

Child Care Worker ANZSCO 4211-11

South Australia September 2018

Current labour market rating: Child Care Worker (Certificate III) – No Shortage

Child Care Worker (Diploma) – No Shortage

Previous labour market rating (September 2017): Child Care Worker (Certificate III) – No Shortage

Child Care Worker (Diploma) – No Shortage

Comments

There is no shortage of child care workers holding certificate III and diploma qualifications. Employers reported challenges in attracting candidates that had the appropriate skills and experience for the role. Employers reported an increase in candidates who did not have the appropriate qualifications when applying for roles. Several applicants failed to present for trial and or interview and were therefore deemed unsuitable and unreliable.

Survey results¹

- Employers surveyed were from the public and independent sectors delivering a range of child care services.
- Of the employers surveyed who had recently advertised for certificate III qualified child care educators, 71 per cent of vacancies in 2018 were filled within four weeks.
- Of those employers that advertised for diploma-qualified child care workers in the last six months, 86 per cent of vacancies were filled within four weeks.
- On average, employers received 31.3 applicants for certificate III qualified vacancies, which is higher than the average in 2017-2018, which received 19.8 applicants.
- In this year's survey on average, there were 14.3 applicants for diploma qualified vacancies, which was considerably lower than the average of 24.1 applicants per vacancy received in 2017-18.
- The number of suitable applicants per vacancy was lower in 2018 at 1.8 for certificate III qualified applicants compared with the average of 2.1 in 2017.
- While all vacancies were filled for both certificate III and diploma level positions, certificate III level positions attracted, on average, slightly less suitable applicants per vacancy (1.7) compared with diploma level vacancies (1.8).
 - Both certificate III level and diploma level vacancies attracted, on average, less suitable applicants in this year's survey compared with the previous year (diploma level, 1.9 in 2017 compared with 1.5 in 2016; certificate III level, 2.5 in 2017 compared with 2.2 in 2016).
- The results of the survey indicate that there was no difficulty recruiting child care workers at either certificate III or diploma level qualifications.

Unsuitable applicants

- Although employers attracted an approximate average of 16 certificate III qualified applicants per vacancy, 89 per cent of these applicants were considered unsuitable.
- Of the 8.1 diploma qualified applicants who applied for vacancies, 47 per cent were considered unsuitable for employment.

¹ The methodology for this research is outlined at [Skill Shortage Research Methodology | Department of Jobs and Small Business](#).

- The two major reasons employers found applicants unsuitable was either a lack of the basic qualification or a lack of experience in the occupation.
- Several applicants were deemed unsuitable due to failing to attend interviews, trials and not contacting the employer to advise they were unable to attend.
- Some employers had concerns that some courses were too short and provided a standard of training that was below their expectations.
- Other reasons for unsuitability included lacking the right attitude or applicants applying for roles were unable to find a job in their field of choice and therefore were looking for work in child care as a secondary choice.
- For diploma level vacancies, employers sought applicants who were highly experienced and had excellent communication skills to develop good relationships with children, families and staff.
- Some employers required specific experience, for example working with children from diverse backgrounds, or willingness to work unusual casual or shift hours.

Demand and supply trends

- According to the Department of Education and Training the number of South Australian children in approved child care (across all service types) increased minimally from 86,230 to 86,260 (0.03 per cent) to the September quarter 2017. This result remains steady considering that there was a 2.5 per cent decrease in the year to the September quarter 2016. The trend to the previous five years from 2010-15 had seen a steady increase in enrolments.²
- The department's data also shows that the number of child care services operating within the state remained steady for the year to September 2017.³
- According to research commissioned by the Department of Education, in 2013 there were 4160 paid contact staff in the SA Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector with certificate III,IV and diploma in comparison to 2016 where there was a slight increase with 4400 paid contact staff with certificate III,IV and diploma qualifications.⁴
- The Department of Jobs and Small Business Internet Vacancy Index data for South Australia showed the number of internet vacancies for childcare workers had decreased slightly in June 2018 with an average of 57 in comparison to June 2017, which had an average of 63.⁵
- In 2012, the Australian Government established the National Quality Framework to raise quality in Australian education and care services. New requirements have been phased in and will continue to 2020. These include an increased emphasis on diploma-level early childhood education and care qualifications and higher educator to child ratios.⁶
- NCVER training data ending 2017 shows commencement numbers have continued to decline (1987) at the diploma level. The number of students enrolled in diploma-level training courses in children's services was (3250) in 2016 and (3559) in 2015.⁷
- The number of students undertaking certificate III level training courses in children's services remained steady in 2017 with (1798) commencements. NCVER training data reflects that commencements were at an all-time high (2572) in 2014 and have fluctuated since.⁸

² Department of Education and Training, Early Childhood and Child Care in Summary September quarter 2017 (Dec 2012 – Sept 2016).

³ Department of Education and Training, Child Care and Early Learning in Summary September quarter 2016

⁴ The Social Research Centre, National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census, 2013 and 2016

⁵ Department of Jobs and Small Business, Internet Vacancy Index, August 2018, 12 month moving average.

⁶ <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework>

⁷ NCVER VOCSTATS training statistics do not include data from private registered training organisations.

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- Completions have declined in both certificate III and diploma programs, completions for certificate III in 2017 were 568 and completions in the diploma program were 590. Certificate III completions were at a high in 2014 at 1862 and diploma level completions followed suit in 2016 with 1124 completions. Diploma completions almost halved in 2017.⁹

⁹ NCVET VOCSTATS training statistics do not include data from private registered training organisations.