



Saskatoon Open Door Society
Employment Services



Guide to Becoming an Early Childhood Educator In Saskatchewan

The information in this pamphlet is intended to help immigrant job seekers who are looking at a career in Early Childhood Education. You may be an Internationally Educated Teacher (IET), an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) whose education and experience were gained outside of Saskatchewan and outside of Canada, or you may be “untrained” but experienced with children and want to pursue a career working with young children. This information is for your use to pursue your goal.

***Note:* The government of Saskatchewan does not have a formal English language requirement for working as an Early Childhood Educator. Employers are free to set whatever level they believe is necessary to work with the children in their care.**

Introduction

You have decided based on your past education, training and/or work and life experience that you want to become an “early childhood educator” in Saskatchewan. We use the term “Early Childhood Educator” because it is the most general term for a variety of possible occupations that are all involved with the education and care of young children. How easy or how difficult this is will depend on several factors. Depending on what you mean by “early childhood educator,” your path could be relatively short (less than one year) or long (a four year University degree – or more).

The job title “early childhood educator” may mean different things in different countries. In Canada, as well, there are different job titles associated with this career. Child-care worker, day-care helper, day-care supervisor, day-care worker, early childhood assistant, early childhood education worker, early childhood educator, preschool teacher, and nursery school teacher are just some of the job titles in this general category of human services work. In parts of Canada and in NOC 2006 (National Occupation Classification), they refer to Early Childhood Educators and Early Childhood Educator Assistants, but in Saskatchewan, the titles **Early Childhood Educator I (ECE I)**, **Early Childhood Educator II (ECE II)**, and **Early Childhood Educator III (ECE III)** are the titles used. These levels were created by the Saskatchewan

Learning - Early Learning and Child Care to refer to different levels of ECE education and preparation, and as a way to gradually improve the preparation of Early Childhood Educators in Saskatchewan-licensed Day Cares and Day Care homes.

Since 2007, all individuals employed 65 hours or more per month who provide child care services in a centre or who supervise persons providing child care services in a centre are required to make application for ECE Certification. In addition, individuals who are licensed as family child care home provider or as a group family child care home are required to make application for ECE Certification. In order to meet Child Care Regulations, 50% of workers in a Day Care must have ECE I or higher, 30% of workers must have ECE II or better and 20% must have ECE III. In addition, the Directors of licensed facilities must have ECE III certification.

The main reason for you as an Early Childhood Educator to have one of the higher levels of certification is that you will have more flexibility and more opportunities to work at the ECE Level II or ECE Level III than if you have the minimum ECE Level I. In addition, some day care centres link salary levels to ECE levels, but this is not true everywhere and is not required by the Child Care Regulations.

STEP 1 -- Determine whether the type of work that you studied for or performed fits the definition of early childhood educator as it is used in Saskatchewan. That is, you must determine the type of work you did in order to determine its equivalency in Canada. The Government of Canada NOC 2006 (National Occupation Classification) website provides descriptions of the different types of jobs, along with good work related vocabulary, to help you figure out whether the kind of work or education that you pursued in your previous country of residence or training would entitle you to the designation of Early Childhood Educator and Early Childhood Educator Assistant (NOC 4214) Website: <http://www23.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/2001/e/groups/4214.shtml> and the Saskatchewan Job Futures website has an excellent profile for these careers:

<http://www.saskjobfutures.ca/profiles/profile.cfm?noc=4214&lang=en&site=graphic>.

Early Childhood Educators plan and organize activities for pre-school children and lead children in these activities to encourage their emotional, social, cognitive, and physical growth. Language development is an especially important area of attention in day cares and preschools. All Early Childhood Educators must be at least 18 years of age.

Typical Duties: Early Childhood educators' duties often include developing daily activities for children of various ages. Their work requires them to perform a variety of activities, such as telling or reading stories, teaching songs, demonstrating the use of simple

musical instruments, preparing craft materials and demonstrating their use, and taking the children to local points of interest. Their instruction is not always play-oriented; they guide and assist children in the development of proper eating, dressing and toilet habits.

Early Childhood Educators also observe children for signs of learning disabilities or emotional problems and discuss the children's progress or problems with parents and other staff members. In order to develop and discuss new teaching methods, many in this field attend meetings and workshops on early childhood education. Some workers in this field are also responsible for supervising and coordinating the activities of other Early Childhood Educators.

Where do Early Childhood Educators work? They are employed in day-care centres, licensed home day cares, and nursery schools. Many organizations such as daycare centres, religious groups, YM/YWCAs and government or community agencies, offer early childhood child care services. Children in early childhood education and daycare programs can range in age from six weeks old (infants) to six years old. In addition, in some centres Early Childhood Educators may also be responsible for planning and organizing activities for school-age children who take part in child-care programs before and after regular school hours.

Where can you get training to become an Early Childhood Educator? Certificates and diplomas in Early Childhood Education are available through the Saskatchewan Institute of Arts Science and Technology (SIAST) and the regional colleges. The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) offers certificate and diploma programs in First Nations Child Care. These programs are designed to reflect the culture of First Nations people. The University of Regina offers a Bachelor of Education (Elementary), with a specialization in Early Childhood Education (PreK-3) and Early Elementary (K-5). The University of Regina also offers a Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) and Social Work.

STEP TWO – What type of Certification do you qualify for?

There are 3 Levels of Certification issued¹:

Early Childhood Educator I (ECE I)

This is the most basic level of certification. ECE I can make up only 50% of the staff in a licensed day care.

Certification as an ECE I is granted upon successful completion of:

A 120-hour introductory course in early childhood education from a university, technical institute, regional college, or similar post-secondary educational facility;

OR

¹ ELCC Branch, May, 2007

A minimum of 120 course hours in the following subject areas (one full-semester course is averaged at 40 course hours):

Subject Area	Course Hours
Child Development	40
Programming	40
Relationships	40
Total Hours	120

Early Childhood Educator II (ECE II)

Certification as an ECE II is granted upon successful completion of:

A one year certificate in early childhood education from a university, technical institute, regional college, or similar post-secondary educational facility;

OR

A minimum of 520 course hours from a university, technical institute, regional college, or similar post-secondary institutional facility in the following subject areas (one full-semester course is averaged at 40 course hours):

Subject Area	Course Hours
Child Development	120
Programming	160
Relationships	120
Related Courses	120
Total Hours	520

Early Childhood Educator III (ECE III)

Certification as an ECE III is granted upon successful completion of:

A two year certificate or diploma in early childhood education from a university, technical institute, regional college, or similar post-secondary educational facility;

OR

A minimum of 1060 course hours from a university, technical institute, regional college, or similar post-secondary educational facility; in the following subject areas (one full-semester class is averaged at 40 hours):

Subject Area	Course Hours
Child Development	160
Programming	240
Relationships	280
Related Courses	380
Total Hours	1,060

What courses are considered in the four subject areas?

Courses with content relating to the subject areas are considered. Course outlines from calendars are used to assess the suitability of courses in a subject area. The following chart indicates examples of courses approved in subject areas:

ECE Subject Areas

Child Development	Programming	Relationships	Related Courses
Theories of Child Development*	Play Environments	Child Guidance*	General Arts (e.g. Sociology, Psychology, Indian Studies, Human Justice)
Social Development	Program/Curriculum Planning	Interpersonal Communication	
Physical Development	Introduction to Early Childhood Education*	Family and Community Relations	Special Needs
Emotional Development	Creative Art Experiences	Professionalism and Ethics	Infant/Toddler Care
Cognitive Development	Movement and Music	Cultural Awareness	School-age Care
Observing and Recording	Children's Language and Literature		Administration/Management
Health and Nutrition	Science and Pre-Math Skills		
	Anti-Bias Curriculum		

Notes:

STEP THREE – Assemble your academic credentials. Please note the following:

Photocopies are not accepted. Applications for Certification must be accompanied by original official transcripts to verify successful completion of courses. Official transcripts bear the college or university seal and/or signature of the Registrar. If course work was taken at a post secondary institution out of Saskatchewan, submission of course descriptions or course outlines assists with assessing the transcripts.

If course work was taken in a foreign language, submission of translated transcripts and course descriptions or outlines to English or French assists with assessing the transcripts.

An IQAS evaluation of your out-of-Canada course work may also be of assistance in the evaluation process, but is not generally required.

STEP FOUR– Fill out your application for ECE Certification

Applications for ECE Certification can be obtained from licensed child care facilities and Regional Early Learning and Child Care Regional offices. The offices are listed on the web at: http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/elcc/pdfs/Application_for_Certification.pdf

Information about ECE Certification can be obtained from the Early Learning and Child Care Branch.

**Early Learning and Child Care Branch
2220 College Avenue
Regina SK S4P 4V9**

**Telephone: 787-1075 (Manager, Credentials and Quality Improvement)
Or 1-888-77LEARN (5-3276)**

STEP FIVE– Submit your application and academic credentials to

**Manager, Credentials and Quality Improvement
Early Learning and Child Care Branch
2220 College Avenue
Regina SK S4P 4V9**

Depending on whether you are granted certification at what you consider to be an appropriate level or not, you may want to consider using the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition PLAR system available through SIAST to gain credits for ECE II and ECE III certification.

From the SIAST – Kelsey Campus Website: **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Availability** -- SIAST recognizes that adults learn in many different ways and through many different means. This includes acquiring knowledge and skills through life and work experience or non-formal training. Such learning may qualify you for equivalency in a SIAST course through our process for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition.

Frequently asked questions regarding PLAR for this program are answered in the [PLAR Fact Sheet](#) (pdf - 60 KB). A detailed [PLAR Candidate Guide](#) (pdf - 572 KB), which includes a self-audit for all PLAR-ready courses, has been developed for this program. This information guides a candidate through all steps in the PLAR process.

Visit the [Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition](#) home page for general information about PLAR. You can check out the benefits, how to determine if you are a candidate, PLAR-ready courses and the PLAR Inventory Database (where you can select a program of study to determine which courses may be available).

For assistance, consult with a [PLAR counsellor](#) or call 1-866-goSIAST (1-866-467-4278).

Candidate Process



Following are the procedures to be followed at SIAST KELSEY::

PROCEDURES FOR PLAR CHALLENGE FOR ECE Program Credits²

This information was provided by Nancy Dill who is the Program Head for ECE at Kelsey Campus. Nancy can be reached at 933-6465.

1. Contact a PLAR Counsellor at 933-8346 for information or an appointment
2. When you see the counsellor, she or he will outline generally what is involved for particular courses, and what the costs are.
3. Make application for the process. Your PLAR counsellor will give you the Assessment Guide and Self-Audit Guide.
4. After that, the application goes to the Program Head for ECE in Wascana Campus, Regina (this is the way they have divided up the duties). Do not call before the head would have received your application.
5. The program head reviews the applicant's situation and explains the exact requirements, in terms of documentation required in order to proceed further.
6. A person is hired to do the actual assessment, including interviews, observation and review of portfolios.

Applications for ECE PLARs are accepted only twice a year. Check for the current deadlines.

The PLAR process may include evaluation letters from supervisors, examples of programming done by the applicant, an observation evaluation by the assessor, and an interview.

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT OF THE PRACTICUM

The Practicum portions of the ECE program can be assessed by PLAR. In order to do this, the applicant must have at least 2 years of ECE experience. There are 4 practicum classes, Levels 1 through 4. Check to see what the current cost is to challenge these requirements. Most of the course assessments are a flat rate. If there is an observation required for the course, the cost is somewhat higher (approximately + \$50.00).

It is clear that the cost is less than the cost of tuition. In addition, if the deadline is met, the time factor will be greatly reduced from the amount of time it takes to complete the courses.

² Based on M.L.Welen, 2006

Challenges Experienced by Internationally Educated Early Childhood Educators (including Internationally Educated Primary & Secondary Teachers)

1) English Language Proficiency can be a challenge.

Although the government of Saskatchewan does not have a formal English language requirement for working as an Early Childhood Educator. SIAST does have English Language Requirements for entry. Moreover, Employers may want to set a certain level of English proficiency that they believe is necessary to work with the children in their care.

English Language Requirement for SIAST Admission

English is the language of instruction and examination at SIAST. If your first or primary language is not English, you will need to provide evidence of having the English language skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing to be successful in the SIAST program you are applying to.

Note: Each testing service has its own policies concerning re-testing timeframes.

Please contact Counselling for more information about satisfying the English Language Requirement for SIAST programs - Kelsey Campus (Saskatoon),

For SIAST credit programs (except the Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan)

Evidence can be demonstrated in one of the following ways:

- Successful completion of the English course(s) (or equivalent) required for admission to the program **plus** a minimum of **three years of successful, formal, full-time secondary level of studies conducted in English** in Canada, the United States of America, England, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa.
- Successful **completion of a certificate, diploma or degree taught and examined in English at a recognized post-secondary institution** in Canada, the United States of America, England, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa. Applicants who have not completed a credential, but have at least one year of progressive and successful full-time study toward a credential, may be considered upon review by the program and Registrar.
- Achievement of the program minimum admission scores on the Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment (CLBA). The CLBA measures English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing. **Scores required for SIAST programs range from 7-9.***
- **An overall score of 81 or higher on the Internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT)**, with a minimum score of **at least 19** in each of **reading, listening, speaking and writing.****
- An overall score of at least **Band 6.5** on the Academic International English Language Testing System (**IELTS**), with no module score less than 5.0.
- Successful **completion of Advanced Level (ESL 050) of the University of Regina's**

Employment Services at the Saskatoon Open Door Society is committed to working with Immigrant Job Seekers to attain appropriate, sustainable employment.

Intensive English as a Second Language Program plus completion of Academic Writing Elective A.

- Successful **completion of Level 50**: Advanced of the **University of Saskatchewan's** full-time English as a Second Language Program.
- An average score of **4.5 in listening and reading, and a score of 4.0 in writing** on the Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees (**CanTEST**).

* Students testing at SIAST with a score of 8+ will be considered to have met level 9.

** Computer-based TOEFL and paper-based TOEFL are still being offered at some centres and equivalent scores will be accepted for proof of proficiency.

(Mostly) Free English Language Classes: Based on your immigration status and an assessment by Canadian Immigration and Citizenship, you may be entitled to free **Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes**, available at the Saskatoon Open Door Society (part time: morning, afternoon and evening classes) and at the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST Kelsey) (full day classes). SIAST – Kelsey has recently begun offering **English for Post-Secondary Success**. Students develop the English language skill levels (speaking, listening, reading and writing) that meet admission standards and support success in SIAST programs. **Participants are those who must meet English language proficiency standards for successful study in SIAST post-secondary programs.** The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs) are the framework for instruction and assessment. Studies focus on CLBs 6 through 9 depending on assessed need.

- Canadian citizens and landed immigrants can contact Counselling Services or Basic Education at SIAST for more information. (Free of Charge)

One low cost, or no cost, alternative path is for internationally trained teachers to attend LINC classes through to Level 5/6, then attend the Enhanced Language Training/International Internship (ELT/IIP) programs in either Regina or Saskatoon. These Enhanced Language Training courses and programs teach a higher level of English than is available in the LINC program at this time. The Saskatoon Open Door Society also offers evening classes in Pronunciation (Accent Neutralization) as well as other employment related workshops which are free to Employment Services clients and ELT/IIP participants. *Please contact the Saskatoon Open Door Society for current information of the availability of these programs.*

Paid English Training: There are also day and evening general English classes, and courses aimed at particular areas such as written and spoken English available from the **University of**

Saskatchewan Language Centre. #232 -221 Cumberland Ave. N, Saskatoon, SK, Canada –
Telephone: (306) ;966-4351; <http://www.learnenglish.usask.ca/>

APPENDIX 1

USEFUL WEB SITES

For more information on a career as an early childhood educator, please consult

<http://www.saskjobfutures.ca/profiles/profile.cfm?noc=4214&lang=en&site=graphic>.
Saskatchewan Job Futures

www.skearlychildhoodassociation.ca/

The **Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association (SECA)** website

http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/elcc/child_care.shtml

The Saskatchewan Government Early Learning And Child Care Home Page :

[Licensed child care](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/elcc/lcdc.shtml) [<http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/elcc/lcdc.shtml>],

[KidsFirst](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/elcc/kids_first.shtml) [http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/elcc/kids_first.shtml]
and

[PreKindergarten](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/elcc/prek.shtml) programs and services [<http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/elcc/prek.shtml>].

For more information on English Language Training:

<http://www.learnenglish.usask.ca/>

University of Saskatchewan Language Centre. #232 -221 Cumberland Ave. N, Saskatoon, Sk,
Canada – Telephone: (306) ;966-4351

<http://www.sods.sk.ca/>

Saskatoon Open Door Society

<http://www.usask.ca/education/>

University of Saskatchewan College of Education

<http://education.uregina.ca/index.php?q=home.html>

Faculty of Education of the University of Regina

www.siastr.sk.ca/kelsey/educationtraining/basiceducation/esl.htm#language

**LINC - Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada and
English for Post-Secondary Success Programs – Kelsey Campus**

APPENDIX 2



Early Learning and Child Care Application for Certification

In summary, Regulation 40 states:

A licensee must ensure that an individual who is appointed as Centre Director:

(a) meets or exceeds the qualifications of an early childhood educator II; and

(b) in the case of a centre director appointed on or after July 5, 2001, meets or exceeds the qualifications of an early childhood educator III.

In summary, Regulation 41 states:

On and after January 1, 2002, a licensee of a centre must ensure that all persons employed in the centre as child care workers for 65 hours or more per month meet or exceed the qualifications of an early childhood educator I.

On and after January 1, 2005, a licensee of a centre must ensure that 30% of the persons employed in the centre as child care workers for 65 hours or more per month meet or exceed the qualifications of an early childhood educator II.

On and after January 1, 2007, a licensee of a centre must ensure that a further 20% of the persons employed in the centre as child care workers for 65 hours or more per month meet or exceed the qualifications of an early childhood educator III.

I have previously been granted an Exemption: ___ No ___ Yes Expiry Date: ___ Day / Month / Year ___

I have previously been granted a Certification: ___ No ___ Yes Certification Date: ___ Day / Month / Year ___

Certification Level: ECE I / ECE II / ECE III

I hereby make application for Certification at the following level:

___ Early Childhood Educator I ___ Early Childhood Educator II ___ Early Childhood Educator III

Applicant Name:		If you are employed in a child care centre please complete the following:	
Alias / Maiden Name:		Centre Name:	
Applicant Address:	Street / Box Number	Centre Address:	Street / Box Number
	City / Town		City / Town
	Postal Code		Postal Code
Applicant Day Phone number:		Name of Child Care Consultant	

* Official transcripts attached ___ or Official transcripts forwarded directly by institution ___

Submit to: Early Learning & Child Care Branch *Photocopies will not be accepted.
2220 College Avenue
Regina SK S4P 4V9

Date: ___ Day / Month / Year ___ Applicant Signature: _____

For office use only:				Date Received
ECE		ECE		
Subject Area	Course Hrs Required	Subject Area	Course Hrs Required	
Child Development		Child Development		
Programming		Programming		
Relationships		Relationships		
Related Courses		Related Courses		

Date: ___ Day / Month / Year ___ Manager Signature: _____ Approved / Not Approved

ELCC November, 2006