



Preparing for the *Knowledge of Early Childhood Education Field Assessment Exam*

All applicants applying for AECEO Equivalency must write the *Knowledge of Early Childhood Education Field Assessment Exam*. This exam will allow you to demonstrate what you have learned in your previous academic and professional studies and through your work experience. The exam questions are based on core knowledge, skills and standards of ethical practice required for early childhood educators to do their job. Results from this examination are not graded as pass or fail, but they are used to assist the AECEO assessors in validating submitted documents, assessing current knowledge strengths and gaps in your profile and determining the next steps for you to take.

Since the professional knowledge and skills are not new to you, you will **not** need to prepare for the exam in the same way you would study for an exam in college or university. Depending on how long ago you completed your training and how long you have been practising in the early learning and care sector, or a related profession, it is likely that you will feel confident of your knowledge and skills in certain areas but less confident in others. You may need to take some time to review theory and concepts in those weaker areas.

A good place to begin is to look over the Early Childhood Education Program Standard and Occupational Standards described below. The documents clearly define the specific knowledge, skills and standards of practice required by early childhood educators.

All graduates of Early Childhood Education Diploma Programs at Ontario's Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology must achieve nine *vocational learning outcomes*. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities provides the Early Childhood Education Program Standard, which lists the nine outcomes and describes elements of performance that must be demonstrated to show the outcomes have been achieved. This document can be found at the following website - <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/college/progstan/humserv/erchedu.html>

The Canadian Child Care Federation and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges have developed *occupational standards* intended for child care practitioners who are responsible for a group of children. These standards can be found at the following website: www.ccscc-ccsge.ca/english/pdf/resources/occupational-final-e.pdf

We suggest that you use these resources to assess your areas of strength and weakness and to target specific areas in which you think additional review and practice might be needed.

By providing you with a list of books and resources, we are not suggesting that you buy or borrow every resource listed and study it from cover to cover. When you have identified those specific areas in which you feel additional preparation is necessary, choose resources that can help you refresh your knowledge in those areas. Your co-workers and other professional colleagues may also be able to suggest other relevant resources or serve as excellent resources themselves.

The exam is comprised of multiple choice and short answer questions. The pages that follow offer some general tips for preparing and writing tests and some specific tips for multiple choice and short answer formats.

BEFORE THE TEST

Identify the areas you need to review

Use the vocational and occupational outcomes described on the previous page to help you determine areas you need to review. Most textbooks provide learning objectives at the beginning of each chapter as well as summaries and review questions at the end of each chapter. These will help you target sections that might be useful and identify important points in those sections.

Set a realistic review schedule

Short review sessions spread out over time are more effective than a single period of intense study. It's better to review a little each day, rather than try to review too much at the last minute.

Try to identify the content of the questions you might be asked

Ask yourself: "If I were making up this test, I would probably ask.....", and then answer these questions.

Make summary notes

You may find it helpful to use summary sheets to organize your reviews. These can be used to define and explain terms, as well as to give examples. Many learners find they can remember material better if they organize it in some way and write it down.

Be prepared to demonstrate understanding of the material

Memorizing the material is not enough. You must be able to describe, explain, analyse and give clear examples of ways in which the information can be used.

ON THE DAY OF THE TEST

Arrive at the test room early

Give yourself enough time to select a seat and calm down before the test papers are distributed. Select a seat where the lighting is good and where your view of other students is minimized. Remember to bring more than one pencil or pen. Dress comfortably (and in layers, so you can put on, or remove a sweater if necessary).

Don't expect to know everything

Remember that you don't have to always get every question right to do well on the test. It is highly unlikely that anyone will answer all questions correctly. Remember that a grade of 75% on a test, which is evidence of a good grasp of the subject matter, means that 25% of the questions were answered incorrectly. So, don't panic if you see a question you did not anticipate. Use everything you know about the material to analyse the question and identify a logical answer.

Look over the test and pace yourself

When you first get the exam, take some time to look through the pages to see how many questions there are in the multiple choice and short answer sections. Make sure there are no missing or duplicate pages. Be sure you know how much time you have to complete the test. Check the clock regularly to make sure you have enough time to complete the questions, re-visit the questions you left blank and review your answers.

Take short breaks

Try taking a few breaks during the exam by stopping for a moment, shutting your eyes, and taking some deep breaths. This can help you stay fresh during the exam session. You do not get extra points for being the first person to finish the exam, so don't feel like you have to race through all the items -- even two or three 30-second breaks can be very helpful.

TIPS FOR WRITING MULTIPLE CHOICE TESTS

Writing multiple choice tests can be very stressful, especially if you have had negative experiences in the past or do not have much experience writing this type of test. Below are some tips for writing multiple choice tests which may reduce your anxiety and help you be more successful.

Read each question carefully

Multiple-choice tests examine your ability to read carefully and thoughtfully as much as they test your ability to recall and reason. Circle or underline key words, such as 'always', 'never', 'not', 'except', 'best', etc.

Identify what is being asked

Don't select a response just because you remember learning the information; it may be a 'true' statement but it may not answer the question being asked. Remember, you are looking for the best answer, not only a correct one.

Answer the questions you know first

This will build your confidence and give you time to deal with harder questions. When you identify a correct response carefully mark this on the question paper. If you are unsure about a question, skip it or mark the answer you believe to be right, then place a question mark next to the question so you can come back to it later. Then move on to the next question.

It is much better to move on and finish all of those questions that you can answer and then to come back later to review the questions that were problems for you. Other parts of the test may give you clues to what the answer may be. Sometimes the answer will occur to you simply because you are more relaxed after having answered other questions.

The "cover up" strategy

Some students find it helpful to read the question, cover up the possible answers and try to recall the answer from memory before looking at each of the four responses. If you can predict the answer before you look at the alternatives, you're less likely to be influenced by an alternative that is incorrect.

Make sure you read through all the choices for the answer even if you are sure the first or second is correct. As you go through each answer, cross through the ones that you know are incorrect. This will save time if you have to come back to the question later.

The "true/false" strategy

Identify if the question is looking for a true or false statement. Then label each of the four responses as "true" or "false" and eliminate those that do not correctly complete the question.

'All of the above' and 'None of the above' choices

If you are certain one of the statements is true, don't choose "None of the above."

If one of the statements is false, don't choose "All of the above".

In a question with an "All of the above" choice, if you see at least two correct statements, then "All of the above" is probably the answer.

If you are not certain of an answer, guess

There is no penalty for wrong answers. Eliminate the responses you know are incorrect. Narrow down your selection to two responses and then compare them and identify how they differ. Finally, make an informed guess. A guess is better than no answer at all.

Review answers

After completing the test, review your answers. Be sure to look over those that you have marked with a question mark because you skipped them or were unsure of the answer.

Changing your first answer

Even though first answers are often correct, you shouldn't be afraid to change your original answer if you have a good reason for doing so. You may have clues from other parts of the test to help you.

SOME REASONS TEST TAKERS DO POORLY ON TESTS

- ✓ They miss or skip questions. They may plan to go back to them but they run out of time or forget to mark the questions that need to be reviewed.
- ✓ They fail to read the questions correctly
- ✓ They fail to do adequate preparation for the test
- ✓ The level of the test may be more difficult than they expected
- ✓ They do not pace themselves and they run out of time
- ✓ Their anxiety about the test affects their ability to concentrate

ABOUT TEST ANXIETY

Some test takers become so anxious about doing well on a test that it has a negative effect on their performance. The following tips may help reduce your test anxiety:

- ✓ The best way to reduce test taking anxiety is to be prepared. Space out your review over time rather than trying to review everything the night before.
- ✓ Take care of yourself. Exercising for a few days before the test will help reduce stress. Get a good night's sleep before the test.
- ✓ Try to maintain a positive attitude while preparing for the test and writing it.
- ✓ Show up to test room early so you won't have to worry about being late.
- ✓ Stay relaxed. If you begin to get nervous, close your eyes, slowly take a few deep breaths and then get back to work.
- ✓ Read the directions slowly and carefully. If you don't understand the directions on the test, ask the person monitoring the test to explain them to you.
- ✓ Do the simple questions first to help build up your confidence for the harder questions.
- ✓ Don't worry about how fast other people finish their test; just concentrate on your own test.
- ✓ Focus on the question at hand. Don't let your mind wander on other things.

TIPS FOR SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

- Professors use short answer questions to get a specific response from students. Short answer questions require you to be concise and specific.
- Read the questions carefully and make sure that you understand what the question is asking you.
- If the question does not specify the number of points to provide, use the marking scheme as your guide. Usually, one mark is given for every point expected.
- Marks will be assigned for your writing skills. You are expected to use appropriate grammar, sentence structure, spelling and punctuation. You will be expected to provide clear, well organized paragraphs for each component of the question.
- Don't write long introductions and conclusions. Most of your time should be spent on answering the question(s) you are being asked.
- Although you are more likely to answer all aspects of the question if you write more, you must be sure that your answer relates to what is being asked. Do not leave an answer blank. Show your work/write down your thoughts. Even if you don't get the exact answer, you may be given partial marks for your work.
- Make an outline before writing your answer. This way your answer will be more organized. If you happen to run out of time, you may be given some marks for the ideas you have outlined.
- If the question is asking for facts, don't give your personal opinion on the topic.
- Keep an eye on the time. Don't spend the entire time on one question. Hopefully, you will have time left over at the end to go back and finish any incomplete answers. Then proofread your work and correct any changes or make any additional points.
- When writing your answer, try to be as neat as possible. However, if you make a mistake, simply draw a line through it; this is much neater and quicker than erasing it. Valuable time can be wasted trying to erase work.

A list of suggested text books, organized according to general subject areas

Please note:

- The book list is intended as a guide only. You are not expected to read / review all of the suggested books, rather they are provided as a reference should you wish to do some review of certain topic areas prior to your exam date.
- Some texts contain material that is focused on jurisdictions other than Ontario and may contain information that is not entirely consistent with the requirements of the MTCU standards / Day Nurseries Act
- Some texts have both USA and Canadian versions, or contain a combination of both
- The AECEO does not claim that these texts will cover every content area covered on the knowledge exam
- There are many aspects of learning that cannot be learned from any textbook.

Parents and Families

Wilson, L. (1997). *Partnerships: Families and Communities in Canadian Early Childhood Education*. Toronto: ITP Nelson.

ISBN: 0176049177

Brooks, J. (2006). *The process of parenting*. (7th. ed.). Mountain View, CA: McGraw-Hill College.

ISBN: 9780073131450

Eshleman, J.R. & Wilson, S. (2001). *The family*. (3rd. ed.). Toronto, ON: Pearson Education Canada.

ISBN: 205317510

Child Development – General

Crowther, I. (2005). *Child Development: A Primer*. Toronto: Nelson College Indigenous.

ISBN-13: 978-0176415655

Berk, L. (2000). *Child development*. (5th. ed.). Toronto: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.

ISBN: 9780205449132

Craig, G., Kermis, M. & Digdon, N. (2002). *Children today*. (2nd. Canadian ed.). Toronto, ON: Pearson Education Canada.

ISBN: 978-0130990853

Feldman, R. (1999). *Child development: A topical approach*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

ISBN: 978-0130807250

Santrock, J. (2008). *Child Development*. (12th. ed.). Toronto: McGraw-Hill.

ISBN: 978-0073370637

Stages of Development

Allen, K. & Marotz, L. (2000). *By the ages: Behavior & development of children: Pre-birth through Eight*.

Albany, NY: Delmar.

ISBN: 978-0766820487

Allen, K. & Marotz, L. (2006). *Developmental profiles: Pre-birth through twelve*. (5th. ed.). Clifton Park, NY: Delmar.

ISBN: 978-1418029074

Developmental Diversity

Mallory, B. & New, R. (1994). *Diversity & Developmentally Appropriate Practices: Challenges for Early Childhood Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

ISBN: 978-0807733004

Focus on Infants and Toddlers

Gonzalez-Mena, J. & Widmeyer Eyer, D. (2008). *Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers*. Toronto : McGraw-Hill.

ISBN: 9780073131320

Martin, S. (2003). *See how they grow: Infants & toddlers*. Toronto, ON: Thomson Nelson.

ISBN: 0774735872

Focus on Pre-School Children

Wellhousen, K. & Crowther, I. (2003). *Creating Effective Learning Environments*. Toronto: Delmar Thomson Learning.

ISBN: 978-1401832148

Focus on School-Age Children

Bisback, K. & Kopf-Johnson, L. (2009). *An Introduction to School-Age Care in Canada*. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada.

ISBN: 978-0132082013

Cultural Diversity, Human Rights and Anti-Bias Approaches

The Affective Curriculum: Teaching the Anti-Bias Approach to Young Children by Nadia Saderman Hall and Valerie Rhomberg (Paperback - April 1995)

Kilbride, K. (ed.). (1997). *Include me too! Human diversity in early childhood*. Toronto, ON: Harcourt Brace.

ISBN: 0774733586

Guidance

Martin, S. & Corson, P. (2006). *Intentional and Relationship-Based Guidance*. Toronto: Nelson College Indigenous

ISBN: 978-0176251789

Miller, D. (1990). *Positive Child Guidance*. Albany, NY: Delmar.

ISBN: 978-1435418592

Quality Child Care

Doherty-Derkowski, G. (1997). *Quality matters: Excellence in early childhood programs*. Toronto, ON: Addison-Wesley.

ISBN: 978-0201766141

Child Care Policy

Friendly, M. (1994). *Child Care Policy in Canada*. Toronto, ON: Addison-Wesley.

ISBN: 020158851X

Ethics

AECEO Code of Ethics

Feeney, S. & Freeman, N. (1999). *Ethics and the early childhood educator*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

ISBN: 978-0935989939

Child Abuse

AECEO Publication: A Child In Need of Protection

Reporting child abuse and neglect: Your responsibility under the Child and Family Services Act. (2000). Toronto, ON: Ministry of Community & Social Services.

Rimer, P. & Prager, B. (1998). *Reaching out: Working together to identify and respond to child victims of abuse*. Toronto, ON: ITP Nelson.

ISBN: 0176073426

Wells, M. (1990). *Canada's law on child sex abuse*. Ottawa, ON: Department of Justice, Canada.

ISBN: 0662178572

Policy and Legislation

Day Nurseries Act

Play

Elkind, D. (2007). *The Power of Play*. Da Capo Press.

ISBN: 978-0738211107

Curriculum and Programming

Curtis, D., Carter, M. & Curtis, D. (2002). *Reflecting Children's Lives*. Redleaf Press.

ISBN: 978-1884834271

Dombro, A., Colker, L. & Dodge, D. (2006). *The creative curriculum for infants and toddlers*. (2nd. ed.). Albany, NY: Delmar Learning
ISBN: 978-1879537996

Gestwicki, C. (2007). *Developmentally appropriate practice: Curriculum and development in early education*. (3rd. ed.). Albany, NY: Delmar.
ISBN: 1401898165

Hill, L., Stremmel, A. & Fu, V. (2004). *Teaching as Inquiry: Rethinking Curriculum in Early Childhood Education with a Foreword by Jeanne Goldhaber*. Toronto: Allyn & Bacon
ISBN: 978-0205412648

Kostelnick, M., Soderman, A. & Whiren, A. (2006). *Developmentally appropriate curriculum: Best practices in early childhood education*. (4th. ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
ISBN: 978-0132390934

Health, Safety and Nutrition

Crowther, I. (2004). *Safe and Healthy Children's Environments*. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada.
ISBN: 978-0131776388

Pimento, B. & Kernsted, D. (2004). *Healthy Foundations in Early Childhood Settings*. (3rd. ed.). Toronto, ON: Nelson Thomson Learning.
ISBN: 978-0176224813

Philosophy of Care and Education

Roopnarine, J. & Johnson, J. (2008). *Approaches to early childhood education*. (5th. ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
ISBN: 978-0135126288

Developmental Diversity – do you mean working with exceptional children?

Klein, M.D., Cook, R. & Richardson-Gibbs, A. (2001). *Strategies for including children with special needs in early childhood settings*. Albany, NY: Delmar.
ISBN: 978-0827383524

Crowther, I. (2009). *Inclusion in Early Childhood Settings: Children with Special Needs in Canada*. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada.
ISBN: 978-0132082020

Observation and Assessment

Martin, S. (2009). *Take a look: Observation and portfolio assessment in early childhood*. (5th. ed.). Toronto, ON: Pearson Education Canada.
ISBN: 978-0321538253

Useful journals with current information about the field of child care and early education

AECEO (Ontario) *The Link*

The Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF) (Canadian) *Interaction*

The Canadian Association for Young Children (CAYC) (Canadian) *Canadian Children*

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (American) *Young Children*

The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) (American/International) *Childhood Education*

Parenting magazines can offer some useful information – (they are not intended for professionals)

Today's Parent (Canadian)

Parents (American)