



ECHE3100

Play-based Curriculum: Discovery and Creativity in Outdoor Environments

Session 1, In person-scheduled-infrequent, North Ryde 2024

Macquarie School of Education

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit convenor

Helen Little

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Contact via iLearn Dialogue

29WW 235

By appointment, Monday - Wednesday only

Tutor

Alison Frost

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Contact via iLearn Dialogue

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp at 1000 level or above including (ECH113 or ECHE1130 or ABEC120) and (ECH130 or ECHE1300)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit examines the role of outdoor environments in providing opportunities for young children to engage in discovery and creative play and physical activity. The unit builds on students' foundational understanding of play-based pedagogies to enhance their capacity to recognise, evaluate and design play-based environments and experiences that promote learning for children from birth to school age. The unit explores inter-relationships between affordances in the outdoor environment, children's play behaviours and their learning, with a particular emphasis on relationship-based learning, scientific inquiry, problem-solving and physical activity. The unit requires students to engage critically with a range of relevant contemporary issues which have the potential to impact on children's opportunities for learning and development. Students also consider issues of inclusive practice for children with different educational and developmental capabilities and with different social and cultural backgrounds.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are

available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Articulate an understanding of the major theoretical developments in outdoor learning environments.

ULO2: Critically reflect on relevant contemporary societal issues and how these may impact on children's learning opportunities.

ULO3: Draw on contemporary theoretical and curriculum approaches to critically evaluate outdoor environments.

ULO4: Design rich, integrated and inclusive outdoor play experiences for children aged birth to five.

ULO5: Understand how outdoor environments can foster holistic learning outcomes as specified in the Early Years Learning Framework.

ULO6: Articulate a range of intentional teaching strategies which can enhance children's learning in outdoor environments.

ULO7: Consider social, cultural and educational diversity when planning for and evaluating outdoor learning environments for children aged birth to five years.

General Assessment Information

Full details of assessment tasks are provided on iLearn.

- Students should be aware of and apply the University policy on academic honesty (see: <https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=3>)
- Unless a Special Consideration (see: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/special-consideration>) request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of, 0 (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11:55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue. This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc).
- Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.
- Please format assessments using 12-point font and 1.5 spacing.

- All assessments are submitted electronically. Turnitin plagiarism detection software is used to check all written assessments.
- Students can use Turnitin's Originality Report as a learning tool to improve their academic writing if this option is made available in the unit.
- Students should carefully check that they submit the correct file for an assessment as no re-submissions will be accepted after the due date and time, including instances where students upload an incorrect file in error.
- Word limits are strictly applied. Work above the word limit will not be marked.
- All assessments are marked using a clear marking scheme or a rubric.
- Marking of all assessments is moderated by the Unit Convenor.
- Applications for extensions must be made via AskMQ (<https://ask.mq.edu.au/>).
- It is **not the responsibility** of unit staff to contact students who have failed to submit assessments. If you have any missing items of assessment, it is your responsibility to make contact with the unit convenor.

University policy on grading

Criteria for awarding grades for assessment tasks

Assignments will be awarded grades ranging from HD to F according to guidelines set out in the University's Grading Policy. For Professional Experience (PEX) units the PE Report is marked as satisfactory or unsatisfactory and the Teaching Performance Assessment (in final PE units) is marked as not meets, meets or exceeds.

Descriptive Criteria for awarding grades in the unit

To meet the unit outcomes and successfully pass this unit, students should attempt all assessment tasks.

Grade	Descriptor
HD (High Distinction)	Provides consistent evidence of deep and critical understanding in relation to the learning outcomes. There is substantial originality and insight in identifying, generating and communicating competing arguments, perspectives or problem-solving approaches; critical evaluation of problems, their solutions and their implications; creativity in application as appropriate to the discipline.
D (Distinction)	Provides evidence of integration and evaluation of critical ideas, principles and theories, distinctive insight and ability in applying relevant skills and concepts in relation to learning outcomes. There is demonstration of frequent originality in defining and analysing issues or problems and providing solutions; and the use of means of communication appropriate to the discipline and the audience.

Cr (Credit)	Provides evidence of learning that goes beyond replication of content knowledge or skills relevant to the learning outcomes. There is demonstration of substantial understanding of fundamental concepts in the field of study and the ability to apply these concepts in a variety of contexts; convincing argumentation with appropriate coherent justification; communication of ideas fluently and clearly in terms of the conventions of the discipline.
P (Pass)	Provides sufficient evidence of the achievement of learning outcomes. There is demonstration of understanding and application of fundamental concepts of the field of study; routine argumentation with acceptable justification; communication of information and ideas adequately in terms of the conventions of the discipline. The learning attainment is considered satisfactory or adequate or competent or capable in relation to the specified outcomes
F (Fail)	Does not provide evidence of attainment of learning outcomes. There is missing or partial or superficial or faulty understanding and application of the fundamental concepts in the field of study; missing, undeveloped, inappropriate or confusing argumentation; incomplete, confusing or lacking communication of ideas in ways that give little attention to the conventions of the discipline.

Note: *If you fail a unit with a professional experience component, the fail grade will be on your transcript irrespective of the timing of the placement.*

Withdrawing from this unit

If you are considering withdrawing from this unit, please seek academic advice via <https://ask.mq.edu.au> before doing so as this unit may be a co-requisite or prerequisite for units in the following sessions and may impact your course progression.

Results

Results shown in iLearn, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit <https://ask.mq.edu.au>

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Outdoor Play policy	40%	No	23:55 5/04/2024
Planning for outdoor learning	60%	No	23:55 3/05/2024

Outdoor Play policy

Assessment Type ¹: Professional writing

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **23:55 5/04/2024**

Weighting: **40%**

1500 word professional policy outlining approach to outdoor learning and embedding sustainability

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Articulate an understanding of the major theoretical developments in outdoor learning environments.
- Critically reflect on relevant contemporary societal issues and how these may impact on children's learning opportunities.
- Draw on contemporary theoretical and curriculum approaches to critically evaluate outdoor environments.
- Understand how outdoor environments can foster holistic learning outcomes as specified in the Early Years Learning Framework.

Planning for outdoor learning

Assessment Type **1**: Design Task

Indicative Time on Task **2**: 50 hours

Due: **23:55 3/05/2024**

Weighting: **60%**

Diagram plus 2000 word rationale and analysis of learning and 1 page experience plan

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Articulate an understanding of the major theoretical developments in outdoor learning environments.
- Draw on contemporary theoretical and curriculum approaches to critically evaluate outdoor environments.
- Design rich, integrated and inclusive outdoor play experiences for children aged birth to five.
- Understand how outdoor environments can foster holistic learning outcomes as specified in the Early Years Learning Framework.
- Articulate a range of intentional teaching strategies which can enhance children's learning in outdoor environments.
- Consider social, cultural and educational diversity when planning for and evaluating

outdoor learning environments for children aged birth to five years.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Required text

Little, H., Elliott, S., & Wyver, S. (2017). *Outdoor learning environments: Spaces for exploration, discovery and risk-taking in the early years*. Routledge.

Structure

The unit structure can be found in the university timetable <https://publish.mq.edu.au> In the tutorial students will discuss issues and questions arising from the lectures and prescribed readings. They are expected to base their arguments/discussions on evidence from published research and other relevant material. There will be a supporting iLearn site for the unit providing additional readings, links and materials.

The weekly program for the course with the accompanying readings/ preparation is available on the following pages or on the unit iLearn site.

Information about the unit iLearn site

This unit has a full web presence through *iLearn*.

Students will need regular access to a computer and the Internet to complete this unit.

Weekly access to iLearn is compulsory for all students. Important assessment information will be posted here, as will other relevant unit notices and materials.

Various activities and materials for discussion and critical reflection are included and students enrolled in INFQ or online mode are especially encouraged to use this web component. Electronic links and suggested references will be included in the Resources section. Please check the iLearn unit regularly.

Weekly lectures are available on the web through the ECHO360 lecture component. You must listen to all lectures.

PowerPoint slides are available in iLearn in advance of the weekly lecture and/or are available in the Active Learning Tool.

Access and technical assistance

Information for students about access to the online component of this unit is available at <https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/login/index.php>. You will need to enter your student username and password.

Please do **NOT** contact the Unit Convenor regarding *iLearn* technical help.

Assistance is available from IT Helpdesk

Ph: 9850 4357 or 1800 67 4357

Log a request: help.mq.edu.au.

On Campus: Ground floor at 18 Wally's Walk

Unit Schedule

Week Beginning	Lecture	Topic
Week 1 19 Feb	1	Contemporary issues and theoretical approaches to outdoor learning environments
Week 2 26 Feb	2	Effective outdoor environments and the regulatory context
Week 3 4 March	3	Outdoor learning and pedagogy
Week 4 11 March	4	Risky play and managing risk
Week 5 18 March	5	EYLF Principles: Sustainability
Week 6 25 March	6	EYLF Principles: Supporting participation and inclusion; Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
Week 7 1 April	7	Thinking outdoors: Language, literacy, numeracy and scientific learning
Week 8 8 April	8	Physically active play
RECESS 15 – 28 April		

Week 9 29 April	9	Environments beyond the gate
Week 10 6 May		No lectures or tutorials due to EDST3020 PEx
Week 11 13 May		No lectures or tutorials due to EDST3020 PEx
Week 12 20 May		No lectures or tutorials due to EDST3020 PEx
Week 13 27 May		No lectures or tutorials due to EDST3020 PEx

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

School of Education Procedures

In addition, the following policies and procedures of the School of Education are applicable in this unit.

Attendance for undergraduate units

See the university timetable for information about when classes begin in this unit. <https://public.h.mq.edu.au/>

Activities completed during weekly tutorials (DAY or ONLINE DAY mode) or on campus days (INFQ mode) are essential for building the core knowledge and/or skills required to demonstrate the learning outcomes of this unit [and to meet the AITSL Graduate Teacher Standards and/or ACECQA requirements]. Attendance at all tutorials or on campus days is expected and the roll will be taken. Make up tasks may be given if attendance is missed to ensure all content is covered to meet accreditation requirements.

Students are required to attend the tutorial in which they are enrolled. Any changes to tutorial enrolments must be completed officially through e-student. Please do not contact the unit convenor requesting a change.

Electronic Communication

It is the student's responsibility to check all electronic communication on a regular weekly basis. Communication may occur via:

- Official *MQ Student Email Address*

- The *Dialogue* function on iLearn
- Other iLearn communication functions

Infrequent Attendance Students

Information about the dates of the on-campus sessions can be found in the university timetable. <https://publish.mq.edu.au/>

- The on-campus sessions are essential to student engagement and learning and attendance is expected. Failure to attend or to have an approved Special Consideration may result in a Fail grade for the unit.
- Prior to the on-campus sessions, you should have read the prescribed readings and listened to the lectures. Summarise the main points and make a note of the key terms and definitions. Prepare any discussion questions of your own that you wish to share.
- Please make effective use of the online component of the unit and access iLearn regularly. Keep up to date with listening to the lectures on a weekly basis.
- Further specific details and any updates about times and locations will be posted on iLearn as an Announcement during first half of the semester.

Fail Rule

This unit is a part of a professional course listed on Schedules 2 and 3 of the Academic Progression Policy. This course has additional requirements that are applicable for the full duration of the course, including course-specific inherent requirements, Fitness to Practice requirements and other compulsory course requirements. It also has rigorous academic progression standards. Inability to meet these requirements may result in a withdrawal of offer of admission and/or permanent exclusion from the course in accordance with the General Coursework Rules.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)

- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via [AskMQ](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

5Rs Framework

The 5Rs Framework, developed by the School of Education at Macquarie University, is embedded throughout your teacher education course.

Your use of the 5Rs Framework will help you develop the capabilities that will make your teaching career sustainable and fulfilling.

In this unit, you will learn using the 5Rs framework in the following important ways:

Resilient:

- In tutorials students consider how a willingness to accept challenge and try new things builds confidence, persistence and resilience. Students are encouraged to examine their own experiences and attitudes towards the outdoors and 'move out of their comfort zone'

in the provision of outdoor learning experiences for children.

Reflexive:

- Students reflect on their own childhood experiences in comparison to children today and factors associated with diverse lived experiences. Students consider how their values and attitudes towards being outdoors influences the experiences they provide for children.

Responsive:

- Students develop outdoor learning philosophy and policy documents that respond to NQF requirements

Ready to Learn:

- Students are supported to develop an understanding that research provides the evidence base to inform practice and to identify strategies for supporting children's learning. This is applied in the development of their policy documents and experience plans submitted for assessment tasks.

Research Engaged:

- Assessment tasks require students to engage with outdoor learning research to support their philosophy and policy development and justify planning decisions.

Unit information based on version 2024.02 of the [Handbook](#)