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Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.
General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
Judith McKay-Tempest
judith.mckay-tempest@mq.edu.au
Contact via 02 9850 9831
X5B Room 368
Please make an appointment via iLearn dialogue

Credit points
3

Prerequisites
Admission to BTeach(ECS)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit examines the role of play and inquiry in children's learning and development. Students develop an understanding of the characteristics of, and theoretical approaches to, play and inquiry in early childhood education, and explore how environments, resources and teaching techniques can be structured to facilitate children's active and meaningful engagement in the learning process. A major emphasis is the role of play materials in enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to explore their world; to reflect upon and represent their experiences; and to communicate about these in the context of ATSI cultures, rural and urban. The unit details relationships between children's play and inquiry across the range of developmental and curriculum areas, and provides students with practical opportunities to engage in and analyse experiences which foster learning in early childhood.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at http://students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/enrolmentguide/academicdates/

Learning Outcomes

1. Understanding of the characteristics of young children's play and inquiry across different contexts and in relation to children's diverse backgrounds and abilities
2. Understanding and practical application of theoretical knowledge about play and inquiry.
3. Ability to analyse the features and potentials of young children's play environments and materials.

4. Ability to analysis children's play /inquiry experiences in terms of how they relate to children's development and learning and identity.

5. Ability to generate ideas that can extend and enhance children's play/inquiry experiences in a way that will promote development and learning.

6. Understanding of the relevance of social and cultural contexts to young children's play and inquiry.

7. Ability to express ideas clearly in writing, using well structured sentences, paragraphs and appropriate academic written expression and APA referencing.

General Assessment Information

Assignment Instructions

A full set of instructions for each assignment can be found in the Assignment guide, attached to the relevant section of the ABEC120 iLearn site.

Presentation and submission guidelines

When preparing your assignments, it is essential that you note that:

- Students must retain a copy of all assignments before submission, and retain the copy until your final grade for the unit has been received;
- Assignment marks will be deducted if you submit your assignment late (refer to the 'late assignments' section below for more details);
- Unless there are exceptional circumstances, no assignment will be accepted after the date that the assignment has been returned to other students.
- In the case of computer malfunctions, a draft of your assignment may be requested. You are therefore required to back up your drafts regularly on an external storage device (e.g., flash drive or iCloud), so that it is available for submission on request.
- All failing assignments will be checked by a second marker when the failure is due to unsatisfactory content. Failures that are the result of deductions for lateness may not be checked;
- Assignments will not necessarily be marked by your tutor.

Submission requirements

All assignments are submitted electronically via Turnitin. The direct link to Turnitin for each assignment is provided on the relevant module section of the ABEC120 iLearn site.

Assignments are due before midnight on the specified date.
Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short Questions on readings</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Block 1 wk 2 &amp; Block 2 wk1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Analysis</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2nd Block Wk1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Environment Analysis</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Sheet</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>mid May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Short Questions on readings

Due: *Block 1 wk 2 & Block 2 wk1*

Weighting: 20%

Complete a 700-800 word analysis answering five (5) questions from set *readings (in 2 parts)
This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the characteristics of young children's play and inquiry across different contexts and in relation to children's diverse backgrounds and abilities
- Understanding and practical application of theoretical knowledge about play and inquiry.
- Ability to analyse the features and potentials of young children's play environments and materials.
- Ability to analysis children's play/inquiry experiences in terms of how they relate to children's development and learning and identity.
- Ability to generate ideas that can extend and enhance children's play/inquiry experiences in a way that will promote development and learning.
- Understanding of the relevance of social and cultural contexts to young children's play and inquiry
- Ability to express ideas clearly in writing, using well structured sentences, paragraphs and appropriate academic written expression and APA referencing.

Video Analysis
Due: 2nd Block Wk1
Weighting: 15%

600-700 word in class open book task

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the characteristics of young children's play and inquiry across different contexts and in relation to children's diverse backgrounds and abilities
- Understanding and practical application of theoretical knowledge about play and inquiry.
- Ability to analyse the features and potentials of young children's play environments and materials.
- Ability to analysis children's play/inquiry experiences in terms of how they relate to children's development and learning and identity.
- Ability to generate ideas that can extend and enhance children's play/inquiry experiences in a way that will promote development and learning.
- Understanding of the relevance of social and cultural contexts to young children's play and inquiry
- Ability to express ideas clearly in writing, using well structured sentences, paragraphs and appropriate academic written expression and APA referencing.
Outdoor Environment Analysis
Due: April  
Weighting: 25%

Complete a 1000 word written report based on observation visits between blocks and a visit to campus Early Childhood Education and Care Services outdoor environments. **Block 2 visits to campus Early Childhood Education and Care Services**.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the characteristics of young children's play and inquiry across different contexts and in relation to children's diverse backgrounds and abilities.
- Understanding and practical application of theoretical knowledge about play and inquiry.
- Ability to analyse the features and potentials of young children's play environments and materials.
- Ability to analysis children's play/inquiry experiences in terms of how they relate to children's development and learning and identity.
- Ability to generate ideas that can extend and enhance children's play/inquiry experiences in a way that will promote development and learning.
- Understanding of the relevance of social and cultural contexts to young children's play and inquiry.
- Ability to express ideas clearly in writing, using well structured sentences, paragraphs and appropriate academic written expression and APA referencing.

Information Sheet
Due: mid May  
Weighting: 40%

Develop a 750-850 word information sheet for families and communities about the **value of play for children’s learning and development**.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the characteristics of young children's play and inquiry across different contexts and in relation to children's diverse backgrounds and abilities.
- Understanding and practical application of theoretical knowledge about play and inquiry.
• Ability to analyse the features and potentials of young children's play environments and materials.
• Ability to analysis children's play/inquiry experiences in terms of how they relate to children's development and learning and identity.
• Ability to generate ideas that can extend and enhance children's play/inquiry experiences in a way that will promote development and learning.
• Understanding of the relevance of social and cultural contexts to young children's play and inquiry
• Ability to express ideas clearly in writing, using well structured sentences, paragraphs and appropriate academic written expression and APA referencing.

Delivery and Resources

Organising your time

As a tertiary student, you are expected to develop study skills that will enable you to work towards meeting the unit expectations and requirements. As ABEC120 is a 3 credit point unit, you are expected to spend the equivalent of 9 hours study time per week over the semester. This includes two (2) on campus Blocks, listening to lectures via iLearn, as well as independent study time each week to complete readings and unit assessment tasks.

Blocks 1 & 2 study is VERY INTENSIVE, so it is very important that you fully commit yourself at this time. To be successful in this unit, you should keep this time commitment in mind and organise your study program accordingly.

Prescribed and recommended readings

Compulsory Texts:

1. Chapters from Custom Publication: Degotardi, S (compiler, 2013) ECH113 Unit readings. Sydney: Pearson: this is available from the Co-op Bookshop on campus. Please note that there are significant changes in this edition from previous editions, so it will be important to obtain the 3rd edition (i.e. the one linked to here).


Other required and additional readings

You will need to access supplementary readings for your tutorial and assignment preparation:

The Resource Readings are ones that you require for your tutorial preparation and assignment 1. These are found in an appropriately labeled folder in the Study Resources and Assignment Links section of the ABEC120 iLearn website.

Additional resources are not required for tutorial preparation, but can help you to develop a deeper understanding of the topic. These are listed as either stimulus readings, which are available in an appropriately labeled folder in the Study Resources and Assignment Links section of the ABEC120 iLearn website or E-reserve readings, which can be found via the Macquarie University library website. E-reserve readings are usually book chapters that have been converted to a pdf file for you to print or download onto your computer. These chapters plus other useful books can be found by typing ‘ABEC120’ to the Multisearch function on the library homepage and then using the chapter title or author name to locate them. Please familiarise yourself with this facility as it contains some essential readings.

Unit Website

There is a website for this unit. Access to this unit is available online through iLearn, at ilearn.mq.edu.au. You will need to login using your Macquarie ID. This site is an essential unit resource. You are required to check this website at least twice per week for any announcements. In addition, it has the following features and functions:

Links to required readings and assignment resources

Assignment submission links: For you to submit your assignment work

Discussion forums: For you to clarify any assignment expectations with your peers

Dialogue: for private messages to members of the teaching staff.

Please note:

• The discussion and dialogue functions on the website are not substitutes for reading the unit outline and associated expectations, guidelines or information. It is not a personal ‘help-line’, but is there to support your engagement in the unit and communication with other students and teaching staff.

• Unit staff will respond to dialogue emails in a timely manner. Please be aware that we have multiple teaching and researching commitments, so may take a couple of days to respond. It is unrealistic to expect us to respond after work hours or during weekends.

• Finally, please follow accepted modes of communication that are appropriate for an academic website. E.g., Please use standard English in your posts and emails (don’t ‘SMS/text type’ –We’re way too old for that!), and please consider the tone of any email or posting – respectful communications are expected, and disrespectful ones will be deleted or returned to sender.
Unit Schedule
Unit Structure and content
Part 1: Understanding play and inquiry

Understanding play:
- The defining characteristics of play
- Challenging popular conceptions about play
- The significance of one’s personal perspective on play
- The usefulness of play: Play from a developmental perspective
- Capitalising on play: Play from an educational perspective
- Playwork: Play from a community and rights-based perspective

Inquiry-based learning
- Defining inquiry
- The significance of inquiry-based learning
- Inquiry-based learning dispositions
- The beginnings of inquiry: Exploratory and heuristic play in infancy
- The importance of observation
- Inquiry-rich experiences: light, colour, sand, water, collections, projects,
- Mathematical and scientific thinking
- From exploratory to intellectual play
- Fostering inquiry through adult involvement

Supporting and enhancing play and inquiry; The adult’s role
- The significance of the adults’ role in play and inquiry experiences: Social and collaborative constructivist approaches to learning
- ‘Managing’ space, time and materials
- Adult involvement: From indirect to direct involvement
- Outcomes of adult involvement
• The importance of flexibility and timing
# Part 2: Contexts of play and inquiry

## Materials and resources for play and inquiry:
- Challenging the ‘neutrality’ of learning environments
- Thinking critically about provisions for play and inquiry
- The significance of the learning environment: historical and contemporary perspectives
- Images of the vulnerable and capable child
- The importance of aesthetics
- Choosing materials to engage interests, promote curiosity, wonder, and imaginations, and promote social and cultural inclusion

## Playing outside:
- Outside education in early childhood education: An historical overview
- Outside environments today: Contemporary perspectives
- Implications of the image of the ‘vulnerable child’
- Forest schools
- Natural environments and resources
- Socially, geographically and culturally ‘ideal’ playgrounds

## Socio-cultural perspectives on play, inquiry and development
- The influence of social and cultural contexts on children’s play and inquiry
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on play and inquiry
- Making play and inquiry culturally relevant
- Inclusion and catering for diversity in play and inquiry
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part 3: Opportunities for learning and development: Play and the early childhood curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symbolic thinking, imagination and creativity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Defining ‘knowledge’ and ‘thinking’</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Intellectual dispositions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Defining and understanding the significance of symbolic thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Defining symbolic play: Object transformation and role play</td>
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<td>• Progression in dramatic play</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Creative and divergent thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Fostering symbolic play</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Language and literacy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Defining language and defining literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The pragmatic function of language</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Emergent literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Play-based opportunity for oral language development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Language play: Chants, rhymes and clapping games</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Interface between play, reading and writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Narrative play</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Symbolic play and literacy development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical development and wellbeing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recommendations for physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Health outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Infant and child physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contexts of physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Surplus safety and obesogenic environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social development and relationships</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social constructivism: ZPD and shared sustained thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parten’s social categories: A critique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fostering relationships through play-based pedagogies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning and Teaching Activities

Teaching Methods and Strategies
On campus block - Tutorials, small group self-guided study, visits to campus early childhood centres and consultations with campus early childhood teachers. Off campus - pre-recorded lectures, iLearn online learning website including e-readings, independent study

Policies and Procedures
Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:


In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct
Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)
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 ask.mq.edu.au.

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

Learning Skills
Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

Student Enquiry Service
For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

Equity Support
Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

IT Help
For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/.

When using the University’s IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities
Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens
As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation’s historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:
Learning outcome

• Understanding of the relevance of social and cultural contexts to young children's play and inquiry

Assessment task

• Information Sheet

Learning and teaching activity

• On campus block - Tutorials, small group self-guided study, visits to campus early childhood centres and consultations with campus early childhood teachers. Off campus - pre-recorded lectures, iLearn online learning website including e-readings, independent study

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Ability to analyse the features and potentials of young children's play environments and materials.
• Ability to generate ideas that can extend and enhance children's play/inquiry experiences in a way that will promote development and learning.

Assessment tasks

• Short Questions on readings
• Video Analysis
• Outdoor Environment Analysis
• Information Sheet

Learning and teaching activities

• On campus block - Tutorials, small group self-guided study, visits to campus early childhood centres and consultations with campus early childhood teachers. Off campus - pre-recorded lectures, iLearn online learning website including e-readings, independent study

http://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/47235/unit_guide/print
Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Assessment tasks

- Video Analysis
- Outdoor Environment Analysis
- Information Sheet

Learning and teaching activities

- On campus block - Tutorials, small group self-guided study, visits to campus early childhood centres and consultations with campus early childhood teachers. Off campus - pre-recorded lectures, iLearn online learning website including e-readings, independent study

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understanding of the characteristics of young children's play and inquiry across different contexts and in relation to children's diverse backgrounds and abilities
- Understanding and practical application of theoretical knowledge about play and inquiry.
- Ability to analyse the features and potentials of young children's play environments and materials.
- Ability to analysis children's play/inquiry experiences in terms of how they relate to children's development and learning and identity.
- Ability to generate ideas that can extend and enhance children's play/inquiry experiences in a way that will promote development and learning.
Understanding of the relevance of social and cultural contexts to young children’s play and inquiry

Assessment tasks

- Short Questions on readings
- Video Analysis
- Outdoor Environment Analysis
- Information Sheet

Learning and teaching activities

- On campus block - Tutorials, small group self-guided study, visits to campus early childhood centres and consultations with campus early childhood teachers. Off campus - pre-recorded lectures, iLearn online learning website including e-readings, independent study

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understanding of the characteristics of young children’s play and inquiry across different contexts and in relation to children’s diverse backgrounds and abilities
- Understanding and practical application of theoretical knowledge about play and inquiry.
- Ability to analyse the features and potentials of young children's play environments and materials.
- Ability to analysis children's play/inquiry experiences in terms of how they relate to children's development and learning and identity.
- Ability to generate ideas that can extend and enhance children’s play/inquiry experiences in a way that will promote development and learning.
- Understanding of the relevance of social and cultural contexts to young children’s play and inquiry
- Ability to express ideas clearly in writing, using well structured sentences, paragraphs and appropriate academic written expression and APA referencing.
Assessment tasks

• Short Questions on readings
• Video Analysis
• Information Sheet

Learning and teaching activities

• On campus block - Tutorials, small group self-guided study, visits to campus early childhood centres and consultations with campus early childhood teachers. Off campus - pre-recorded lectures, iLearn online learning website including e-readings, independent study

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Understanding and practical application of theoretical knowledge about play and inquiry.
• Ability to analyse the features and potentials of young children's play environments and materials.
• Ability to analysis children's play /inquiry experiences in terms of how they relate to children's development and learning and identity.
• Ability to generate ideas that can extend and enhance children's play/inquiry experiences in a way that will promote development and learning.
• Understanding of the relevance of social and cultural contexts to young children's play and inquiry
• Ability to express ideas clearly in writing, using well structured sentences, paragraphs and appropriate academic written expression and APA referencing.

Assessment tasks

• Short Questions on readings
• Video Analysis
• Information Sheet
Learning and teaching activities

• On campus block - Tutorials, small group self-guided study, visits to campus early childhood centres and consultations with campus early childhood teachers. Off campus - pre-recorded lectures, iLearn online learning website including e-readings, independent study

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Ability to analyse the features and potentials of young children's play environments and materials.
• Ability to generate ideas that can extend and enhance children’s play/inquiry experiences in a way that will promote development and learning.

Assessment tasks

• Short Questions on readings
• Video Analysis
• Outdoor Environment Analysis
• Information Sheet

Learning and teaching activities

• On campus block - Tutorials, small group self-guided study, visits to campus early childhood centres and consultations with campus early childhood teachers. Off campus - pre-recorded lectures, iLearn online learning website including e-readings, independent study

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:
Learning outcome

• Ability to express ideas clearly in writing, using well structured sentences, paragraphs and appropriate academic written expression and APA referencing.

Assessment tasks

• Video Analysis
• Outdoor Environment Analysis

Changes since First Published

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04/02/2015</td>
<td>Assessment Tasks - amended Delivery &amp; Resources - correction to 1st paragraph</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deleted - Graduate Capabilities table as generated by iTeach automatically</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

http://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/47235/unit_guide/print