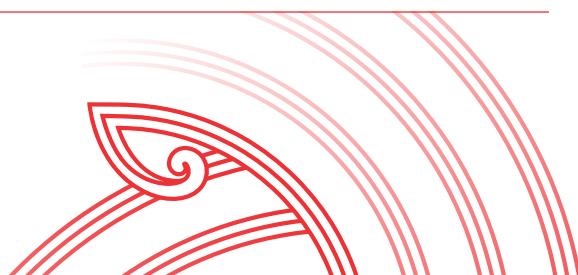
- Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand [www.teachingcouncil.nz](http://www.teachingcouncil.nz)
- Te Riu Roa NZEI [www.nzei.org.nz](http://www.nzei.org.nz)
- Early Childhood Council [www.ecc.org.nz](http://www.ecc.org.nz)
- New Zealand Educational Administration and Leadership Society [www.nzeals.org.nz](http://www.nzeals.org.nz)

## Career and study information

Some study pathways and degrees have a recommended school background, and some careers may require further study beyond a first degree or additional experience.

### Gather helpful information from:

- Subject-specific content at [www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/subjects/early-childhood-teaching](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/subjects/early-childhood-teaching)
- Job profiles on career websites like [www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz)
- Job adverts/vacancy descriptions
- Industry professional bodies.





## What skills can graduates gain?

Through studying a Early Childhood Teacher Education qualification, graduates develop a valuable set of skills and competencies, which can include:

- Understanding of teaching and learning processes, and experiences that enhance children's learning and development
- Advocacy for tamariki, whānau and the profession
- Understanding Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Competence using te reo Māori, articulating tikanga Māori and implementing te ao Māori pedagogical approaches
- Community engagement
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Patience and understanding
- Time-management, planning and organisation
- Oral and written communication
- Interpretive and analytical thinking
- Thinking critically, creatively and challenging ideas.

### Applied Learning

Community engagement and placement opportunities are available in a range of early childhood education settings. These experiences deepen graduates' skillset, awareness of others, working knowledge, and employability.

### What do employers look for?

Many employers look for generic skills such as communication, bicultural competence, cultural awareness, teamwork and initiative.

With technology, globalisation, and other drivers changing society, skills such as resilience, problem solving, and adaptability are important.

Skills that are likely to grow in importance include analytical and creative thinking, systems thinking and technological literacy.\*

\*World Economic Forum: [www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/05/future-of-jobs-2023-skills](http://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/05/future-of-jobs-2023-skills)

### How can these skills be developed?

- Some skills are gained through studying
- Extra-curricular activities can help, such as getting involved in clubs, mentoring, cultural groups, part-time work or volunteering
- Be open to professional and personal development opportunities, whether it is undertaking work experience, overseas exchange, skills seminar, or joining an industry group.

## Where have graduates been employed?

Graduates are likely to find roles in early learning centres. These organisations may be funded by the government, run as a business or part of a franchise, by a church or religious group, or even as part of a charity's work. They go by various names including:

- Kōhanga reo and iwi immersion services
- Early learning centres
- Preschools
- Kindergartens
- Montessori centres
- Home-based care agencies.

Following teaching registration, graduate teachers have also pursued other opportunities in a variety of organisations, including:

- Ministry of Education
- Tertiary education institutes.

Graduates may choose to specialise and work more closely with groups of infants, toddlers and young children, such as Māori, Pasifika, gifted or disabled children.

There are also international teaching opportunities, for example in the UK and Australia.

Employment opportunities may also be found in a range of settings that value working with young children and their families.

## What jobs and activities might graduates do?

Graduates of UC's Early Childhood Teacher Education programmes will be eligible for provisional registration, enabling them to apply for early childhood teaching positions in Aotearoa New Zealand.

See some job examples below.

Note: This list is not exhaustive, and some jobs may require further study, training or experience. It is recommended to start with the section 'How can I gain a sense of career direction?'

### Early childhood teacher

- Plan curriculum experiences that support and extend children's learning
- Educate and care for children
- Document the learning and development of tamariki (children)
- Build relationships with whānau

### Kaiako kōhanga reo | Māori language nest teacher

- Teach young children in a Māori language and culture-immersed setting
- Help develop te reo and tikanga with children
- Collaborate with whānau and iwi

### In-home educator, home-based carer coordinator

- Support children's development in the home
- Plan and supervise daily activities

### Hospital play specialist

- Assess a child's experience of illness or trauma
- Ensure children remain active and socialise
- Encourage therapeutic play to help them cope

### Special education / early intervention teacher

- Teach children with diverse learning needs
- Evaluate special needs, working with whānau and teachers to develop suitable learning plans

### Early childhood education mentor / educator

- Coach ECE teachers and educators
- Build networks and professional practice for those working in isolated settings e.g. in homes

### Early childhood centre assistant manager, assistant supervisor, deputy head teacher

- Support the director or head teacher to manage aspects of the centre

### Early childhood centre director / manager / head teacher / team leader

- Manage the overall functioning of the centre including scheduling
- Oversee staff employment and development
- Build and maintain community relationships

### Programme coordinator, service manager

- Research and plan programmes or services
- Coordinate staff and liaise with stakeholders
- Implement and evaluate programmes/ services

### Review / quality assurance officer (ERO)

- Check legality of EC centre policies/practices
- Report findings and make recommendations
- Assess use of funding

### Examples of other job titles and careers include:

- Education consultant
- Project administrator
- Child and youth worker
- Child advocate
- Family support worker
- Community development worker
- Teacher assistant or teacher aid (primary / secondary)
- Tutor
- Nanny.

## Further study options

Postgraduate study options can be pursued in areas such as Te Reo Māori Bilingual Teaching, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, and Special Education.

For those who already have a bachelor's degree and would like to enter early childhood, consider UC's Graduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning (Early Childhood).

Further study may facilitate career benefits such as specialist skills, entry into a specific occupation, higher starting salary, faster progression rate, and advanced research capability.

It is important to determine which, if any, further study options align with future career aspirations.

For further UC study options visit:

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study)

## How can I gain a sense of career direction?

Understanding yourself and others is important to gain a sense of direction. This grows with experience; therefore, trying new things and reflecting on an ongoing basis is important.

### Career planning checklist

#### Discover and reflect on:

- Your values, interests, strengths, abilities, and aspirations
- Your connection to whānau, people, and places
- Lifestyle preferences and location
- The skills you want to gain, use, or enhance

#### Engage in a variety of experiences to learn about:

- How you want to contribute to society, the environment, and global challenges
- The tasks, responsibilities and work environments you prefer
- Your work values, priorities and interests

#### Learn more and gather career and study information

(refer to page one of this resource)

- Speak with people working in careers that interest you; check the realities of a job/career
- Gather information from various sources

#### Identify your next steps

- Talking to a career consultant can help you to identify your next steps. Visit: [www.canterbury.ac.nz/life/jobs-and-careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/life/jobs-and-careers)





## What have other students and graduates done?

Explore career stories of students' university experiences and UC alumni who make a difference globally in varied ways.

Visit: [www.canterbury.ac.nz/about-uc/why-uc/our-students/student-stories](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/about-uc/why-uc/our-students/student-stories)



### Aroha

Bachelor of Teaching and Learning  
(Early Childhood Education)

#### What motivated you to study your subject and degree?

My mother was a teacher who also completed a Bachelor degree in ECE at UC. It was through visiting the centres she worked in and her passion that I discovered my own passion for children and was therefore, inspired to take on this career path at Uni so I could learn the skills and knowledge I needed to assist children in their growth and development in these crucial years of their lives.

#### What do you enjoy about your subject and degree?

I really enjoy this career path because it is so rewarding to be a part of children's growth and to build those positive relationships with children and their whānau. Each day is new and exciting and to witness and be a part of their curiosity and exploration is truly a gift. I believe that we can learn so much from children.

#### What advice would you give to someone considering studying in your degree area?

Be open to the knowledge, information and opportunities that are available to you because there is always room to grow. Don't be afraid to ask questions even when you think they are stupid. Make the most of the resources you have available to you including lecturers (they really do know what they're talking about). Enjoy uni, make the most of it and keep a hold of the passion that brought you into teaching in the first place.

#### What are your career goals?

I am in the process of looking into doing an additional year of study to gain a qualification for primary teaching. Currently I am absolutely loving teaching the younger ones however, I want to explore and further build on my teaching knowledge and career, as well as leave my future career options open for both age groups.

## Career guidance

Career services are available for future and current students, and recent graduates. To learn more, contact:

Te Rōpū Rapuara | Careers

T: +64 3 369 0303

E: [careers@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:careers@canterbury.ac.nz)

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/life/jobs-and-careers](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/life/jobs-and-careers)

#### Helpful career insights

- Speaking with employers is key to finding opportunities; not all jobs are advertised
- Developing an online presence is useful as employers can search for future employees online
- Learning about recruitment patterns and where to find opportunities is important.

## Study advice

Student Advisors at UC help with questions focused on starting, planning and changing studies. To connect with Student Advisors, visit:

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/study-support-info/study-support](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/study-support-info/study-support)

#### Future students – contact:

The Future Students team

T: 0800 VARSITY (0800 827 748)

E: [futurestudents@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:futurestudents@canterbury.ac.nz)

#### First year students – contact:

Kaitoko | First Year Student Advisors

T: +64 3 369 0409

E: [firstyearadvice@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:firstyearadvice@canterbury.ac.nz)

#### Continuing students – contact:

Ako | Education

T: +64 3 369 3333

E: [educationadvice@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:educationadvice@canterbury.ac.nz)

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/education](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/education)

