



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Children's Reporter Practice: An Introduction to the Role

Unit code: FW6D 37

Superclass: EC

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Unit purpose

This Unit provides an introduction to the role of the Children's Reporter, the values underpinning the organisation and the legislative and agency framework in which the organisation and the Children's Reporter operates.

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

- 1 Explain and apply the structure, funding, values and ethos of the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA).
- 2 Analyse the principles of the Kilbrandon Report.
- 3 Analyse the principles of Human Rights and their relevance to the role of the Reporter.
- 4 Apply knowledge of the roles played by other agencies and local resources and services for children, young people and their families.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Because of the specialised nature of this Unit (and others linked to the Professional Development Award for Children's Reporter Practice) all candidates must be employed by SCRA. In most cases this will be in the role of the Children's Reporter. For those candidates who are not employed in the role of Children's Reporter but employed by SCRA, case studies will be used to enable the candidate to achieve the evidence requirements for this Unit.

Candidates will find it beneficial to have a background/experience in the field of law, social work and/or education.

General information (cont)

Credit points and level

2 Higher National Unit credits at SCQF level 10: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 10*)

**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.
General information (cont)*

Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problem Solving* and *Communication* at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components. Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes in this unit specification.

Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Assessment

Assessment for this Unit could take the form of written papers, performance evidence, casework and/or oral evidence and can be undertaken during a suitable course of study or in the candidate's work context. Assessment may be completed in time set aside from work or in the candidate's own time.

All evidence should be relevant to the role of the Children's Reporter in delivering services to children, young people and their families.

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

Explain and apply the structure, funding, values and ethos of the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA).

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Organisational structure of the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)
- ◆ The Scheme of Delegation and its application
- ◆ Overview of and apply practice Instruction
- ◆ Apply organisation's vision and values
- ◆ Team approach

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide written or oral evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- (a) explain the organisational structure of the SCRA including the funding and organisational arrangements
- (b) explain the Scheme of Delegation, supported by an example of where it has been applied appropriately in candidate's work, supplemented by the use of a case scenario where necessary
- (c) explain what Practice Instruction is supported by a minimum of two examples where different items of Practice Instruction have been applied by the candidate to casework
- (d) explain the vision and values of SCRA supported by a minimum of two examples where the values have been applied by the candidate in their work
- (e) explain the benefits of a team approach supported by an example of how the candidate has contributed to the team.

NB: Evidence for this Outcome will contribute to Outcomes 2, 3 and 4.

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome could take the form of a written report; oral evidence; performance evidence; case studies; witness testimony.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Children's Reporter Practice: An Introduction to the Role

Outcome 2

Analyse the principles of the Kilbrandon Report.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ History of Kilbrandon Report
- ◆ Analyse the key principles of the Kilbrandon Report
- ◆ Evaluate the implementation of the key principles of the Kilbrandon Report

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide a report equivalent to between 1500–2000 words and/or oral evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- (a) describe the Kilbrandon Report
- (b) explain the key principles of the Kilbrandon Report, analyse how these have been applied and evaluate the key principles.

NB: Evidence for this Outcome will contribute to Outcomes 1, 3 and 4.

Assessment Guidelines

Assessment for this Outcome could take the form of a written paper. The written paper could be supplemented by oral questions to ensure all aspects of the evidence requirements are fully met.

Outcome 3

Analyse the principles of Human Rights and their relevance to the role of the Reporter.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), its history and its implementation into Scottish law
- ◆ The key concepts in articles 6 and 8 of ECHR
- ◆ Analyse the impact of the European Convention on Human Rights on the hearing system and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)
- ◆ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Children's Reporter Practice: An Introduction to the Role

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide a report equivalent to between 2000–2500 words and/or oral evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- (a) describe the European Convention on Human Rights, the Scotland Act 1998 (insofar as it relates to Human Rights) and the Human Rights Act 1998
- (b) describe the main articles in the European Convention on Human Rights which impact on the hearing system and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)
- (c) explain the key concepts in articles 6 and 8
- (d) analyse the relevance of Human Rights to the role of the Reporter and the hearing system.

NB: Evidence for this Outcome will contribute to Outcomes 1, 2 and 4.

Assessment Guidelines

Assessment for this Outcome could take the form of a written paper. The written paper could be supplemented by oral questions to ensure all aspects of the evidence requirements are fully met.

Outcome 4

Apply knowledge of the roles played by other agencies and local resources and services for children, young people and their families.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Roles, responsibilities and remits of partner agencies
- ◆ Analyse the partnership approach
- ◆ Current children's services plan
- ◆ Apply local resources to support casework
- ◆ Local protocols and application to casework

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide written and/or oral evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- (a) explain the roles, remits and responsibilities of a minimum of three partner agencies supported by reflective accounts of the candidate's experience of two placements with partner agencies
- (b) analyse partnership approach in delivering services to children, young people and their families
- (c) explain local resources and apply knowledge of them to casework
- (d) explain local protocols and apply knowledge of them to casework.

NB: Evidence for this outcome will contribute to Outcomes 1, 2 and 3.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Children's Reporter Practice: An Introduction to the Role

Assessment Guidelines

Assessment for this Outcome could take the form of a written paper including a reflective account. The written paper could be supplemented by oral questions to ensure all aspects of the evidence requirements are fully met. Assessment could also take the form of case studies and witness testimonies.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Children's Reporter Practice: An Introduction to the Role

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 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is designed for those members of SCRA who are carrying out the role of Children's Reporter. This Unit is part of the Professional Development Award (PDA) for Children's Reporter Practice. Candidates undertaking the full Award should be encouraged to relate their work for this Unit to the others in the Award.

The candidate should be encouraged to reflect on their experience and skills development during this and all other Units which comprise the PDA. It is anticipated that candidates will maintain a work-based reflective journal. This journal could be used as a private reference mechanism by the candidate and can assist in progressing the candidate's personal development. This journal is not assessed and its purpose is to enhance the personal development of the candidates.

Outcome 1

At the time of writing, relevant legislation, rules, case law and governmental reports include: Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and supporting rules and case law, Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994, Kilbrandon Report (Report on the Committee on Children and Young Persons, (Scotland) 1964) Cmnd 3065, HMSO, Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.

At the time of writing, relevant SCRA documentation, protocols and guidance include: SCRA vision statement, Corporate Plan, Business Plan, Annual Report, SCRA organisational roles and responsibilities, Partnership forums, Regional Management Teams, Practice Instruction.

Outcome 2

At the time of writing, relevant legislation, rules, case law and governmental reports include: Kilbrandon Report, Children (Scotland) Act 1995, Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.

At the time of writing, relevant SCRA documentation, protocols and guidance include: Case Law and Practice Instruction, critiques, commentaries.

Outcome 3

At the time of writing, relevant legislation, rules, case law and governmental reports include: Children (Scotland) Act 1995, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, European Convention of Human Rights, Human Rights Act 1998, Scotland Act 1998, Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.

At the time of writing, relevant SCRA documentation, protocols and guidance include: Case Law and Practice Instruction, critiques, commentaries.

Outcome 4

At the time of writing, Agencies include: Social Work, Education, Health, Police, Children's Panels, Voluntary Organisations, Courts, Procurator Fiscal.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Children's Reporter Practice: An Introduction to the Role

At the time of writing, relevant SCRA documentation, protocols and guidance include: Local Authority Childrens' Services Plans and Time Intervals Local Authority Review Groups, Child Protection Committees, Youth Justice Groups, Education, Social Work, Health Groups, Residential Resources, Voluntary organisations (eg SACRO, Barnardos, NCH, etc).

Looked After Children Procedures, Case Conferences, Case Discussions, Vulnerable Young Persons Procedures, Inter-agency Protocols and Guidelines.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit can be delivered as part of the Professional Development Award (PDA) for Children's Reporter Practice or on a stand-alone basis. As this is an introduction to the topic, it is envisaged that it would be one of the first Units to be undertaken, although it may be taught concurrently with other Units in the award.

Candidates will meet with assessors to agree an assessment plan which will include detail of what evidence will be produced by the candidate and the date it will be produced.

For Outcome 1 candidates could produce a written report or answer questions about the structure, funding, values and ethos of SCRA; the scheme of delegation and/or practice instruction. A written report could be supplemented by oral questions to ensure all aspects of the Evidence Requirements are met. Performance evidence could be in the form of witness testimony or examples from candidate's casework.

Candidates will be expected to produce assignments to support Outcomes 2 and 3. In these assignments, candidates will be expected to provide evidence that some research/reading has been undertaken. This should be evidenced by quoting current/best practice or referring to material they have read. Candidates are expected to justify their references, eg because they agree or disagree based on what they believe/have experienced, or explain how it will influence their practice. For example, in relation to the assignment for Outcome 2, in addition to referring to the Kilbrandon report, candidates could refer to the views expressed by Professor Norrie or other leading commentators. In relation to Outcome 3, candidates will also be expected to refer to some of the leading case law in the area.

The assignment for Outcome 2 should be approximately 1500–2000 words. To meet the learning outcome for this assignment, candidates are expected to say what the Kilbrandon report is; describe and explain the key principles of the report; analyse how these have been applied and evaluate the key principles. The assignment could be reviewed with the candidate in the form of a professional discussion to allow professional reflection.

The assignment for Outcome 3 should be approximately 2000–2500 words. To meet the learning outcome for this assignment, candidates are expected to say what the European Convention on Human Rights and Human Rights Act 1998 are; what the main articles affecting SCRA and the hearing system are; describe and explain the key concepts in articles 6 and 8; analyse how these are relevant to the role of the Reporter and the Hearing system. Examples of areas which could be covered by the candidates include relevant persons, legal representative, and role of reporter in hearings. The assignment could be reviewed with the candidate in the form of a professional discussion to allow professional reflection.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Children's Reporter Practice: An Introduction to the Role

For Outcome 4 candidates could produce a written report or answer questions about the roles, responsibilities and remits of a minimum of three partner agencies (two of which are expected to be social work services and panel members) supported by reflective accounts of the candidate's experience of two placements with partner agencies and examples of application of local services plan. A written report could be supplemented by oral questions to ensure all aspects of the Evidence Requirements are met. Candidates could also produce witness testimonies or examples from candidate's casework.

Candidates may complete the Evidence Requirements in time set aside from work or in their own time. They may be supported in this through a course of study including workshops provided by the centre or external training courses.

To support them completing this unit, candidates can access resources on the intranet including current case law, practice instruction and research articles.

Open learning

All Outcomes are appropriate to open learning with assessor support at all stages. It is the responsibility of the delivering centre to ensure the authenticity of the candidate's work. Assessment evidence must be generated as described in the Evidence Requirements section. At the time of writing, candidates complete a paper portfolio but it is anticipated that e-portfolios will be developed in the future.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Elements of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking and Reviewing and Evaluating may be developed and enhanced in this Unit, which requires the analysis of some of the fundamental principles involved in the role of the Reporter and its application to casework.

Oral *Communication* skills may also be enhanced during the interaction with children, young people and their families in the workplace. This is likely to involve using a range of verbal and non-verbal communication techniques, such as questioning, giving information and responding to others in order to advise on and/or prepare a case. Written *Communication* skills may also be enhanced where candidates will be encouraged to produce clear, structured written work in the preparation of their casework.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Children's Reporter Practice: An Introduction to the Role

This Unit is about the knowledge and skills you need as an introduction to the role of the Children's Reporter, the values underpinning the organisation and the legislative and agency framework in which the organisation and the Children's Reporter operates.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of your centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

This Unit is assessed by written papers, performance evidence, casework or oral evidence and can be undertaken during a suitable course of study or in your work context. Assessment may be completed in time set aside from work or in your own time.

You will learn about/how to:

- ◆ Organisational structure of the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)
- ◆ The Scheme of Delegation and its application
- ◆ Overview and apply practice Instruction
- ◆ Apply organisation's vision and values
- ◆ Team approach
- ◆ History of Kilbrandon Report
- ◆ Analyse the key principles of the Kilbrandon Report
- ◆ Evaluate the implementation of the key principles of the Kilbrandon Report.
- ◆ The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), its history and its implementation into Scottish law
- ◆ The key concepts in articles 6 and 8 of ECHR
- ◆ Analyse the impact of the European Convention on Human Rights on the hearing system and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)
- ◆ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- ◆ Roles, responsibilities and remits of partner agencies
- ◆ Analyse the partnership approach
- ◆ Current children's services plan
- ◆ Apply local resources to support casework
- ◆ Local protocols and application to casework