

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Children's Development and Learning: An Introduction
(Intermediate 1)

CODE DV2H 10

COURSE

SUMMARY

This Unit enables candidates to examine the role and responsibilities of the parent in meeting the needs of children from birth to five years. The Unit also requires candidates to describe the qualities and skills required in providing for the care, development and learning of children aged 0–5 years.

This Unit is suitable for parents, those intending to become parents and other candidates wishing to extend their knowledge of the issues surrounding the parenting of young children. They may wish to progress onto further courses of study in early education and childcare in order to gain a qualification in this area. Whilst this Unit relates specifically to early education and childcare it may also be suitable for candidates who have an interest in the wider care sector.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe the responsibilities required for effective parenting in meeting the needs of children.
- 2 Describe the qualities required for effective parenting.
- 3 Describe the skills required for effective parenting.

Administrative Information

Superclass: HF

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, there are a variety of prior learning experiences which are relevant to candidates wishing to undertake this Unit, including the following:

- ◆ personal experience of parenting
- ◆ a Course or Unit in Care at Intermediate 1
- ◆ a Course or Unit in any relevant subject at Intermediate 1
- ◆ a programme of study in childcare, eg a combination of relevant SQA Units

CREDIT VALUE

0.5 credit(s) at Intermediate 1 (3 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4*)

**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*

CORE SKILLS

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

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Describe the responsibilities required for effective parenting in meeting the needs of children

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify the basic needs of children.
- (b) Describe the changing needs of children.
- (c) Describe the responsibilities of a parent in meeting the needs of children.

OUTCOME 2

Describe the qualities required for effective parenting

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify the qualities required for effective parenting.
- (b) Describe the ways in which these qualities benefit the child.

OUTCOME 3

Describe the skills required for effective parenting

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify the skills required for effective parenting.
- (b) Describe the ways in which these skills benefit the child.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Evidence for this Unit will be gathered on one assessment occasion through short or restricted responses to questions. The assessment should take place towards the end of the Unit. The assessment will be carried out under supervised conditions. The time allocated for the assessment shall be no more than 30 minutes. A cut-off score may be used. Candidates failing to reach the required standard will be given one opportunity for re-assessment or, in exceptional circumstances, two. A holistic approach to assessment across the Unit should be taken.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Specific requirements:

Outcome 1: The candidate is required to identify the basic needs of children, describe how these needs may change and describe three responsibilities of effective parents in meeting the basic needs of children, as given in the Appendix to the Statement of Standards for this Unit.

Outcome 2: The candidate is required to identify three parental qualities such as those given in the Appendix to the Statement of Standards for this Unit and describe the benefits to the child of having a parent who demonstrates these qualities.

Outcome 3: The candidate is required to describe three skills such as those given in the Appendix to the Statement of Standards for this Unit and describe the benefits to the child of having a parent who demonstrates these qualities.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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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 20 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Throughout this Unit there should be a strong emphasis and reinforcement of the vital role parents play as their child's first educator. It should be stressed that parents are the adults who know their own child best and, with support where necessary, are best placed to meet the needs of the child. This Unit is designed to enhance candidates understanding of the many responsibilities faced by a parent in meeting the needs of a child and of the qualities and skills required to parent effectively.

Outcome 1

The many responsibilities of being a parent will be explored as candidates, where appropriate, share their own experiences of parenting and their coping strategies for managing the task. Through discussion these can be identified and related to the age groups from birth to five years. These responsibilities and how they will vary depending on the individual circumstances and the age and stage of development of the child should be discussed. Photographs and magazine illustrations could be used to focus on these needs and anticipation of future needs could also be discussed should time allow. To establish the responsibilities, and the rights which allow parents to fulfil them, mention should be made of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and The Parents' Charter in Scotland. These should be presented in a simplified, non-threatening and interesting way and should highlight the relevance to the individual parent and child. Choices the individual parent has the right to make for their child both at the present and in the future should be explored. The individual responsibilities of making the correct choice, ie that which will be of the greatest benefit to the child, should also be considered and discussed. It may also be appropriate to mention child protection issues, ensuring this is carried out in a sensitive manner.

For tutor clarification, the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 identifies four main responsibilities which parents have toward their children. These are:

- ◆ to safeguard and promote the child's health, development and welfare
- ◆ to provide, in a manner appropriate to the stage of development of the child, direction and guidance
- ◆ if the child is not living with the parent, to maintain personal relations and direct contact with the child on a regular basis
- ◆ to act as the child's legal representative

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 also identifies four main rights which allow parents to fulfil their responsibilities:

- ◆ to have the child live with them or otherwise to regulate the child's residence
- ◆ to control, direct or guide, in a manner appropriate to the stage of development of the child, the child's upbringing
- ◆ if the child is not living with the parent, to maintain personal relations and direct contact with the child
- ◆ to act as the child's legal representative.

The Parents' Charter in Scotland also identifies parental rights in relation to the education of the child and whilst this may not be relevant for this age group, the future consequences should be covered, eg the right to choose a school for the child, wherever possible, and the right to view records of their child's progress.

A diary of the candidate's personal interaction with a child of this age, recording when they acted responsibly for a child and the benefits of such would be useful, if appropriate. Indoor and outdoor opportunities could also be identified in this way.

Outcome 2

Where appropriate, candidates should be encouraged to identify their own personal qualities both in general and more specifically in relation to their role as a parent. Examples from their own experience would be of benefit to the group as they discuss how members might have coped with incidents and experiences disclosed. Case studies could provide for situations where specific qualities are needed, should these not have arisen in group discussion. Individual strengths and weaknesses should be explored in a sensitive and positive manner and it might be helpful to expand this discussion into an action plan of how any weaknesses could be turned to a strength. Photographs, magazine illustrations or charts with facial expressions could be used to provide a starting point and to lighten the discussion.

A diary of the candidate's personal interaction with a child of this age recording when they displayed such qualities and the benefits to the child/ren would be useful, if this were appropriate.

Outcome 3

Candidates should be encouraged to identify the skills required in the tasks of everyday parenting, eg getting children ready for nursery or school, doing the shopping accompanied by children. They should then explore their own personal skills and how they relate to the parenting of children. Again, examples from candidates own experience would be of benefit to the group as they discuss how group members might have coped with events and the skills they would have brought to situations. Case studies could provide for situations where specific skills are needed, should these not have arisen in group discussion. Individuals should be encouraged to acknowledge the skills they possess and to identify those which need to be worked on. This should be explored in a sensitive and positive manner and it might be helpful to expand this discussion into an action plan of how any such skills could be acquired.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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A diary of the candidate's personal interaction with a child of this age recording when they displayed such skills and the benefits to the child/ren would be useful, if this were appropriate.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

In delivering this Unit there should be a balance between tutor presentation and candidate centred learning. Candidates should be given opportunities to discuss the issues surrounding parenting. Advice on approaches to learning is integrated throughout the previous section. Some of the approaches used could include:

- ◆ small group exercises
- ◆ group discussion
- ◆ case studies
- ◆ workshops
- ◆ video/audio material
- ◆ visits to initiatives, eg a baby clinic
- ◆ visiting speakers, eg public health practitioners
- ◆ individual research, including the Internet

Candidates should be encouraged throughout to contribute from their own experience of parenting where appropriate.

This Unit can be delivered in a flexible manner, ie as distance learning.

Outcome 1

The role of the parent should be explored in general and candidates, where appropriate, encouraged to share their own experiences of being a parent. The change in lifestyle, financial implications, support from family and friends and the sense of responsibility might well be among the discussion points at the beginning of the Unit. The qualities and skills required of a parent could also be explored along with expectations and reality. The role of the media and of society would provide an interesting topic for discussion. For tutor's information, the basic needs of children can be identified in the theories of Mia Kelmer Pringle, Maslow's hierarchy of needs and in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). The four areas of development should be covered, namely physical, emotional and social, cognitive and language. The changing needs of the child as s/he develops and matures should be explored as well as how these needs could best be met in varying circumstances. Tutors should mention that although all children follow the same stages of development, there may be variations in the age at which they do so and one must meet the specific needs of the individual child.

Through tutor presentation the Children (Scotland) Act and the Parents' Charter in Scotland could be explored in a meaningful and relevant manner. Worksheets could be created, if time allows, to identify how these documents affect the individual parent and child in terms of rights and responsibilities. These and handouts would form the basis of study materials for the assessment of Outcome 1.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Outcome 2

The qualities required of a parent should be explored along with expectations and reality. The influence of the media and of society would provide an interesting topic for discussion. Candidates could bring magazine articles and illustrations to demonstrate the pressure parents are faced with to be the "perfect parent". It should be remembered that parents often lose self-esteem and confidence through isolation, or having the advice of the "perfect" grandparent/friend which can add to feelings of inadequacy, so the identification of positive qualities should be dealt with sensitively. The Scottish culture could be compared with others, eg the American – Scots tend to dwell on their negative traits, as identifying positive traits is seen by many as "boasting". Help available to strengthen any qualities which are felt to be lacking should be explored and local facilities or experts could, if time allows, be invited to give the appropriate advice and support. The ways in which these qualities benefit children from birth to five years should be thoroughly explored and discussed and personal experiences shared to this effect.

Videos may supplement the material for this Outcome if so desired. Where appropriate, a diary of individual interaction with the child would be an interesting method of recording the benefits to the child and to the parent, also reinforcing his/her positive qualities and providing a useful source of material for preparing for assessment.

Outcome 3

Candidates should be encouraged to identify the skills required of a parent, along with expectations and reality, in that no one person can be good at everything. The role of the media and of society would again provide an interesting topic for discussion and reference could be made to the role models selected for Outcome 2. Everyday tasks should again be explored and carefully broken down to the particular skills required, eg providing meals involves budgeting, communicating, time management and interpersonal skills, let alone the skill of cooking itself and the knowledge of what constitutes a healthy diet appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child. The benefits to the child of having a parent with such skills should be explored and once again strengths should be identified and praised. Local facilities which provide help and support to improve skills, if required, should be identified.

Speakers from the locality or visits to any of the facilities in the area may provide an interesting and informative addition to this Outcome as would relevant videos. Again, where appropriate, a diary of positive interaction could provide an interesting method of recording the benefits to the child and to the parent, also reinforcing his/her positive skills as well as providing a useful source of material for the assessment.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The assessment requirements for this Unit are clearly laid out in the Evidence Requirements section of the Statement of Standards. Assessment should always be carried out under supervision. A variety of approaches could be used.

Assessment time allocated for this Unit must not exceed 30 minutes.

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 document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).

National Unit Specification: Appendix to the statement of standards

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NB: *This Appendix is within the statement of standards, ie the mandatory requirements of the Unit.*

The age range of this Unit is 0–5 years. This is divided into the following age groups: 0–1 year, 1–3 years, 3–5 years.

Outcome 1

The responsibilities of a parent include:

- ◆ meeting the basic needs of children from birth to five years, eg as described in Mia Kelmer Pringle and Maslow, Children (Scotland) Act 1995, Parents Charter
- ◆ providing for the optimal physical development of the child/ren
- ◆ providing for the optimal emotional and social development of the child/ren
- ◆ providing for the optimal cognitive development of the child/ren
- ◆ providing for the optimal language development of the child/ren
- ◆ understanding the need for indoor and outdoor provision appropriate to the needs of the children

Outcome 2

The qualities required of a parent could include:

- ◆ a loving nature
- ◆ sensitivity
- ◆ affection
- ◆ patience
- ◆ understanding
- ◆ flexibility
- ◆ empathy
- ◆ ability to apply knowledge and understanding

Outcome 3

The skills required of a parent could include:

- ◆ organisational skills
- ◆ time management
- ◆ budgeting
- ◆ communication and interpersonal skills
- ◆ cooking skills
- ◆ literary skills, eg writing a shopping list/reading instructions/reading a story, etc
- ◆ knowledge of what constitutes a healthy diet

NB: This list is not exhaustive and could be added to.