



# Child Care Worker ANZSCO 4211-11

## New South Wales September 2018

### Current labour market rating:

Child Care Worker (Diploma)	Shortage
Child Care Worker (Certificate III)	Shortage

### Previous labour market rating (September 2017):

Child Care Worker (Diploma)	No shortage
Child Care Worker (Certificate III)	No shortage

### Comments

There is a shortage of child care worker with a Diploma and Certificate III in metropolitan and regional NSW. Employers were generally not able to fill vacancies in metropolitan NSW however, employers in regional NSW were generally able to fill vacancies.

It should be noted this year, only a small number of responses were able to be obtained from regional employers about their recent recruitment experience. The majority were in metropolitan areas across various child care services. Regional employers indicated the difficulty to find quality applicants and found recruitment very challenging.

### Survey results<sup>1</sup>

- The Department of Jobs and Small Business surveyed employers who had recently advertised for child care worker in the following areas: preschools, kindergarten, long day care, community based and privately owned child care centres and hospitals.

### Employer Requirements

- In general, employers sought the following in applicants:
  - Qualifications as required by the role such as, a Diploma or Certificate III recognised by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).
  - Employers required additional accreditations such as, Working with Children Check, First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification, Asthma and Anaphylaxis Training, Child Protection Training and National Police Check.
  - Many employers required previous experience working in early childhood centres or a similar role. However, some employers indicated that prior experience was desirable but not essential and an applicant's personality with the right attitude to get the job done were most valuable.

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

- Knowledge and familiarity of Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Framework and Work Health and Safety policies.

### Vacancies filled

- Across NSW, 56 per cent of vacancies were filled within the survey period compared with 75 per cent in September 2017 for Child Care Worker with a Diploma.
- Across NSW, 56 per cent of vacancies were filled within the survey period compared with 87 per cent in September 2017 for Child Care Worker with a Certificate III.
- Employers were generally able to fill vacancies across preschools, kindergarten and child care centres however, metropolitan recruitment firms, community service providers and privately owned child care centres found it most difficult to fill their vacancies. Employers planned to fill unfilled vacancies through word of mouth and re-advertising.

### Applicants per vacancy

#### Child Care Worker (Diploma)

- Across NSW, there was an average of 19.3 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 2.1 applicants were considered suitable by employers.
- By comparison, in 2017 there was an average of 6.4 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 1.4 applicants were considered suitable by employers.

#### Child Care Worker (Certificate III)

- Across NSW, there was an average of 4.8 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 1.6 applicants were considered suitable by employers.
- By comparison, in 2017 there was an average of 5.2 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 1.3 applicants were considered suitable by employers.

### Metropolitan and regional results

#### Child Care Worker (Diploma)

- In metropolitan regions, there was an average of 15.6 applicants per vacancy and 11 per cent were considered suitable by employers.
  - Employers in metropolitan areas were able to fill 43 per cent of vacancies.
  - While there was an average of 15.6 applicants per vacancy, this figure has been inflated by an employer who attracted a considerable amount of applicants. When this employer's data is removed, the remaining employers attracted an average of 6.3 applicants per vacancy. Irrespective of the number of applicants, employers considered few suitable for the vacancies.
- In regional areas, there was an average of 32.5 applicants per vacancy and 11 per cent were considered suitable by employers.
  - Employers in regional areas were able to fill 100 per cent of vacancies.
  - While there was an average of 32.5 applicants per vacancy, this figure has been inflated by an employer who attracted a considerable amount of applicants. When this employer's data is removed, the remaining employers attracted an average of 15.0 applicants per vacancy. Irrespective of the number of

applicants, employers considered few suitable for the vacancies and found it difficult to find quality applicants, noting there were only a small number of regional employer responses.

- On average, metropolitan vacancies attracted 13.6 applicants with qualifications compared to 17.5 applicants with qualifications per vacancy in regional areas.

#### Child Care Worker (Certificate III)

- In metropolitan regions, there was an average of 3.5 applicants per vacancy and 17 per cent were considered suitable by employers.
  - Employers in metropolitan areas were able to fill 42 per cent of vacancies.
- In regional areas, there was an average of 8.5 applicants per vacancy and 56 per cent were considered suitable by employers.
  - Employers in regional areas were able to fill 100 per cent of vacancies.
- On average, metropolitan vacancies attracted 2.9 applicants with qualifications compared to 5.8 applicants with qualifications per vacancy in regional areas.

#### Unsuitable applicants

- The reasons given by employers on why an applicant was considered unsuitable include:
  - Lack of qualification and additional accreditation for instance, current working with children check.
  - Insufficient experience working as a child care worker such as, four years constant employment as a child care worker.
  - Familiarity and knowledge with various industry regulations and frameworks.
  - Lack of skill set sought by the employer including strong communication skills (written and verbal) to communicate with parents and staff, leadership skills and ability to work autonomously and as a team.
  - Lack of computer literacy skills, such as using different computer and mobile applications.
  - Poorly written CV's and applications which did not address the application selection criteria.
  - Lack of employability and reliability for instance, not able to conduct telephone manners and failing to attend scheduled interview or having a passion in the occupation.
  - Locality of applicant and their proximity to work for instance, not willing to hire someone who needs hours to commute to work.
  - Not having Australian working rights, applicants requiring sponsorship or having other visa restrictions such as, restrictions in work hours.

#### Demand and supply trends

- Demand for the occupation has grown in recent years due to rising underlying demand for early childhood education and care services and increased government funding for these services.
  - In December 2017, the number of children using child care services in NSW was around 434,100 (an increase of nearly 21 per cent over four years).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Australian Government Department of Education and Training, *Early Childhood and Child Care in Summary*, various issues.

- The number of approved long day care and outside school hours service providers increased by around 18 per cent over the four years to December 2017.<sup>3</sup>
- From 2 July 2018, the Department of Education and Training implemented a new child care package. This includes a new Child Care Subsidy (which replaced the Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate) and a \$1.2 billion Safety Net to give the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, included those from regional and remote communities, a strong start through access to quality early learning and child care.<sup>4</sup>
- Data from the 2016 Census indicates:
  - The median age group for child care workers is 30 to 34 years of age. The proportion of people aged 25 to 34 years comprised 27 per cent of child care centre workers, which is slightly higher than in the professional, technical, and trade occupations at 23 per cent which indicates that the entry of this age group into the labour force is slightly higher for this occupation.<sup>5</sup>
  - Around 59 per cent of child care centre workers were working in child care services with 27 per cent employed in preschool education. Another four per cent were in local government administration and around three per cent were in primary education.<sup>6</sup>
  - The majority in the occupation, around 96 per cent were female.<sup>7</sup>
- The number of students that have completed a child care diploma program compared to the previous year has dropped by 29 per cent to 3,568 with the completions of Certificate III programs remaining similar at 5,124 an increase of two per cent.<sup>8</sup>
  - The number of students enrolled in child care diploma programs in NSW averaged around 8,300 in the two years to 2017. This was a decrease of around 20 per cent compared to the two years to 2015. Certificate III programs commencements averaged around 13,200 in the two years to 2017 and have remained relatively similar to the average to the two years to 2015, with an increase of four per cent.<sup>9</sup>
- The average monthly level of internet vacancies for child care centre worker in NSW in the year ended September 2018 had a relatively small increase of three per cent from that for the previous two years.<sup>10</sup>

## Other indicators and issues

- Some employers in metropolitan NSW indicated that they have found it difficult to recruit due to having many child care centers around their location creating a competitive recruitment environment.
- Some employers expressed concern regarding applicants where English was their second language. They found that though they may have the qualifications some applicants lacked fluency in written and spoken English, understanding of the role and passion of the occupation, which did not make them a right fit for the company.
- Many metropolitan and regional employers located in the Northern Beaches, North Shore and Far South Coast found it particularly difficult to recruit due to the lack of applicants applying, transportation issues for people travelling to these areas such as, the lack of public transport near the centres and no parking on site.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Government Department of Education and Training, *The New Child Care Package*, <https://www.education.gov.au/ChildCarePackage> (accessed 21 November 2018).

<sup>5</sup> ABS, 2016 Census of Population and Housing.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> NCVET, *Total VET students and courses*, program completions, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> NCVET, *Total VET students and courses*, program enrolments, 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Department of Employment, Internet Vacancy Index, 12 month moving averages.

Some employers planned to fill these vacancies by increasing remuneration, offering extra incentives such as leave, bonuses and paid parking.

- The Australian Government established the National Quality Framework (NQF) in 2012 to improve the quality and requirements in early childhood education and care services. The new requirements have been phased in and will continue to 2020. This includes a higher educator to child ratios and educators with increased skills and qualifications with emphasis on diploma-level education and care qualification.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority, <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework>