

## FACULTY OF ARTS

Macquarie School of Education  
Macquarie University  
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**MACQUARIE**  
University  
SYDNEY · AUSTRALIA

Dear Ms Julia Finn, MP, Committee Chair

Thank you for the invitation to provide information about how the arts and music are taught in our initial teacher education courses at Macquarie University.

Research demonstrates that Primary School teachers do not feel confident to teach Music (e.g., Burak, 2019). In some schools this is circumvented by employing a Specialist Music teacher but for many schools this is not an option that has been made available to them. The provision of Professional Learning opportunities, however, particularly in relation to Music education, has proven successful and has been met with enthusiasm (Powell, 2019, Powell & La Rocca, 2021). So, the issue is twofold: How do we prepare our ITE students to engage children effectively in Creative Arts education learning when they have little or no prior experience or skill; and how do we support our existing teachers to engage children in Creative Arts education experiences? Anecdotally, ITE students and teachers report feeling underprepared and under skilled for providing music education to their students. Current research in the Macquarie School of Education is focused on upskilling teachers and preservice teachers and developing their understanding and capacity to teach music and the arts.

In the Macquarie School of Education, the Creative Arts are taught in our Primary and Early Childhood courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. In each of our units we cover Music and Dance (combined), Drama, and Visual Arts. Students attend classes in these artforms in each unit taught and, depending on the course and mode of study, this ranges from 12 to 24 hours of face-to-face teaching. Creative Arts teaching staff have responded to the needs of ITE students by taking an active and embodied approach to arts education and have integrated the teaching of the Arts with other Key Learning Areas. For example, how can a teacher use music in Science, or Maths, or History? Our focus is teaching creatively for creativity across all artforms, including music, in a way that empowers teachers and preservice teachers to engage children in creative learning, regardless of skill level.

From 2025, Macquarie School of Education will launch a suite of new courses, and we are excited that our Creative Arts unit offerings will provide students with a greater number of teaching and learning hours in each of the artforms described above, across our ITE degrees.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Sarah Powell

On behalf of Professor Deborah Youdell

Dean, Macquarie School of Education