



ECHE310

Play-based Curriculum: Discovery and Creativity in Outdoor Environments

S1 External 2016

Institute of Early Childhood

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit convenor

Helen Little

helen.little@mq.edu.au

Contact via via iLearn dialogue

X5B364

Monday 10am - 1pm or by appointment

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp including ECH113

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:

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

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.

General Assessment Information

PLEASE REFER TO INFORMATION ON iLEARN FOR FULL DETAILS OF ASSESSMENT TASKS AND MARKING CRITERIA

All assessment tasks for this unit are submitted online.

IEC Assessment Presentation & Submission Guidelines

Please follow these guidelines when you submit each assignment:

- Allow a left and right-hand margin of at least 2cm in all assignments.
- Please type all assignments using 12-point font and 1.5 spacing.
- All assessments must be submitted through turnitin in .doc or .pdf format for submission.
- It is the onus of the student to ensure that all assessments are successfully submitted through turnitin.
- Faculty assignment cover sheets are NOT required for this unit.

Draft Submissions & Turnitin Originality Reports

- Students may use Turnitin's Originality Report as a learning tool to improve their academic writing if this option is made available in the unit.
- Students are strongly encouraged to upload a draft copy of each assessment to Turnitin at least one week prior to the due date to obtain an Originality Report.
- The Originality Report provides students with a similarity index that may indicate if plagiarism has occurred. Students will be able to make amendments to their drafts prior

to their final submission on the due date.

- Generally, one Originality Report is generated every 24 hours up to the due date.

When preparing your assignments, it is essential that:

- Students must retain a copy of all assignments before submission, and retain the copy until your final grade for the subject has been received;
- Marks will be deducted if you submit your assessment late (refer to the 'late assessments' section below for more details);
- Unless there are exceptional circumstances, no assessment will be accepted after the date that the assessment has been returned to other students.
- If an assessment is considered to be below passing standard, another staff member on the unit will provide a second opinion. No failed assessment may be re-submitted.

Final Submissions

- Students are responsible for checking that their submission has been successful and has been submitted by the due date and time.

Late Assessments:

A deduction of 5% of the total possible mark allocated for that assessment would be made for each day or part day that assessment is late, weekends counting as two days. For example, if an assessment is worth 20 marks and you submit it 2 days late, you will have 2 marks (2 x 5% of 20 marks) subtracted from your awarded mark.

Extensions:

In extenuating circumstances, students may apply to the unit coordinator for an extension to the assessment due date. Reasons for the extension need to be documented through the [Disruption to Studies form](#) accessible through ask.mq.edu.au under "Disruption" and supported (e.g., a [Professional Authority Form](#) must be used in the case of illness). Note that:

- Students **MUST** speak with the unit coordinator **prior to submitting their request through <https://ask.mq.edu.au>**
- Extensions will only be granted in receipt of the completed form submitted through ask.mq.edu.au plus documentation.
- Emails are not appropriate means of extension requests.
- It is essential that you plan ahead and organise your study time effectively. Poor time management is not grounds for an extension.
- In the case of computer malfunction, a draft of your assignment may be requested.

Please ensure that you print out a draft regularly, so that it is available for submission on request.

- Extensions are usually not granted on the due date.

IEC Academic Honesty Guidelines:

All assignments should cite and provide full bibliographical details of all material that you have used to inform or support your ideas. At the Institute of Early Childhood, students are required to use the American Psychological Association (APA) referencing procedures. Full details about how to cite and reference correctly can be found in **Perrin (2015)** and in the **IEC Academic Honesty Handbook**.

The following guide can be purchased from the Co-op Bookshop. This is a required text:

Perrin, R. (2015). Pocket guide to APA style (5th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.

Unit Grades

The final grade a student receives signifies their overall performance in meeting the learning outcomes for the unit. The number assigned to a grade (Standard Numerical Grade or SNG) reflects the extent to which student attainment matches the grade descriptors.

Your raw mark for the unit (i.e., the total of your marks for each assessment item) may not be the same as the SNG which you receive. Results may be scaled to ensure there is a degree of comparability across the university, so that units with the same past performances of their students should achieve similar results. The process of scaling does not change the order of marks among students. A student who receives a higher raw score mark than another will also receive a higher final scaled mark.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Assignment 1</u>	20%	24 March (Week 4)
<u>Assignment 2</u>	30%	13 May 2016 (Week 9)
<u>Assignment 3</u>	50%	17 June 2016

Assignment 1

Due: **24 March (Week 4)**

Weighting: **20%**

Professional reflection based on your personal experience of outdoor environments as a child. In this reflection, you will consider your own experiences in relation to contemporary issues (with

reference to relevant literature) impacting on children's outdoor play

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.

Assignment 2

Due: **13 May 2016 (Week 9)**

Weighting: **30%**

Evaluating provisions for science learning in the outdoor environment.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 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
- 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.

Assignment 3

Due: **17 June 2016**

Weighting: **50%**

Planning for outdoor learning: Design an outdoor learning space for infants, toddlers & preschool aged children.

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.

Delivery and Resources

Students in this unit should read this unit guide carefully at the start of semester. It contains important information about the unit. If anything in it is unclear, please consult the Unit Coordinator.

IEC Relevant Documents

The information in this *Unit Guide* must be read in conjunction with the following documents available for download from iLearn:

- *IEC Academic Honesty Handbook*
- *Unit Readings, Assessment details*

IEC Electronic Communication

During semester time, staff may contact students using the following ways:

- *Dialogue* function on iLearn
- Official *MQ Student Email* Address

It is the student's responsibility to check all electronic communication on a regular weekly basis.

Learning and Teaching Methods

The unit is offered in external mode. A compulsory on campus day will be held on **Tuesday 19 April**. Content in this unit will be delivered using a combination of pre-recorded lectures, required readings and individual study tasks.

IEC Unit Expectations

- In order to be eligible for a passing grade, students must meet the following attendance

requirements:

- External Students: Attend all on-campus sessions – punctuality is expected.
- Students are required to contribute to all online and tutorials tasks
- Students are expected to read weekly readings before completing tasks and attending tutorials
- Students are expected to listen to weekly lectures before completing tasks and attending tutorials
- **All** assessment tasks must be submitted

Required Readings:

Week 1: Historical and contemporary approaches; Theoretical Approaches

Tovey, H. (2014). Outdoor play and the early years tradition. In T. Maynard & J. Waters (Eds), *Exploring outdoor play in the early years* (Chapter, 1, pp. 16-28). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Sandseter, E.B.H., Little, H. & Wyver, S. (2012). Do theory and pedagogy have an impact on provisions for outdoor learning? A comparison of approaches in Australia and Norway. *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning*, 12(3), 167-182. doi: 10.1080/14729679.2012.699800

Week 2: Contemporary issues

Waller, T., Sandseter, E.B.H., Wyver, S., Ärlemalm-Hagsérd, E., & Maynard, T. (2010). The dynamics of early childhood spaces: opportunities for outdoor play? *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 18(4), 437-443. doi: 10.1080/1350293X.2010.525917

Week 3: Regulatory context of outdoor learning environments

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority [ACECQA]. (2011). *Guide to the National Quality Standard*. <http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/NQF03-Guide-to-NQS-130902.pdf>

Australian Government Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations [DEEWR]. (2009). *Belonging, being and becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. Canberra: DEEWR. http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf

Cummins, E & Reedy, A. (2015). *Getting the balance right. Risk management for play*. Melbourne: Play Australia. (Part B, excerpts)

Week 4: Natural playspaces

Dowdell, K., Gray, T., & Malone, K. (2011). Nature and its influence on children's outdoor play. *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education*, 15(2), 24-35.

Week 5: Playing outside; Outdoor environments for infants and toddlers

Little, H., & Wyver, S. (2008). Outdoor play: Does avoiding the risks reduce the benefits?

Australian Journal of Early Childhood, 33(2), 33-40.

Huggins, V., & Wickett, K. (2011). Crawling and toddling in the outdoors: very young children's learning. In S. Waite (Ed), *Children learning outside the classroom. From birth to eleven* (Chapter 2, pp. 20-34). London: Sage.

Week 6: Managing risk in play

Cummins, E & Reedy, A. (2015). *Getting the balance right. Risk management for play*. Melbourne: Play Australia. (Part A, excerpts)

Week 7: Thinking outdoors

Petriwskyj, A. (2013). Science. In D. Pendergast & S. Garvis (Eds), *Teaching early years: curriculum, pedagogy and assessment* (Chapter 7, pp. 107-124). Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Luken, E., Carr, V., & Brown, R. (2011). Playscapes: Designs for play, exploration and science inquiry. *Children, Youth and Environments*, 21(2), 325-337. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7721/chilyoutenvi.21.2.0325>

Week 8: Sustainable practice and environmental responsibility

Elliott, S. (2014). *Sustainability and the Early Years Learning Framework* (Chapter 3). Sydney: Pademelon Press.

Week 9: Creative play

TBC

Week 10: Physically active play

Archer, C., & Siraj, I. (2015). *Encouraging physical development through movement play* (Chapter 3). London: Sage.

Week 11: Environments beyond the gate

Elliott, S., & Chancellor, B. (2014). From forest preschool to Bush Kinder: An inspirational approach to preschool provision in Australia. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 39(4), 45-53.

Week 12: Relationships based learning and teaching

Lofdahl, A. (2010). Who gets to play? Peer groups, power and play in early childhood settings. In L. Brooker & S Edwards (Eds.) *Engaging play* (Chapter 9, pp.-122- 135). Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.

Week 13: Supporting participation and inclusion

Jeavons, M. (2008). Making natural playspaces more accessible to children with disabilities. In S. Elliott (Ed.), *The outdoor playspace naturally for children birth to five years* (Chapter 6). Sydney: Pademelon Press.

Unit Schedule

	Week	Topic	Topic	Lecturer	Reading	
Module 1: Approaches to outdoor learning	1	1	Historical and contemporary approaches to outdoor learning environments	Helen Little	Tovey (2014)	
	29 Feb	2	Theoretical perspectives	Helen Little	Sandseter, Little, & Wyver (2012)	
	2	3	Contemporary issues	Helen Little	Waller, T., et al. (2010).	
	7 Mar	3	4	The regulatory context of outdoor learning environments	Helen Little	EYLF & NQS Cummins & Reedy (2015)
Module 2: Outdoor environments as pedagogical spaces	3	5	Features of effective outdoor environments	Luke Touhill		
	14 Mar	4	6	Natural playspaces	Helen Little	Dowdell, Gray, & Malone (2011).
	21 Mar	5	7	Playing outside	Helen Little	Little & Wyver (2008)
	28 Mar	9	9	Outdoor environments for infants and toddlers	Sheila Degotardi	Huggins, & Wickett (2011)
		10	10	Outdoor environments for pre-schoolers	Luke Touhill	

	6 4 Apr	11	Managing risk in play	Helen Little	Cummins & Reedy (2015)
Module 3: Discovery in outdoor environments	7 25 Apr	12	Thinking outdoors	Luke Touhill	Petriwskyj (2013) Luken, Carr & Brown (2011)
	8 2 May	13	Sustainable practice and environmental responsibility	Helen Little	Elliott (2014)
	9 9 May	14	Creative play	Luke Touhill	
	10 16 May	15	Physically active play	Helen Little	Archer & Siraj (2015)
	11 23 May	16	Environments beyond the gate	Helen Little	Elliott & Chancellor (2014)
Module 4: Relationships-based learning	12 30 May	17	Relationships based learning and teaching	Helen Little	Lofdahl (2010)
	13 6 June	18	Who can play? Supporting participation and inclusion	Helen Little	Jeavons (2008)

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:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

New Assessment Policy in effect from Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html. For more information visit http://students.mq.edu.au/events/2016/07/19/new_assessment_policy_in_place_from_session_2/

Assessment Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

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/

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 Services and 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.

Student Enquiries

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

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.

Graduate Capabilities

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

- 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

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3

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:

Learning outcomes

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

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 3

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

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

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

- 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
- 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.

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3

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

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

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3

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

- 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

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3

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 outcomes

- 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

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3

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 outcomes

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

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3

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

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

- Design rich, integrated and inclusive outdoor play experiences for children aged birth to five
- Consider social, cultural and educational diversity when planning for and evaluating outdoor learning environments for children aged birth to five years.

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3