

**PLACE AND TRAIN PROFESSIONAL CONVERSION PROGRAMME (PCP) FOR
CHILD CARE TEACHERS
WSQ PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION
(Child Care)**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Entry requirements to the course

1. Applicants should have either:

- a 3-year polytechnic diploma with at least a credit in GCE 'O' level English as a first language (EL1)
OR
- a university degree where the medium of instruction is English

To note:

Applicants who have a C5 or C6 in EL1 are given 2 years from the point of teacher registration to obtain either a B4 or a minimum band of 6.5 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS – General Training).

2. Applicants must be employed by a child care centre licensed by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS).

1. What is WSQ Professional Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education (Child Care) programme or PDECCE (Child Care)?

The WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) is an accelerated conversion training programme. It has been designed and modeled in accordance with the Specialist Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education (SDECCE) programme and targeted at mid-career professionals who are polytechnic diploma and degree holders and are aspiring to become qualified child care teachers.

Child care centres cater to children from 2 months to 6 years and operate on longer hours. Custodial care and routines constitute a significant part of young children's holistic development, and these are reflected in a child care centre's programme. The 700-hour accelerated training acknowledges this and encompasses the principles of care and education in its coverage. Trainee child care teachers will be equipped with relevant knowledge and competences in child development, infants and toddlers, curriculum and pedagogy, and issues related to safety, health, hygiene and nutrition.

The WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) works on a 'Place and Train' concept. This will enable trainees to scaffold their work with young children and classroom practices with the training that is undertaken concurrently. The Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) will fund the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) course fees under the Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience scheme, or SPUR for short. With effect from 1 June 2009, child care centres participating in this programme will receive 90% course fee subsidy under SPUR as well as a monthly stipend of 80% of basic salary capped at \$1,600 for the trainee. This stipend will be provided for the full duration of the Professional Conversion Programme (PCP) and is only applicable under the Place and Train mode. Employers will be required to

top up the remaining 20% of the trainees' salaries, in addition to the usual CPF contributions based on the trainee's full salary.

2. Who will conduct the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care)?

The SEED Institute will be conducting the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care).

3. When will the course be conducted?

For details on the course, please email your inquiries to info@seedinstitute.com.sg or contact the SEED Institute's personnel at 6332 0668 / 6334 6005.

4. Who can apply for WSQ PDECCE (Child Care)?

Mid-career professionals, and fresh graduates and diploma holders who are interested to pursue a career in the early childhood care and education sector are eligible to apply for the professional diploma. Interested applicants should meet the following criteria:

- Have a 3-year polytechnic diploma with at least a credit in GCE 'O' level English as a first language (EL1) or a university degree where the medium of instruction is English. Applicants who have a C5 or C6 in EL1 are given 2 years from the point of teacher registration to obtain either a B4 or a minimum band of 6.5 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS – General Training).
- Be employed by a child care centre licensed by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS).

5. How do interested applicants enroll for the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care)? / Do applicants for the course have to be employed by a child care centre before they undergo the training?

They need to be employed by a child care centre prior to enrolling for the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care). The child care centre will submit the application on the applicant's behalf. As the employer, the child care centre will also sponsor the applicants for the course during the PCP.

6. Are non-Singaporeans or non-permanent residents eligible for the course?

Non-Singaporeans or non-permanent residents are eligible for the course if they meet the course entry requirements. However, they will not be eligible for the funding. Subject to the availability of training places, priority will be given to Singaporeans and Permanent Residents.

7. If I have not obtained my diploma from the polytechnics, do I qualify for professional diploma?

You need to have obtained the local full-time polytechnic diploma with at least a credit in GCE 'O' level English as a first language (EL1) or a university degree where the medium of instruction is English. Applicants who have a C5 or C6 in EL1 are given 2 years from the point of teacher registration to obtain either a B4 or a minimum band of 6.5 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS – General Training).

8. I would like to undergo the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) for my personal knowledge. Is this possible? / I would like to complete the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) before entering the child care profession. Is this possible?

The WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) comes under the auspices of the 'Place and Train' mode. Only trainee teachers who are employed by the child care centre are eligible as the aim is to support the work with young children in centre-based care with the training.

9. If I have obtained the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) will I be able to teach in kindergartens? / Is the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) suitable for kindergarten teachers?

The WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) has been developed specifically to meet the needs of care and education in a child care setting. The training prepares personnel to work with children aged 2 months to 6 years.

10. Is the course open to kindergarten teachers?

This course is only open to trainees employed by child care centres.

11. Is the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) accredited by the Preschool Qualification Accreditation Committee (PQAC)?

The course is recognised by MCYS and WDA.

12. How is the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) different from the PQAC-accredited Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education - Teaching (DECCE-T) and Specialist Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education (SDECCE)?

The WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) is an accelerated conversion training programme recognised by MCYS and tailored for mid-career professionals and fresh graduates holding polytechnic diplomas and degrees to teach specifically in child care centres providing care and education to children aged 2 months to 6 years.

While the PQAC-accredited 1,200-hour DECCE-T offers personnel the opportunities to work in either a kindergarten or a child care centre, the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) prepares trainees to work only in a child care centre. The PQAC-accredited 1,600-hour SDECCE equips trainees to assume teaching as well as leadership roles and responsibilities, enabling them to work as supervisors in child care centres after acquiring 2 years of pre-school teaching experience in either a kindergarten or a child care centre.

13. What are the differences between the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) and the WSQ PDECCE (Kindergarten Teaching)?

The WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) focuses on equipping trainees with the necessary skills and knowledge to address the care and education needs of children aged 2 months to 6 years in centre-based care. Having a WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) will allow graduates to work as child care teachers. The WSQ PDECCE (Kindergarten Teaching) caters to trainees working with children aged 4 to 6 years in kindergartens and will enable them to work as kindergarten teachers.

14. Is WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) equivalent to the DECCE-T or the SDECCE?

The objectives, duration and coverage of these courses differ from those of the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) which has been developed specifically for mid-career professionals aspiring to become child care teachers.

Cost, Remuneration and Bonds

15. How much does the child care centre need to pay for the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care)?

WDA will subsidise 90% of the course fees under the SPUR scheme. Child care centres would need to pay the remaining 10%.

16. Can a trainee teacher opt to pay for the course on her own?

The WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) comes under the auspices of the 'Place and Train' scheme which requires the trainee teacher to be first employed by a child care centre. Funding for the course is only available to the employers and not to individual trainee teachers.

17. What is the monthly salary support to employers for each trainee?

WDA will provide a monthly stipend support of 80% of basic salary capped at \$1,600 per month during the PCP. Employers will be required to top up the balance of the trainee's salary. The stipend funding will begin from the month in which the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) training starts and will be for the next 12 months till the end of course.

18. How does the child care centre apply for the course fee funding or the monthly stipend support for the teacher?

Upon enrollment of the trainee into the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) with SEED Institute, participating child care centres would have to pay 10% of the course fees to SEED Institute. SEED Institute would receive the course fee subsidy and monthly stipend from WDA and would disburse the monthly stipends to the respective participating child care centres on a quarterly basis. Employers would have to submit the necessary documents to SEED Institute for each stipend claim.

19. Do I have to bond my trainee teachers?

The funding for the course fees and the monthly stipend support does not stipulate that child care centres have to bond the trainee teachers. Issues relating to bonds are largely guided by the child care centre's staff training, HR and staff welfare policies. However, child care centres are strongly encouraged to consider bonding these trainees to ensure professional accountability and commitment from the trainees. This would help ensure that the child care industry has a pool of trained workers. Any bond terms imposed by child care centres should be reasonable.

20. What happens if my trainee teacher defaults and drops out in the course of training? Is the child care centre or the trainee teacher liable for any liquidated damages?

In the event your trainee teacher defaults and drops out of the training, the contractual agreement on the reimbursement of the course fees to the employer will come into effect. It also depends on the terms mutually agreed on by the child care centre and the trainee teacher when he/she was employed. In the event that you impose any condition to recover the course fees and/or training allowance from your trainee teacher under the PCP, the course fees and/or training allowance which had been disbursed to you must be refunded to WDA. There will, however, be no refund of any fees paid to the training provider.

21. What happens if my trainee teacher fails the course? Can she retake the failed module/s?

She may retake the modules. However, she will not be eligible for further funding for the cost of the module/s of the same course. Also, if the module is retaken beyond the 12-month duration of the PCP, there will be no training stipend for the trainee to retake the additional module/s.

22. Due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. pregnancy, health reasons), is the trainee teacher allowed to defer the course?

The child care centre will have to inform the training provider, in this case, SEED Institute, in writing, the reasons for deferment. SEED Institute will review the case and the

circumstances on a case-by-case basis. There will, however, be no refund of any fees paid to the training provider.

23. Is the employer liable to pay for the course materials and other miscellaneous fees (e.g. purchase of books, insurance fees, etc)?

There is no obligation for employers to support additional resources such as course materials and purchase of books other than the 10% course fee payment. Any discussion on this issue is between employer and employee.

24. Is the trainee allowed to change employer while undergoing the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care)?

The WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) operates on a 'Place and Train' mode. Trainees are strongly encouraged to stay with the child care centre to create that continuity and stability needed to synergise the training and classroom practices. Employers would need to consider factoring in this concern into the contractual agreement between the employer and the trainee teachers.

25. I have just recruited a new child care teacher. Can my new employee undergo this programme as well?

The funding under SPUR for the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) is only open to all newly hired child care teachers. To be eligible for the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care), the teacher's date of employment must be less than 3 months from the course start date. For child care teachers who are employed for more than 3 months before the course start date, they may consider attending the 1,200-hour DECCE-T programme offered by the training providers approved by the PQAC as part of in-employment skills upgrading.

Professional Development/Career Advancement

26. I understand that my academic qualifications also allow me to enroll for the SDECCE, which is accredited by PQAC. Isn't this a better career pathway for me if I were to undergo SDECCE instead?

The SDECCE is designed to prepare diploma holders and graduates to teach and lead in both kindergartens and child care centres while the WSQ PDECCE (Child Care) is aimed at preparing trainees to teach in child care centres specifically and does not cover the leadership aspects.

27. What's my professional development advancement after attaining WSQ PDECCE (Child Care)?

Upon completion of WSQ PDECCE (Child Care), trainees who wish to progress on to become child care centre supervisors may embark on the SDECCE.

28. I already have a degree in another discipline. Can I take a Masters in Early Childhood Education upon completion of WSQ PDECCE (Child Care)?

The admission to the Masters programme depends on the entry criteria to the course. You may wish to contact the institution offering the Masters programme for further clarifications.