

Child Care Coordinator	Queensland
ASCO Code: 1295-11	February 2008
Labour market rating	<i>Shortage</i>

Occupational demand

Child care coordinators are responsible for managing the short and long-term planning of a child care service, including overseeing the daily operations in relation to families, children and staff, and ensuring the service complies with relevant legislative requirements. A growing population and rising levels of female labour force participation have stimulated solid growth in the number of child care facilities opening across Queensland. This growth has generated strong and steady demand for child care coordinators to manage those services.

Occupational supply

Entry to this occupation is via the completion of, or enrolment in a three-year qualification in early childhood or child care studies or an Advanced Diploma of Children's Services. However, a service with a licensed capacity of not more than 30 children may engage a coordinator with a two-year qualification. In addition to the prescribed qualifications, people working in child care services are required to have a current positive prescribed notice (Blue Card), issued by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian. Supply from training is difficult to quantify for this profession as there is a wide range of qualifying degrees and the advanced diploma figures were unavailable. However, as one indicator, data from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations show that an annual average number of 670 students have enrolled in and 450 students have completed early childhood education degrees since 2003. Labour Force Survey figures show that the child care coordinator workforce grew by approximately 660 persons over the year to February 2008. It is possible that the balance of growth came from other graduate areas or supply may have been supported by interstate migration. Department of Immigration and Citizenship data show that an annual average of only three self-identified child care coordinators have migrated to Queensland from overseas since 2003.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

Overall, only 62 per cent of vacancies for child care coordinators were filled within six weeks of advertising. The filled rate in regional Queensland was significantly lower (50 per cent) compared with Brisbane (64 per cent) and regardless of location, the majority of employers had to advertise repeatedly over several months. In some cases, after failing to attract suitable applicants, respondents filled vacancies by promoting existing staff and encouraging professional development. Employers considered two thirds of the applicants as unsuitable because they did not have adequate experience or qualifications. This year, contacts reported high levels of wastage from the occupation as workers left to take positions in the education sector. These employers claimed that until the remuneration offered is commensurate with the time and cost of additional study, skill level, and the duties and workplace responsibilities required for the coordinator position, the wastage will continue. Other employers claimed that recruitment success is directly linked to employment conditions, for instance, the age of the centre, above award wages and bonuses. Employers from this study offering these or other employee incentives reported few difficulties filling vacancies.

Labour market outlook

Demand for child care co-ordinators is expected to strengthen given Queensland's growing female participation rate and general population growth. Queensland's Department of Communities data show that the average number of licensed child care services in Queensland has increased by 9.4 per cent each year since 2003 with 2420 licences recorded in 2007. Demand for child care coordinators is likely to increase as an additional 230 services come into operation over the next 12 months, and shortages will persist.