-Module Number-   7260334   -Session- 1994-95

-Superclass-   GA

-Title-   **THE CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: AN
                    INTRODUCTION (x$^1/_2$)**

-DESCRIPTION-

GENERAL COMPETENCE FOR UNIT: Introducing what is meant by the term special needs in the context of the total development of the child. The unit is designed to provide an introductory knowledge and to allow the candidate to tackle or refer some of the problems which may arise while following a career working with young children.

This unit is most suitable for candidates who have completed a range of child care modules and who have some experience of working with children in a mainstream setting.

OUTCOMES

1.   explain what is meant by the term "special needs" in the context of the continuum of the child's needs;

2.   identify referral procedures, agencies and strategies which might be used to help the child to achieve optimum development.

CREDIT VALUE: 0.5 NC Credit

ACCESS STATEMENT: Completion of: 7260204: Child Development: An Introduction and/or some experience of working with mainstream children would be beneficial.

For further information contact: Committee and Administration Unit, SQA, Hanover House, 24 Douglas Street, Glasgow G2 7NQ.

This specification is distributed free to all approved centres. Additional copies may be purchased from SQA (Sales and Despatch section) at a cost of £1.50 (minimum order £5).

NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE: UNIT SPECIFICATION

STATEMENT OF STANDARDS

UNIT NUMBER: 7260334

UNIT TITLE: THE CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: AN INTRODUCTION

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

OUTCOME

1.   EXPLAIN WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERM "SPECIAL NEEDS" IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONTINUUM OF THE CHILD'S NEEDS

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

(a)   The identification of the child's special needs is accurate in the context of "normal" developmental needs.

(b)   The definition of the term "special needs" is comprehensive in terms of physical, cognitive, emotional and social needs and cultural and economic factors.

(c)   The assessment of the implications of the special need is realistic in the light of current evidence and research.

RANGE STATEMENT

Needs: Short and long term. The changing needs of the child and family as time passes.

Types of special need: physical; cognitive; emotional; social.

Factors to be considered: cultural diversity; economic disadvantage.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Written evidence generated by notes, case studies, and specialised assignments on set topics.

OUTCOME

2.   IDENTIFY REFERRAL PROCEDURES, AGENCIES, AND STRATEGIES WHICH MIGHT BE USED TO HELP THE CHILD TO ACHIEVE OPTIMUM DEVELOPMENT

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

(a)   The identification of procedures is appropriate to the needs of the child and in accordance with local and national guidelines.

(b)   The selection of strategies used to achieve optimum development is consistent with the best interest of the child and family and meets accepted professional standards of childcare practice.

(c)   Identification of referral agencies is comprehensive and relates to current local and national availability.

RANGE STATEMENT

Strategies: short term; long term; special programmes.

Agencies: child guidance; learning support; paramedical therapists; social work department.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Written evidence generated by notes, case studies, copies of local procedures. Oral or written questions on local/national agencies.

ASSESSMENT RECORDS

In order to achieve this unit, candidates are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the performance criteria for each outcome within the range specified. Details of these requirements are given for each outcome. The assessment instruments used should follow the general guidance offered by the SQA assessment model and an integrative approach to assessment is encouraged. (See references at the end of support notes).

Accurate records should be made of assessment instruments used showing how evidence is generated for each outcome and giving marking schemes and/or checklists, etc. Records of candidates' achievements should be kept. These records will be available for external verification.

SPECIAL NEEDS

In certain cases, modified outcomes and range statements can be proposed for certification. See references at end of Support Notes.

NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE: UNIT SPECIFICATION

SUPPORT NOTES

UNIT NUMBER: 7260334

UNIT TITLE: THE CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: AN
INTRODUCTION

SUPPORT NOTES: This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. None of the sections of the support notes is mandatory.

NOTIONAL DESIGN LENGTH: SQA allocates a notional design length to a unit on the basis of time estimated for achievement of the stated standards by a candidate whose starting point is as described in the access statement. The notional design length for this unit is 20 hours. The use of notional design length for programme design and timetabling is advisory only.

PURPOSE This module aims to introduce the candidate to the concept of "special needs" in the context of a child's development. In particular it provides a basis to look at each child as an individual with changing and developing needs. It also enables the candidate to investigate what resources are available in general and what part the candidate can play on promoting optimum development of every child.

It is suitable for candidates undertaking programmes in Childcare and Education, or to extend the training of experienced practitioners working in the field of childcare, either in mainstream or in special units.

SQA publishes summaries of NC units for easy reference, publicity purposes, centre handbooks, etc. The summary statement for this unit is as follows:

This module introduces the concept of 'special needs' and what this means for a child's development. It also identifies strategies and resources to meet these needs.

CONTENT/CONTEXT Corresponding to Outcomes 1-2:

1.   The term "special needs" was selected by the Warnock Committee in 1978 in its investigation into Special Educational Needs. The focus on needs was an attempt to move away from labelling children and to get candidates to look at the whole child. Following this line of thought this module attempts to look at the child as an individual with needs like any other child but who may also have either short or long term extra or special needs which may have to be met with special programmes, and, or extra support. A narrower, but more up-to-date title is Children with Learning Difficulties, whose needs are included in this module.

Candidates must have a sound grasp of general developmental needs before moving on to consider "extra" or "special" needs. The concept of the needs of the child is outlined in every childcare text, is incorporated in the United Nations Charter of Children's Rights and is summed up in the Kellman Pringle list of rights i.e. to be loved; to be valued; to be physically and emotionally secure; to be stimulated; to be as independent as possible. Discussion should range over the developing needs of children from birth to seven and how external circumstances will affect these needs. Candidates may bring examples from these placements, of how these needs are met by family and child care workers. In the context of special needs there must be an awareness of physical, cognitive, emotional and social needs as well as recognising the importance of cultural variations and the effects of economic circumstances. Mention should be made of the fact that every child has special needs at some time, and child care workers must be alert to this. The child with learning difficulties will have more special needs as well as the gifted child or any child on an "at risk" register. Attention should be drawn to the fact that a child with special needs often has a mixture of extra needs which impact on his/her development. For example a child with learning difficulties may have these compounded by poverty or an unstable family background. Therefore the special need must always be considered in the context of the total needs of that particular child.

Physical needs should deal briefly with the effects of some of the more common disabling conditions e.g. asthma, epilepsy, sensory impairment, cystic fibrosis, cerebral palsy. It will be impossible to study these in depth but candidates may elect to study an area in which they have a special interest or involvement.

Cognitive needs should emphasise that the range is very wide from what constitutes severe/profound learning difficulties, to lesser problems of understanding and perception, including dyslexia, and problems associated with gifted children who lack sufficient stimulation. Poverty and deprivation must also be considered as aspects of special need and contributory factors in intensifying other needs.

2. Candidates should investigate the range of agencies available locally and nationally, who deal with specific disabilities and problems e.g. the Health Visitor should be the access point for the pre-school child who, in turn, might need the services of home visitors, home teachers, family support workers and organisations targeted at support for people with specific disabilities e.g. Child Poverty Action Group, National Autistic Society, National Children's Bureau, National Deaf Children's Society, Downs Association, Royal National Institute for the Blind, Enable. These and many other similar organisations are listed in social work and voluntary work directories which are available in local libraries. Behavioural problems might be dealt with in the context of what is happening around the child, his/her stage of development, and his/her's reaction to stress. Practical solutions to common problems, e.g. aggression, tantrums, clinging to an adult, should be discussed in the light of examples from placement and should be guided by current theories of what constitutes good practice. Further reference might be made to behaviour modification strategies, referral to child guidance and use of support staff.

APPROACHES TO GENERATING EVIDENCE Tutor input should start with the sensitivities and preconceptions which surround this topic and provide a supportive environment where candidates are encouraged to share ideas, assumptions and personal feelings, and to consider primarily the welfare of the child and the family.

Good use can be made of television programmes, newspaper and journal articles as well as topics currently under media scrutiny. Project work should involve topics with the special interest ranges of the candidates and these projects should be shared to extend the knowledge base of the whole group. Use should be made of visiting speakers from national societies, support groups, and if possible parents' views should be sought. (Many parents of disabled children are willing to help explain the issues to small groups of candidates).

This module might be introduced by a brainstorm on the needs of the child at set stages e.g. birth, 3 years, 7 years. Emphasis would be on the fact that needs are common to all but change and develop as the child matures. Once this continuum of needs has been understood (and various methods of/resources for satisfying these needs discussed) the tutor can then introduce the concept of special needs. There are many excellent video presentations which may be used for this and, in this way, the candidate would start to realise the range of individual differences and resources which are available to help achieve the child's optimum development.

For Outcome 2:

from their own personal placement knowledge, the group could start to compile a list of different specialists, agencies aids, and resources which could form a resource pack for the group (often there is a local database available from social work departments).

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES Candidates should keep a folio of notes, information sheets, pamphlets, articles and information they have acquired. This should include placement procedures and different referral systems. Some of the notes on available resources may be used for formative assessment. Tutors should also consider the use of the following Assessment Instruments.

Outcome 1   Case studies with targeted questions - always encompassing the total needs of the child.

Outcome 2   Restricted response questions or a grid exercise.

PROGRESSION   This module would provide a useful entry point for a candidate who is experienced in childcare and who now wants to extend this to Special Needs. It would also be useful for acquiring some of the underpinning knowledge for the SVQ in Childcare and Education - Working with Children with Special Needs level III.

RECOGNITIONMany SQA NC units are recognised for entry/recruitment purposes. For up-to-date information see the SQA guide 'Recognised and Recommended Groupings'.

REFERENCES

.   Guide to unit writing.
2.   For a fuller discussion on assessment issues, please refer to SQA's
       Guide to Assessment.
3.   Procedures for special needs statements are set out in SQA's guide
       'Students with Special Needs'.
4.   Information for centres on SQA's operating procedures is contained in
       SQA's Guide to Procedures.
5.   For details of other SQA publications, please consult SQA's publications
       list.