

REPORT ON ECCE KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE STANDARDS FOR EMERGING AND INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

HB Ebrahim (PhD)

Professor and UNESCO Co-chair for ECD

ECCE PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK AND QUALIFICATION DEVELOPMENT

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STRUCTURE

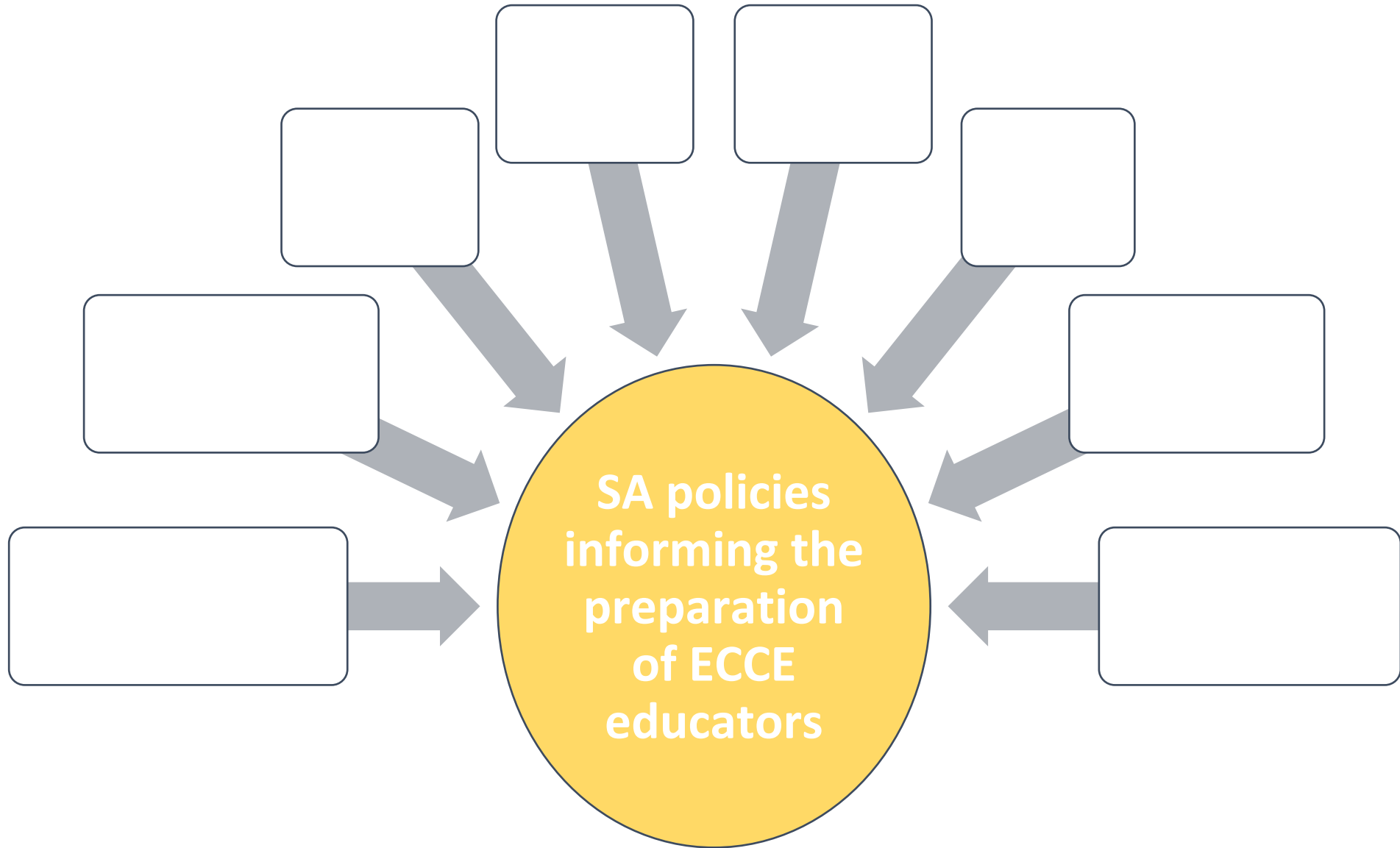
- Context
- Support ECCE policies
- Competency based model
- Messages for principles
- 10 competencies to consider for knowledge and practice standards
- Examples of how the knowledge and practice standards have been designed



CONTEXT THAT WARRANTS ACTION IN ECCE TEACHER EDUCATION

Vulnerable early childhoods

- There are 6 311 000 children under 6 in South Africa (South African ECD Review 2016). Geographical location and socio-economic conditions impacts negatively on children's lives. In the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga more than 60% of children under 6 live in rural areas. Four million children under 6 live in the poorest 40% households.
- *Women's work with little or no pay – naturalisation of nurturance*
- *Unstable workforce – low retention*
- *Teacher quality - poor response to babies, toddlers and children with special needs*
- *A fragmentary field of training – no coherent system for ECCE teacher education*



THE COMPETENCY BASED MODEL

- The *PLMRP* (2017) uses a competency-based model for ECCE teacher education.
- Tells us *what ECCE educators should be able to know and do*.
- The competencies provide *benchmarks of what the minimum levels of achievement* in various aspects of practice should be.
- In the *PLMRP* (2017) the basic competencies for professionally qualifications are listed in **Appendix One**. There are also indications of competencies in other parts of the document such as the knowledge mix e.g. pedagogic learning.
- There needs to be a **better organisation of the competencies for it to function as knowledge and practice standards** that can inform programmed design, monitoring, evaluations etc.

SOME THOUGHTS ON TOP-DOWN KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE STANDARDS

- When this approach is strong then there can be the risk of promoting **one particular view of teaching and what it means to be a teacher** (Sachs 2003) – NARROW AND LEADS TO TECHNICAL PRACTICE
- To obviate this, it is expected that the field would collaborate to **develop a shared framework** to inform programme development.
- In the Foundation Phase this has been problematic as there is **no community of practice** guiding this type of work.
- Additionally, there is **institutional competitiveness** and this hampers collaborative endeavours for programme development.

VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE STANDARDS OF SA ECCE

- National regulatory frameworks with appropriate minimum standards can better “level the playing field” by ensuring that all children benefit from a minimum quality of education and care (Belsky, 2011; Eurydice, 2009; Vandebroek, 2011). **Raising standards or setting minimum standards can help reduce knowledge gaps for all**, although the effect is greater for low-income, immigrant and minority children (OECD, 2006 & 2011).
- The defining of knowledge and practices for ECCE standards must be **done by a community of practice** made up of a variety of providers from the profession. It should be used flexibly and adapted to address contextual realities.
- The outlining of the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions can guide the building of foundations for a strong workforce. ECCE educators can begin to **identify themselves not just through a Diploma and Degree qualifications but through knowledge and practice competencies** that are gained through participating in the learning opportunities offered in the qualifications.
- The goal should be the use of the **knowledge and practice standards as a basis** for curriculum development, approval of programmes by the DHET and CHE, evaluations by teacher educators and awarding of degrees.

MESSAGES FOR PRINCIPLES FOR ECCE T.ED

ECCE educators are lifelong learners and need to be developed (critically) reflective practitioners

Children's rights must be respected and all actions must be in the best interest of children

Children in early childhood are competent and vulnerable too

Holistic child development and learning must be the focus of all programmes

Equity, diversity and inclusion must be addressed

Quality early care and learning supported by responsive pedagogies including play must be addressed

Parents, families and members of the community must be recognised, respected and encouraged to work as partners.

Interprofessional and multisectoral partnerships are important

10 Core Competencies for knowledge and practice standards found in SA ECCE qualifications and the *PLMRP* (2017)

1. Becoming a professional by paying attention to **mindset, roles and responsibilities**
2. Understanding and promoting **child development and learning** in different contexts
3. Building **family and community relationships**
4. Ensuring effective **health, safety and nutrition practices**
5. Creating **effective learning environments** including managing behaviour
6. Planning and facilitating learning through **play and other transformative pedagogies in appropriate ways (developmentally, culturally linguistically)**
7. Using **curriculum and relevant content knowledge** to build meaningful learning opportunities (6 Early Learning and Development Areas (ELDAs) in NCF)
8. **Observing, documenting and assessing** to support young children's development and learning
9. Understanding and addressing **diversity, inclusion and equity** to act in the best interest of all children
10. Showing **basic leadership, management and administration skills**

DO YOU AGREE? ARE THERE OMISSIONS?

THEMES INFORMING THE CORE COMPETENCIES



Professional Knowledge (Knowing)

Knowledge of child development and learning in different contexts that characterises young children's lives

- **Knowledge of** diversity, inclusive education and barriers to learning and development
- **Knowledge of** health, safety, nutrition
- **Knowledge of** learning environments in a variety of ECD contexts
- **Knowledge of** the approved curriculum and related content knowledge and concepts to build a meaningful and contextually responsive learning opportunities (e.g. communication and language development and exploring mathematics – ELDAs in NCF)
- **Knowledge of** planning and facilitating early learning that is developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate - Knowledge of play and other transformative pedagogies
- **Knowledge of** relationships and interactions with young children
- **Knowledge of** observing and assessing young children
- **Knowledge of** parents, families and community and how to work in partnerships
- **Knowledge of** basic leadership, management and administrative skills

Professional Practice (Doing)

Ability to address children's development and learning in context and in appropriate ways.

- **Ability to** adapt planning and facilitation strategies to address inclusion and equity
- **Ability to** promote and effective health, safety and nutrition practices
- **Ability to** create effective learning environments (physical space, resources/materials, activities, classroom management as well as emotional climate)
- **Ability to** manage children's behaviour
- **Ability to** use the approved curriculum to plan and facilitate early learning in developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate ways - using play and other transformative pedagogies
- **Ability to** use relationships and interactions to advance children's development and learning
- **Ability to** observe, document, assess children to support their learning
- **Ability to** building family and community relationships
- **Ability to** show basic leadership, management and administrative skills

Professional mindset, role and responsibilities and values Becoming a professional

- Begins engaging as a critically reflective practitioner and as an advocate for children's rights
- Demonstrates ethical practice with children and fellow colleagues.
- Participates in learning opportunities with peers
- Demonstrates an understanding of policies, regulations for ECCE settings
- Uses technology for own learning and to facilitate children's learning
- Builds competence in multilingualism

Standard	Observing, documenting and assessing to support young children’s development and learning	
	Knowledge	Practice based on the knowledge
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and evaluation must be valid, reliable, and sensitive to the cultural and linguistic background of the child. Theoretical insights must also be use. • Practices must include observing children in natural situations and documenting observations through a variety of strategies. • Assessment procedures must be planned in accordance with up-to-date information on appropriate methods, sensitivity to individual and cultural differences, and with regard to the overall purpose of assessment. • Informal assessments and initial screenings are used to determine whether additional assessment and/or consultation are needed • Families are encouraged to share information about their children’s interests, activities, behaviors, developmental progress, health, and prior experiences. • Confidentiality of assessment results is respected with legal and ethical considerations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment Plan and Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan assessment procedures that: • Use formal and informal methods to identify and document children’s interests, strengths and challenges. • Employ assessment theories used for decision making and curriculum planning. • Implement assessment practices and interpret results with sensitivity to individual differences in children's ability levels as well as families' cultures, languages, and environmental factors. • Reflect the overall purpose of assessment and articulate the limits of norm-referenced and standardised assessments. 2. Communication with families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with families to share assessment plans and information as well as to plan follow-up services and developmental learning experiences based on assessment. 3. Confidentiality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain confidentiality of assessment results in accordance with ethical and legal considerations, including the importance of avoiding

Diploma
(should include and build on knowledge and practice standards from the certificate)

- Identifies various ways to get to know each child as an individual and his/her background (cultural, linguistic, developmental)
- Follows procedures for collecting data about each child's development
- Uses a system for collection of children's work samples and observations
- Explains the importance of screening children for health and developmental progress
- Shares notes with families about children's day and their learning
- Participates in making referrals to key personnel and maintains confidentiality

Degree
(includes and builds on the Diploma)

- Uses assessment tools that are relevant to curriculum or program planning
- Objectively observes and documents children's activities and interactions with others
- Uses observation on a regular basis to document children's growth and development including social emotional, physical, cognitive, language, and creative, using multiple measures (e.g., running records, anecdotal records, time sampling, checklists, surveys)
- Keeps accurate and up to date records of children's health and developmental screening
- Maintains a collection of work samples and records of varying types of observations for each child (e.g., pictures, written observations, tape recordings)
- Uses assessment information in curriculum planning, designing the environment, working with parents, and developing goals for the children
- Maintains confidentiality when dealing with sensitive