

POLICY – STUDY LEAVE

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1. National Quality Standards

Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements		
Area	Concept	Descriptor
4.1.1	Organisation of educators	The organisation of educators across the service supports children’s learning and development.
4.2.2	Professional standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Baringa Early Learning Centre (Baringa) recognises the importance of formal study and continuing professional development. The investment in staff enables high quality early childhood education.
- 2.2 This policy aims to ensure Baringa supports staff to attain and maintain their early learning and educational qualifications, emphasising the value of study and professional development, while also adhering to the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to support permanent staff of Baringa completing formal study, undertaking professional placements or continuing professional development relevant to the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector.

4. Implementation

- 4.1 Staff will be provided flexible work arrangements to support completion of formal study relevant to ECEC. This includes the option for rostering permanent staff to complement study commitments. For example, full-time staff may choose to work over four days each week, allowing the fifth day to be used for study.
- 4.2 Staff enrolled in a *Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care* or *Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care* will be provided the opportunity to complete professional placements and/or on-the-job training as part of their qualification onsite at Baringa. This includes paid placements, where rostering permits.

Early Childhood Teachers

- 4.3 Staff counted as an Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) as defined by ACECQA and CECA; and actively working towards an approved ECT Qualification as recognised by ACECQA, will be provided:
- (a) the opportunity to complete professional placements as part of their qualification on-site at Baringa. This includes paid placements, where rostering permits; and/or
 - (b) the opportunity for paid study leave if they require off-site, professional placements external to Baringa. Paid study leave will be provided to permanent staff with regular shifts of at least 3 days per week. Eligible study leave will be based on the calculations as at s4.4.
- 4.4 ***How much study leave can ECTs apply for?***
- The process for calculating the total amount of eligible study leave for staff (defined at s4.3) is as follows:
- (a) The total amount of eligible study leave per financial year requires:
 - (i) Information on the staff member's regular weekly wage (rate of pay); and
 - (ii) Documentation from the tertiary provider defining the total number of weeks the staff member is required to undertake off-site mandatory professional placements; and
 - (iii) Information on the staff member being employed on a permanent basis and having completed the required probationary period prior to commencing off-site mandatory professional placements; and
 - (iv) Information on the staff member requirement to have passed prior study units with professional placements, prior to accessing study leave in the current financial year. This clause may be reconsidered in extenuating circumstances, at discretion of Management.
 - (b) Staff are eligible to claim study leave at their full rate of pay for up to 50% of the number of weeks of mandatory professional placements. For example:
 - (i) If two weeks of off-site mandatory professional placement is required within the financial year, staff can claim up to one week (50%) of study leave at their regular weekly wage.
 - (ii) If four weeks of off-site mandatory professional placement is required within the financial year, staff can claim up to two weeks (50%) of study leave at their regular weekly wage.
 - (iii) If six weeks of off-site mandatory professional placement is required within the financial year, staff can claim up to three weeks (50%) of study leave at their regular weekly wage.
 - (c) Staff cannot claim more than three weeks of study leave within the financial year. This means if more than six weeks of off-site mandatory professional placement is required, the maximum study leave remains at three weeks of study leave at their regular weekly wage.
 - (d) Staff cannot claim eligible study leave at half pay. This means staff must claim study leave at full rate of pay. However, staff may use other leave entitlements as per s4.6(c).
 - (e) Staff must claim within the financial year and cannot "roll-over" unused study leave to the following financial year.
- 4.5 Staff who are able to access other means of financial assistance (e.g., scholarship or external sponsorship) for a specific unpaid professional placement block will not be eligible to use study leave for that duration.
- (a) Staff who may have additional professional placement blocks within the same financial year may access study leave; and
 - (b) For the purpose of s4.4(b), the total duration of eligible study leave within the financial year, is limited to professional placement blocks not covered by other means of financial assistance.

4.6 **What flexibility do ECTs have in accessing study leave?**

The recommended method is for staff to claim study leave in blocks during off-site mandatory professional placement, to compensate for not being available to undertake paid shifts. However:

- (a) Staff may request to claim their eligible staff leave throughout the financial year (instead of blocks during their off-site mandatory professional placement), such as during assessment or testing periods. The process at s4.4 applies to determine the total amount of eligible study leave.
- (b) Staff who do not have mandatory professional placements within the financial year (depending on the tertiary provider) may apply for study leave to be claimed as per 4.5(a). The total eligible study leave will be no more than one week per financial year at full pay, at the discretion of Management.
- (c) Staff may request Annual Leave, Time in Lieu, Special Leave or Leave Without Pay to supplement Study Leave.

4.7 **How do ECTs apply for study leave?**

The process for obtaining study leave for staff (defined at s4.3), is as follows:

- (a) Study leave applications must be submitted in Easy Employer at least four weeks prior to commencement of the professional placement. The request must include the name of the unit of study related to the placement, the duration and dates of the professional placement period.
- (b) Study leave applications related to s4.5(a) or s4.5(b) must be submitted in Easy Employer at least four weeks prior to commencement of study leave dates. The request must include the name of the unit of study related to the placement and reason for request, such as assessment or testing period.
- (c) In assessing the application for study leave, Management will approve the application unless there are extenuating circumstances. Management will respond in writing to the applicant within two weeks of receiving the application.

5. **Links**

[ACECQA Definition of an Early Childhood Teacher](#)
[ACECQA Qualification Checker](#)
[ACT Children's Education and Care Assurance \(CECA\)](#)

6. **Feedback**

Feedback about this policy may be provided by emailing admin@baringa.org.au.

7. **Approval and Review Details**

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Board
Administrator	Management
Next Review Date	31 December 2023
History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	12 October 2020
Amendment Authority and Date Modifications made	12 October 2020 – This policy replaces 47. Study Leave Policy of the Policies and Procedural Manual (01/08/2016). 31 January 2023 – Update of policy based on current requirements.