

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Manage a Quality Curriculum

Unit code: DN89 35

Unit purpose: The Unit is intended for candidates who are employed in an early education and childcare setting or who have access to one. It is designed to enable candidates to identify a range of quality curricula and to evaluate their role in developing and maintaining such a provision. The term ‘curriculum’ should be considered to encompass more than a specific document, set of guidelines or support materials used in any setting(s) or establishment(s). It should take account of the wider concepts of, and approaches to, providing for and managing a learning environment used across the age ranges – birth-3, 3-5, 5-8 and 8-12 where appropriate.

On completion of this Unit the candidate should be able to:

- ◆ Understand the concept of a quality curriculum
- ◆ Develop and plan for a quality curriculum
- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of their contribution in the development and maintenance of a quality curriculum

Credit points and level: 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 8 (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: It is recommended that the candidates should have already achieved some recognised qualifications in early years eg HNC, SVQ3 or equivalent. They should have experience of working in an early years setting.

Core skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components. However there may be opportunities to develop Core Skills of Communication, Working with Others and Problem Solving.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of the group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes. This Unit is included in the framework for the PDA Certificate in Early Education and Childcare (level 8).

Assessment: It is recommended that Outcome 1 be assessed by means of a written report and Outcomes 2 and 3 be holistically assessed by a write up of a project.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Evaluate the concept of a quality curriculum

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Current curriculum approaches
- ◆ Values and principles underpinning the curriculum
- ◆ Theories influencing the curriculum

Evidence requirements

By the end of Outcome 1 the candidate should understand the elements that contribute to a quality curriculum from a range of curriculum approaches studied. The candidate should examine national and local curriculum guidelines, at least three models of curricula and two recognised approaches. The candidate should also examine at least one example of a curriculum which supports inclusion and/or provides additional support for children with additional educational requirements.

The candidate should write a report which evaluates the concept of a quality curriculum making reference to at least two recognised approaches.

Assessment guidelines

The candidate should write a report (approximately 1000 words) which evaluates the concept of a quality curriculum making reference to at least two recognised approaches.

Outcome 2

Develop and plan for a quality curriculum

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Provision of a learning environment, which supports the implementation of a curriculum
- ◆ A curriculum which supports the needs of the group/individual child
- ◆ Working in partnership with others in developing and planning the curriculum
- ◆ The role of a manager in developing and planning the curriculum

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Evidence requirements

The candidate should demonstrate their ability to take a lead role in developing and planning for a quality curriculum. The candidate must provide evidence which shows their knowledge of how the early year's childcare environment should be structured and resourced, including physical, material and human resources. They should show how they provide for equality of opportunities and equality of access.

This Outcome should be assessed jointly with Outcome 3.

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome will be assessed with Outcome three as one piece of work.

Outcome 3

Evaluate the effectiveness of the adult contribution to the development and maintenance of a quality curriculum

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ A range of techniques used to evaluate curriculum provision
- ◆ Ways of developing future provision
- ◆ The contribution of significant adults in the development of the curriculum

Evidence requirements

The candidate should critically evaluate the effectiveness of the curricular programme. They should use a range of techniques in order to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum programme. The candidate should use the evaluations in order to identify ways of developing future curricular provision.

This Outcome should be assessed with Outcome 3 and should take the form of write up of a project.

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome will be assessed with Outcome two. It could take the form of a project (approximately 1500-2000 words) which details the candidate's responsibilities and role in the development and planning of the curriculum across a period of time eg one month. The project should include evidence of the planning process, samples of children's work, materials used for evaluation and proposed developments for future provision.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DN89 35
Unit title:	Manage a Quality Curriculum
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Manage a Quality Curriculum

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit will be delivered as part of the group award PDA Early Education and Childcare. It gives candidates the opportunity to investigate a range of curriculum approaches. It will give them the opportunity to evaluate their own role in the development and maintenance of the curriculum.

The term ‘curriculum’ should be considered to encompass more than a specific document, set of guidelines or support materials used in any setting(s) or establishment(s). It should take account of the wider concepts of, and approaches to, providing for and managing a learning environment used across the age ranges – birth-3, 3-5, 5-8 and 8-12 where appropriate.

It is intended for candidates who have some experience of working in an early education and childcare setting. The candidate will have the opportunity to develop their knowledge of the theories, concepts and values of curricula and will investigate the concept of a ‘quality’ curriculum. They will investigate a curriculum in operation and evaluate the adult role in its development and maintenance.

This Unit may also be suitable for candidates who did not take the ‘Curriculum and Assessment in an Early Education and Childcare Setting’ option as part of the HNC in Early Education and Childcare.

There may be links with other units within the PDA Early Education and Childcare e.g. with Managing Quality in Early Education and Childcare Settings, Early Education and Childcare: Graded Unit 2 and International Perspectives in Early Education and Childcare.

In Outcome 1 the following issues may be considered when identifying what constitutes a quality curriculum:

- ◆ Models of curricula e.g. developmental, progressive, spiral
- ◆ The Reggio Emilia Approach
- ◆ The New Zealand Model
- ◆ National/Local Curriculum Guidelines – include guidelines for various age ranges
- ◆ Values underpinning the curriculum/The Hidden Curriculum
- ◆ Play and the Curriculum
- ◆ The High Scope Approach

Candidates should examine the work of recognised ‘theorists’ which has had an impact on curriculum development. The work of some of the following may be explored:
Tina Bruce, Trevarthen, Sylva, Bruner, Vygotsky.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Manage a Quality Curriculum

Candidates should familiarise themselves with current frameworks in use to support the delivery of the curriculum. Where possible candidates should have the opportunity to see some of these approaches in action (perhaps through video material, visiting speakers or visits to settings where such approaches are in use)

In Outcome 2 the candidates should analyse the curriculum provision in an early years setting looking at the role of the manager and the early years practitioner in developing and maintaining this. The following issues may be explored:

- ◆ Consultation with children/parents/staff
- ◆ Support to /supervision of staff
- ◆ The environment
- ◆ Record keeping/organisation/
- ◆ Planning – long term, medium term and short term
- ◆ Responsive planning
- ◆ Planning meetings
- ◆ Planning cycle
- ◆ Routines

In Outcome 3 the candidate will evaluate the contribution made by practitioner, manager and significant adults in the provision of a quality curriculum e.g. over a planning cycle.

Evaluation should look at the curriculum analysed in Outcome 2 and should identify strengths/weaknesses of:

- ◆ Planning, implementing and evaluating of the learning experience
- ◆ Organisation of the environment
- ◆ Parent/child contribution
- ◆ Record keeping
- ◆ Meetings

A range of tools used to evaluate provision could be explored eg:

- ◆ Observations
- ◆ Assessments
- ◆ Records
- ◆ Appraisals/staff development
- ◆ Feedback from parents/children
- ◆ Inspection reports
- ◆ Performance Indicators

Outcomes 2 and 3 will be assessed as one piece of work – a project

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Recommended Books and Websites

Contemporary Issues in the Early Years - Edited by Gillian Pugh, published by Paul Chapman
ISBN 0761970525/ISBN 0761970533 (2001)

Threads of Thinking - Cathy Nutbrown, published by Paul Chapman
ISBN 1853964581 (1999)

Learning through Play - Tina Bruce, published by Hodder Arnold H&S
ISBN 0340801522 (2001)

Early Years Management in Practice - Maureen Daly, Elisabeth Byers, Wendy Taylor, published by
Heinemann Educational Secondary Division ISBN 0435401408 (2004)

Good Practice in Nursery Management - Elizabeth Sadek, Jacqueline Sadek, published by Nelson
Thornes ISBN 074877548X (2004)

www.scotland.gov.uk

www.LTScotland.org.uk

Official website of Scottish Executive
Learning and Teaching Scotland

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

As specified in the support notes. The exploration of the concept of a quality curriculum can be enriched by visits to establishments other than the candidate's own or by visiting speakers.

It is expected that this Unit will form part of a group award which is primarily designed to provide candidates with the opportunity to gain practice in or develop skills necessary for lead practitioners or manager status within an early years childcare setting.

Assessment will be by two instruments of assessment, one for Outcome 1 and the other for Outcomes 2 and 3 together.

Open learning

This Unit could be developed for open learning mode of delivery.

For information on normal open learning arrangements, please refer to the SQA guide *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning* (SQA 2000).

Candidates with additional support needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on the SQA website www.sqa.org.uk.

General information for candidates

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This Unit is designed for those employed in an early years or childcare setting (or with access to such a setting) who are seeking to develop their understanding of what a quality curriculum is. It will provide you with the opportunity to develop new skills required for managing a quality curriculum or to further develop those already in use. It will enable you to critically evaluate a quality curriculum and to relate theory to practice.

The Unit has two main areas. You will look at what a quality curriculum is and the theories supporting this. You will then examine the curriculum offered in your own establishment (or one to which you have access) and critically evaluate your role and responsibilities in contributing to it.

In order to complete this Unit successfully, you will be required to achieve a satisfactory level of performance on two pieces of work: a report which critically evaluates the concept of a quality curriculum and a project detailing your responsibilities and role in the development and management of the curriculum across a period of time.