

General Elective: Early Childhood Education

| Category/ Subject | Course Code | Title | No. of AUs | Pre- requisites |
|---------------------------------|----------------|---|---------------|--------------------|
| Early Childhood Education | AED16A | Practices and Issues in Early Childhood Education | 3 | - |
| | AED16B | Curriculum and Assessment in Early Childhood Education | 3 | - |
| | AED16C | Learning Environments for Young Children | 3 | - |
| | AED16D | Child Development in Early Childhood Education | 3 | - |
| | AED16E | Diversity in Early Childhood Education | 3 | - |

Minor in Early Childhood Education

Students can offer a Minor in Early Childhood Education (15 AUs) when they have completed all five courses. The five elective courses must be completed with passing grades to offer the Minor in Early Childhood Education.

For students who are interested in completing the Minor, we recommend that you complete AED16A and AED16D first to enable you to make more meaningful sense of the other courses.

AED16A Practices and Issues in Early Childhood Education

This course will provide students/student teachers with the fundamental background of key historical perspectives and current influences underpinning the developments of early childhood education (ECE), both internationally and in Singapore. Theoretical perspectives and empirical research will be used as analytical lenses to examine the key trends and issues concerning the education and care of children from the

ages of 0 to 8. In the Singapore context, this will include children in the preschools and the lower primary mainstream schools.

Examples of topics which will be explored include the concept of children and childhood, curricular approaches to ECE, concept of quality in ECE, diversity and inclusion, play and integrated learning, transition to formal schooling, relating to parents and community, and leadership, mentoring and professional development. Participants will explore how the developments in these various areas could impact learning and teaching in the lower primary classes in Singapore.

Course participants are expected to participate in critical discourses pertaining to the various topics and through the process to develop deeper appreciation and greater insights into how early childhood education has taken shape over the years and in different socio-cultural contexts. The emphasis of the course is for participants to take on a constructive stance, and develop their personal viewpoints and philosophy towards early childhood education or lower primary education, particularly within our local context. Hence the course will embrace a learner-centred pedagogy to provide opportunities for the participants to undertake serious reflection and to assume greater ownership of their learning experiences.

AED16B Curriculum and Assessment in Early Childhood Education

This course will explore the concepts and fundamentals of curriculum design, and examine assessment practices which can further support the curricular goals. It will

emphasise the need to view these two segments as a seamless flow of ideas to support children's learning.

The research evidence conclusively attests to the early years being critical years for the acquisition not only of knowledge and skills, but more importantly desirable dispositions which have a life-long impact on the children's development. Curriculum designers for early years learners therefore need to understand children's development in this holistic manner. This course will introduce to the students/student teachers the dynamics of curriculum development. Participants will examine the curriculum concepts and theoretical foundations underpinning the different early childhood curriculum models. In addition, they will critically evaluate the different approaches and examine their relevancy and application in relation to the socio-cultural context of the Singapore education system.

A curricular framework should not only entail decisions of what, how and when to teach, but also how to assess the learning that has occurred. Participants will learn of current assessment concepts, and explore their roles in influencing the learning outcomes of children. Participants will also examine a wide range of assessment modes and ascertain their suitability for young learners. In particular, the role of observations and documentations will be given added attention. Participants can look forward to practical sessions in which they will be given opportunities to utilise appropriate assessment techniques to analyse young children's behaviour and development, interpret their data and undertake responsive curricular decisions.

AED16C Learning Environments for Young Children

The AED16C Course will provide participants with an understanding on the importance of a well-designed environment on young children's holistic development, learning and behaviour. The environment has been espoused as the 'third educator' in early childhood education. Participants will learn how a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment (indoor and outdoor) can be designed to provide children with opportunities to learn about themselves and the world around them.

Hence, the AED16C Course is designed to help participants to understand the importance of a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment in the early years as well as

the relationship between the environment and children's development, learning and behaviour. Participants will visit indoor/outdoor play areas to examine the role and design of learning environments for young children. They will also have hands-on experiences in creating learning environments for young children through utilising appropriate principles and elements of space covered in the Course.

AED16D Child Development in Early Childhood Education

The AED16D Course is designed to study children's development across infancy, pre-school and primary years (birth to 8 years) through the critical review of and reflection on various developmental theories, models and approaches. It is also designed to study children's development using a multidisciplinary framework which cuts across disciplines, domains, contexts and cultures.

Hence, the AED16C Course is designed to help participants to understand the growth and development from conception to age 8 years in the various domains, namely, physical, cognitive, social and emotional. Participants will learn about child development theories, models and approaches and their importance in understanding how children develop, learn and behave in the early years. They will visit a preschool to undertake a simple observation activity in order to understand the importance of observation and documentation in the early years through utilising the child development theories, models and approaches covered in the Course.

AED16E Diversity in Early Childhood Education

Diversity is a key feature of early childhood education settings today, and it can produce challenges for the early childhood practitioner who aims to effectively support the holistic development of all children in their classroom. In this course, participants will first understand and define the concept of diversity, and examine the kinds of diversity and their impact a young child living and learning in Singapore may experience. Participants are also facilitated to deeply reflect on their own preferences and deeply held assumptions regarding diversity. The course seeks to equip participants with pedagogy for difference in order that diversity in the classroom be celebrated and supported positively. It examines the concept of an inclusive classroom, and how it embraces both social and learning inclusion. This entails the establishment of a safe and inclusive classroom in which the class engenders a healthy respect for diversity, thrives as a community of learners, and effectively accommodates and supports the diverse learners in the early childhood setting.