



Learning
for *Living*

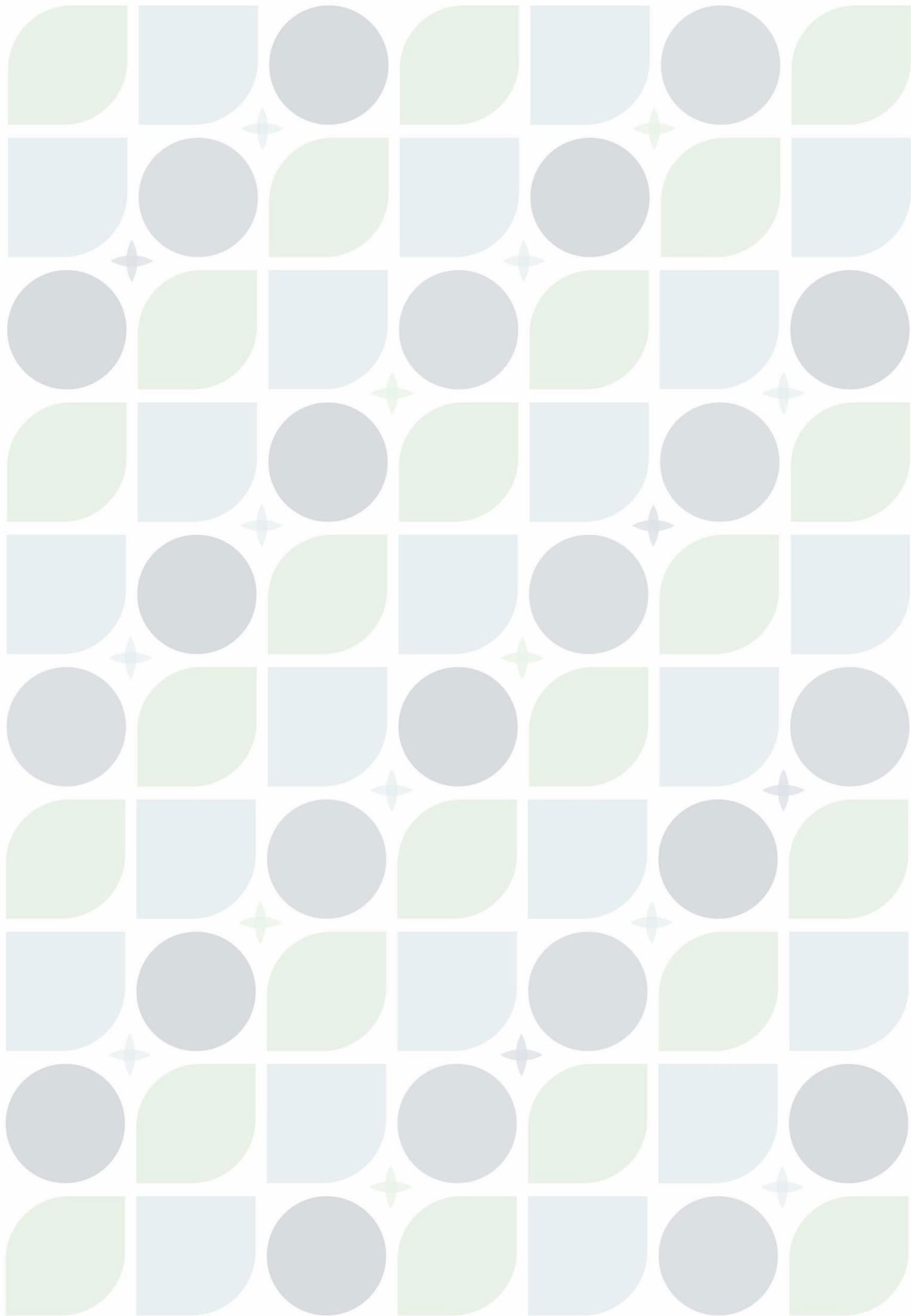
DEA

Professional Standards and Competencies



Developmental
Educators
Australia

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PROFESSIONALISM

1. Ethical and Professional Conduct

Developmental Educators practice in an ethical and professional manner

1.1	Uphold ethical practice in accordance with the DEA Code of Ethics and Practice (2025).
1.2	Implement safe, lawful and accountable practice that complies with legislation, standards, policies and protocols.
1.3	Respect and value the perspectives and lived experiences of people with disability.
1.4	Apply critical and reflective thinking to evaluate own values, biases, cultural identity, personal and professional abilities and challenges.
1.5	Maintain currency of professional knowledge and skills through ongoing professional development, supervision and research to enhance skills and practice.
1.6	Practise within own level of competence and expertise, and in alignment with the Developmental Educators Australia Scope of Practice (2026).
1.7	Recognise when practice is outside scope and refer as needed to access discipline-specific expertise.
1.8	Contribute to the advancement of knowledge and practice in developmental education.
1.9	Utilise collaborative practice that promotes equity, inclusion, and shared decision-making with people with disability, families, and other professionals.
1.10	Apply multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary models of practice.
1.11	Implement professional and interpersonal skills to communicate with diverse audiences.
1.12	Utilise respectful language, communication, imagery and representations of disability across all contexts.
1.13	Uphold professional boundaries and practise self-care.
1.14	Obtain informed consent and maintain confidentiality.



KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE

2. Disability Perspectives and Theory

Developmental Educators articulate and apply contemporary perspectives and theories

2.1	Apply the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to uphold the rights of people with disability.
2.2	Apply knowledge of historical and cultural perspectives and theories of disability to inform practice and their impact for people with disability.
2.3	Apply contemporary models of disability including social, human rights, and biopsychosocial, to inform practice.
2.4	Integrate critical perspectives in disability studies, intersectionality and lived experience into professional practice.
2.5	Apply knowledge of health factors of people with disability to inform practice.
2.6	Demonstrate knowledge of practices that support access, equity, justice and inclusion for people with disability.

3. Principles of Disability Practice

Developmental Educators articulate, model and apply principles of person-centred, neuroaffirming and evidence-informed practice.

3.1	Embed person-centred principles in practice.
3.2	Integrate principles of neuro-affirming principles into practice.
3.3	Implement strengths-based principles in practice.
3.4	Promote and uphold inclusion, rights, agency, and voice of people with disability within their communities
3.5	Apply evidence-informed practice to guide decision-making and outcomes.
3.6	Embed trauma-informed principles in practice.
3.7	Implement culturally safe, inclusive, responsive practice to support people with disability and, where relevant, their families from diverse backgrounds and identities.
3.8	Utilise a holistic and life course approach to practice.
3.9	Apply knowledge of the impact of physiological, psychological and environmental factors on health, functioning, participation and well-being to inform practice.



3.10	Apply knowledge of the impact of cognitive, communication, sensory and motor differences on participation, functioning, communication, learning, behaviour, and well-being to inform practice.
3.11	Integrate knowledge of environmental and systemic factors to inform inclusion, participation, self-determination, and agency in practice.
3.12	Embed co-design with people with disability to develop person-centred programs, practices and systems.

APPLICATION AND PRACTICE

4. Evidence-Informed Decision-Making

Developmental Educators make professional decisions on the basis of best available evidence, the preferences and values of the client and their own expertise

4.1	Apply ethical assessment principles to select and undertake a range of assessment processes.
4.2	Ensure assessment practices are delivered within professional scope and are aligned with the goals of people with disability.
4.3	Integrate strength-based and neuro-affirming principles into assessment processes.
4.4	Apply ethical practice and integrate theory and evidence to select, administer, score, and interpret formal and informal assessments.
4.5	Utilise data and assessment to inform decision making.
4.6	Communicate assessment results in a manner that is accessible for different stakeholders.
4.7	Engage people with disability, families, and other professionals in collaborative assessment and data-informed decision-making.
4.8	Apply evidence-informed practice, integrating research, professional expertise, and the preferences and context of people with disability.
4.9	Apply clinical reasoning to synthesise assessment findings and formulate a description, plan and recommendations.



5. Capacity building

Developmental educators promote the development of skills to enhance inclusion, sense of competence and quality of life

5.1	Apply a holistic approach that is responsive to the person's interests, identity and context.
5.2	Promote and foster choice, self-determination, self-confidence, autonomy, and self-advocacy for people with a disability.
5.3	Promote and model safety, respect, and dignity to support relationship development.
5.4	Apply evidence-informed practice to support development, use and maintenance of skills and strategies across domains and contexts.
5.5	Support transitions across life stages and contexts using evidence-informed practice.
5.6	Co-design with people with disability in planning, goal setting and evaluation of outcomes.
5.7	Implement environmental adjustments that reduce barriers and promote access and inclusion.
5.8	Implement strategies that support diverse communication methods such as augmentative and alternative communication and Auslan.
5.9	Co-produce resources (e.g. Easy Read, picture cards, social stories, visual supports) to facilitate access to communication.

6. Health, Well-Being, Self-Determination and Behaviour

Developmental Educators employ a human-rights and neuro-affirming approach to behaviour support that focuses on quality of life

6.1	Integrate ethical and human rights principles into behaviour support practice.
6.2	Recognise and respond to behaviour as meaningful, multifaceted, and influenced by communication and context.
6.3	Collect and analyse information and data to understand the function and context of behaviour.
6.4	Co-design person-centred and multi-component positive behaviour support plans in partnership with people with disability.
6.5	Collaborate with stakeholders to implement consistent and cohesive behaviour support across environments.
6.6	Integrate evidence-informed, rights-based supports to reduce and eliminate restrictive practices.
6.7	Assess risk and vulnerability and respond to potential harm to physical or mental health and well-being.



6.8	Provide knowledge and expertise on behaviour support principles and approaches to individuals, families and broader support contexts.
6.9	Implement strategies and provide expertise to support health, well-being, and self-determination.
7. Disability Advocacy <i>Developmental Educators advocate for justice, access, equity and inclusion.</i>	
7.1	Identify and act to reduce and/or eliminate ableism across contexts, systems, policies and practices.
7.2	Advocate to achieve outcomes aligned with the rights, goals, and preferences of people with disability.
7.3	Promote and support self-advocacy and self-determination of people with disability.
7.4	Identify and collaborate with others to reduce and eliminate barriers to self-advocacy and self-determination.
8. Access, Education and Collaborative Engagement <i>Developmental Educators collaboratively engage with systems and communities to improve access to and participation in education, health, work and community; improve knowledge and understanding of disability and diversity; and build capacity for people, families and communities.</i>	
8.1	Strengthen understanding of disability and diversity among individuals, families and communities.
8.2	Integrate universal design principles to support access and participation across contexts.
8.3	Apply knowledge of systems and supports to guide connections and inform referrals.
8.4	Apply a holistic, approach to understand and respond to the needs of both people with disability and their families.
8.5	Apply case management principles to coordinate, connect and monitor supports that empower people with disability and, where relevant, their families.
8.6	Utilise foundational counselling skills to support people with disability and families.
8.7	Implement culturally informed practice to engage with and support people with disability and families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including First Nations people.



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