



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Play and Play Spaces (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: H5X1 35

Superclass: EE

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enhance knowledge of play and playwork theory, including principles, play cycle, play types, play spaces, approaches to risk and play space quality assessment, etc.

The target audience for this Unit is professionals from other disciplines whose work impacts on or influences the general context of play for children and young people nationally, for example, health care professionals, design specialists, housing services, community planning, etc.

This Unit is part of the PDA in *Strategic Planning for Play* and should be undertaken alongside the other Units in the award.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Develop knowledge and understanding of play and play spaces.
- 2 Understand the intrinsic benefits of play and quality play spaces for children and young people.
- 3 Understand the positive impact of play and quality play spaces.
- 4 Develop an understanding of approaches to risk and play and play spaces.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8)

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

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Recommended entry to the Unit

Learners do not need to have knowledge or previous qualifications in the play sector. Learners should have the ability to think analytically and reflectively.

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

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.

This Unit is a mandatory Unit within this qualification.

Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

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. Learners 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

Develop knowledge and understanding of play and play spaces.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Definitions of play
- ◆ Current theories of play
- ◆ Different perspectives of play
- ◆ Playwork principles
- ◆ Play spaces
- ◆ Play process and play cycle
- ◆ Play types
- ◆ Intervention strategies and techniques

Outcome 2

Understand the intrinsic benefits of play and quality play spaces for children and young people.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Understand the intrinsic benefits:
 - Pleasure and enjoyment
 - Emotional regulation
 - Stress response systems
 - Attachment
 - Learning and creativity
 - Socialisation
- ◆ Development and learning
- ◆ Mental health and wellbeing
- ◆ Physical activity
- ◆ Risk and play
- ◆ Extended experiences and developing skills

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 3

Understand the positive impact of play and quality play spaces.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Impact of play on:
 - children and young people
 - families
 - communities

Outcome 4

Develop an understanding of approaches to risk and play and play spaces.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Adventure, challenge and risk in play
- ◆ Play spaces — location, accessibility, features, environmental factors
- ◆ Risk and development
- ◆ Maintenance — improvement
- ◆ Risk benefits analysis

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills across all Outcomes by showing that they can:

Outcome 1

- ◆ identify various definitions of play and the role they take in shaping the way play is viewed and interpreted by the various disciplines in the wider children's sector.
- ◆ identify key aspects of quality play spaces.
- ◆ understand the play process and how this relates to children's play.
- ◆ understand the playwork principles as a concept in relation to play spaces and intervention of play by adults.

Outcome 2

- ◆ identify the benefits of play for children and young people.
- ◆ identify the benefits of quality play spaces for children and young people.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 3

- ◆ identify some of the key factors of play and quality play spaces which have a positive impact on the lives of children and young people.
- ◆ identify some of the key factors relating to play which have an impact on family life.
- ◆ identify some of the key factors relating to quality play spaces which impact communities.

Outcome 4

- ◆ identify the benefits of risk in children's play and play spaces.
- ◆ identify and understand the key factors which support risk in a play space such as environmental, accessibility and challenge.
- ◆ understand basic risk benefit analysis and how this is carried out in practice.

Holistic Assessment Guidance

Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be assessed as one piece of work. However, it may be that it works better to encourage the learner to carry out the assessment of the play space first and this can be discussed with the tutor. The learner can then use the findings to link to their report on the benefits and impact the play space will have. The report can include some references to theory from Outcome 1.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

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Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and 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 is a mandatory Unit in the PDA in *Strategic Planning for Play*. This Unit can also be used for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) purposes as a free standing Unit. The Unit is aimed at those who wish to update their knowledge of play and play spaces. There is no requirement for learners to have previous knowledge of the children's workforce or sector in order to progress to this Unit.

Outcome 1

Develop knowledge and understanding of play and play spaces.

The purpose of this Outcome is to give an introductory overview to learners on the subject of play. This includes knowledge of various theories and discourses on play which relate to a variety of definitions. It would be useful to look at theory and definitions from an educational stance such as Moyle's and Bruce, but also to look at play from the child's perspective as freely chosen by them. This would include definitions and theories from Hughes, Sturrock, Lester, Else,

The *Playwork Principles* is a framework for playworkers working with children in play spaces underpinned by theories from the freely chosen approach to play.

There are many different types of play, and these can be explored briefly by learners to ensure that they have an understanding of the variety of play types and how each one has a part to play in the lives of children and young people. Bob Hughes 16 play types may contain several types of play which may offer challenging thoughts to the learner.

Throughout this Unit the learners must develop their understanding of play spaces. They should identify the key aspects that identify a quality play space. This can include indoor and outdoor spaces which embrace different types of play and support the *Playwork Principles*.

The issue of intervention in children play is another debate which is useful to raise in the learners learning. On the one hand, educationalists may intervene in children's play for the sake of learning Outcomes and development benefits. On the other side, play professional may deliberately not intervene in children play in order to encourage the children to learn through the play experience for themselves.

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Outcome 2

Understand the intrinsic benefits of play and quality play spaces for children and young people.

This Outcome aims to give the learner an understanding of why play and quality play spaces are beneficial to children and young people. This must again be looked at from the different approaches to play, ie the educational approach and the freely chosen approach.

In the educational approach, using play as a medium to engage children in learning the Outcomes set by the adults as part of a curriculum. The benefits to children's learning and development are clear to see. However, in the freely chosen approach, the benefits to children and young people will be led by the child and not set up by an adult. Play is viewed as play for its own sake. Children learn through this approach to play to set their own pace, take initiative, learn about their own abilities through risks and negotiation, socialise and communication skills. The benefits on mental health and emotional wellbeing to children through their own freely chosen play have been documented in research. As the preferred freely chosen play by children would be outdoors, there are clear benefits in this area as well.

Outcome 3

Understand the positive impact of play and quality play spaces.

This Outcome aims to give the learner knowledge on the impact of play initially on the child, but also to extend this to the family and then to the wider community.

Leading on from the previous Outcome on the benefits of play to the child, there is a natural progression for the learner to understand what impact there would be on a child if there was no play encouraged in their lives. For example, poor environments, no outdoor opportunities, parental concerns of children playing out, etc. Possible impacts on children and young people are play deprivation, poor socialisation, obesity, poor wellbeing and mental health. While positive impacts are well, happy children with confidence, life skills and positive relationships.

Impacts of play on the family can also look at positive and negative impacts ranging from fears and anxieties to family engagement in play.

In the area of impact on the communities it is again useful to look at this from two approaches. Communities where there are signs banning play — what is the impact that has on families, children, and the communities themselves. Communities where shared integrated space allows for children and young people playing as well as all ages to walk and relax may have a more positive impact on communities. The area of roads and transport as well as planning, could be discussed in this section also in relation to community impact.

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Outcome 4

Develop an understanding of approaches to risk and play and play spaces.

This Outcome is intended to encourage the learner to think about the relevance of risk in the play of a child and the risk factor in a play space. Although there are ideas to think through, it is also the practical issue which the learner must think of. What makes the play and or the play space risky. It is a personal challenge to the learner as well, as how much risk to allow a child to engage in can be a personal one.

The risk benefit analysis focuses on the steps to be taken in order for the play space and the child to engage in the risk. This is key to this piece of work. The opposite being a risk analysis which identifies the space or activity is too risky to engage in.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

The delivery of this Unit would work best by taking an Outcome by Outcome approach as each one leads to the next one. The final assessment can only be completed when all the learning has been completed by the learner.

Many of the theories and concepts within the Unit can be taught through hand-outs and visual presentations. However, it is very much encouraged to engage learners in discussions and debates relating to some of the topics and issues raised in the Outcomes.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4

The learner will produce a holistic and integrated assessment to cover Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4. This assessment will be 1,000 words, appropriately referenced.

The learner will be undertake an assessment of the quality of a play environment which will include location, accessibility, features, environmental factors and challenge and risk.

The learner will then use their data from their assessment of the quality of a play environment to produce a 1,000 word report describing the process and findings. Then they should identify the positive impact their own discipline can have on this play environment.

They should discuss the intrinsic benefits of play and the impact on children, families and communities. This report should consider the theoretical approaches researched in the Unit and linked to the role of the play sector.

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Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill(s) of *Communications*, *Working with Others* and *Problem Solving* in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Learners who use the internet to conduct research will also have opportunities to develop skills in *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* and *Numeracy* depending on the variety of data gathered.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

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This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This Unit has been developed to give you a broad knowledge of the theories, concepts and understanding in the area of play and play spaces.

On completion of the Unit you should be able to:

- 1 Develop knowledge and understanding of play and play spaces.
- 2 Understand the intrinsic benefits of play and quality play spaces for children and young people.
- 3 Understand the positive impact of play and quality play spaces.
- 4 Develop an understanding of approaches to risk and play and play spaces.

The Unit is split into four Outcomes which will take you from a knowledge base of the theories and definitions of play and play spaces in Outcome 1. In Outcome 2, you will learn about the benefits of play for children and young people from different perspectives. Outcome 3 leads you to understanding the impact which play can have on children, families and the wider community. This may be positive and negative impacts. The final Outcome, takes you to looking in more detail at risk, play and play spaces and link all the knowledge you have gained from the previous Units into assessing a play space to see if it is beneficial, offers risk, will have a positive impact on the child, etc.

As an assessment for this Unit, you will be asked to do one piece of work, which essentially can be split into two parts. The assessment however, can only be carried out when the learning from the Outcomes is achieved.

The first part is about carrying out an assessment of a play space and the second is to produce a report of your findings.