

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Child Protection: An Introduction (Intermediate 2)
NUMBER	DF6J 11
COURSE	Care Issues for Society (Childcare)

SUMMARY

This unit looks at the meaning of child protection and the various categories of abuse and neglect which require child protection intervention. It explores the physical signs and behavioural indicators which may indicate that a child requires protection and also looks at why certain apparent signs of abuse or neglect may be attributed to causes which do not require child protection intervention. The unit looks at the legal framework, policies, procedures and agencies which are involved in child protection.

It should be stressed that this unit in no way prepares students for the assessment of child abuse. Rather it is designed to give the student an awareness of child abuse and how apparent signs of abuse or neglect may be misread. It also is designed to make students aware of the importance of following agency policies and procedures for child protection.

The unit is introductory and therefore suitable for students on a range of care related courses.

OUTCOMES

1. Explain issues relating to child protection and intervention.
2. Describe situations where child protection intervention is required.
3. Describe how the rights of the child are maintained by current legislation and available sources.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Completion of *Child Development: An Introduction*, or *Child Development: Birth to Young Adulthood* and/or some experience of working with children would be beneficial.

Administrative Information

Superclass:	PN
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CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 2 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*)

**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.

Information on the automatic certification of any core skills in this unit is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, publication code BA0906).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Child Protection: An Introduction (Intermediate 2)

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

Explain issues relating to child protection and intervention.

Performance criteria

- a) A clear and accurate explanation of child protection is given.
- b) Categories of abuse and neglect which require child protection are identified.

OUTCOME 2

Describe situations where child protection intervention is required.

Performance criteria

- a) Physical signs and behavioural indicators for each of the main categories of abuse and neglect which require child protection intervention are accurately described.
- b) Alternative explanations for apparent physical signs and behavioural indicators of abuse and neglect which would not require intervention are accurately identified.
- c) Effects of long-term abuse and neglect are identified.

OUTCOME 3

Describe how the rights of the child are maintained by current legislation and available sources.

Performance criteria

- a) Key current legislation underpinning child protection intervention is described.
- b) Major agencies involved in enacting child protection intervention are identified and their roles, policies and procedures described.
- c) Current key steps in child protection intervention is described.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIT

Evidence requirements apply to the Unit as a whole, and therefore apply holistically to all Performance Criteria of the Unit.

To demonstrate satisfactory attainment of the Unit, candidates must produce written or recorded oral responses to items that cover both Performance Criteria of Outcome 1. These will typically be produced in response to specific questions in a question paper comprising a mixture of short-answer or structured questions, and may be based on stimulus material. This should take the form of a closed-book, supervised test.

To demonstrate satisfactory attainment of Outcomes 2 and 3 of the Unit, candidates must produce written or recorded oral responses to items that cover all Performance Criteria. These will typically be produced in response to specific questions in a question paper comprising a mixture of short-answer and restricted response items; questions may be structured, and may be based on stimulus material.

Total duration of assessment for the unit should not exceed one hour.

The instrument of assessment should provide opportunities for all Performance Criteria to be fulfilled, by means of sampling across the range of content of the Unit. Sampling of content for assessment should vary, and thus be relatively unpredictable; candidates must therefore learn all of the content for the Unit, in order to be able to answer questions on any part.

Where a candidate achieves 60% or over for the internal assessment, she/he is deemed to have fulfilled the Unit requirements; it is inferred that s/he is capable of achieving all PCs for the Unit. Where a candidate has taken an internal Unit assessment but has not met the Unit evidence requirements, the candidate should be offered one further opportunity for remediation/re-assessment. Since content of items will vary from one instrument to the next, it is likely that such candidates will be required to resit the entire assessment, rather than only the specific questions where performance was weak.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Child Protection: An Introduction (Intermediate 2)

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

Details of Content and Context for this Unit are provided in Appendix 1.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Throughout the unit, it is important to stress that issues of child abuse and neglect can arise in all types of family and are not restricted to any particular type of family such as those living in deprivation or where there are substance use issues. It is also important to note that the unit does not require the student to understand the motives of the abuser, or how and why the particular types of abuse may have been used. Indeed the tutor may have to control discussion firmly if it strays, for example, towards ways in which sexual abuse may take place.

There is the opportunity to use a wide variety of approaches to this unit. There will be a need for sound tutor support throughout, however, because a unit such as this can arouse strong emotions in students and may also cause distress to students who have been victims of abuse and neglect themselves.

Students will require clear tutors input on the broad explanation of child protection, the categories of abuse and neglect and relevant legislation. Tutors could explore the area of physical signs and behavioural indicators and why these need not always indicate abuse or neglect, by use of short case studies.

It should be stressed that, at this level, students on placement or Care Assistants would report any suspicions they might have to their supervisor and would not be expected to take further action themselves.

Issues such as the need for inter-agency communication could be explored through relevant landmark cases such as Maria Colwell (1974), Victoria Climbié (2003) Orkney, Caleb Ness (2003), Kennedy MacFarlane (2002).

Student research could be used to explore the role of various agencies.

It is recommended that approximately 9 hours should be allocated to the delivery of Outcome 1, 18 to Outcome 2 and 12 to Outcome 3.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Assessment of this unit will normally be by the use of instruments of assessment drawn from the National Assessment Bank. Where a centre decides not to use the NAB, SQA procedures for the use of alternative assessment instruments must be followed.

The instrument of assessment will be a test covering all Outcomes. The test will be closed book and carried out under supervised conditions. There will be two types of question namely restricted response and structured. The structured questions will be based on short case studies illustrating particular physical signs and behavioural indicators of abuse or apparent abuse.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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The instrument of assessment should provide opportunities for all Performance Criteria to be fulfilled by means of sampling across the range of content of the Unit.

The required standard for success in the unit will be achievement of 66% of the marks allocated to the NAB assessment used.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering special alternative Outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, September 2003).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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APPENDIX 1: Content and context

NB This Appendix is within the Statement of Standards, ie the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

Definitions of child protection can be found in various texts e.g. 'Child Protection' 2nd edition by Jennie Lindon (2003), 'Protecting Children – a shared responsibility' (2003).

The range of circumstances which require child protection intervention should include all the categories currently in use under Scottish legislation. At present Scotland recognises five categories which are:

- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Non-organic failure to thrive (N.B. This category only applies in Scottish legislation)

Tutors should emphasise to candidates that, at this level, students on placement or Care Assistants would report any suspicions they might have to their supervisor and would not be expected to take further action themselves.

Physical signs and behavioural indicators

It is important to note that the physical signs and behavioural indicators given here for the various categories of abuse and neglect do not represent an exhaustive list nor are the suggested alternative explanations exhaustive.

Physical signs and behavioural indicators of physical abuse

The major signs should be covered but it is also important that students realise there could be alternative reasons for apparent signs of physical abuse which would not require child protection intervention. The major signs of physical abuse could include:

- Injuries which are unusual in terms of location, pattern, type of injury e.g. bruises, burns, bite marks.
- Persistent illness with no clear medical explanation (Fictitious Illnesses Syndrome by proxy)
- Changed behaviour - self harm; reluctance to go home; becoming withdrawn; aggression

Cultural practices e.g. female genital mutilation could also be discussed as this could be an issue in some communities where there are families who might have practiced this in their country of origin.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Circumstances not requiring child protection intervention

- Normal developmental behaviour e.g. bumps and bruises from learning to walk, physical play, etc.
- Disorders e.g. brittle bone disease.
- Changed behaviour due to normal life occurrences e.g. new baby in family, separation or loss of parent or close relative.

Physical signs and behavioural indicators of neglect

- Underweight, overeating when food is available
- Inappropriate clothing for weather e.g. not providing adequate warm clothing in winter
- Dirty appearance, soiled clothing
- Irregular habits of parent/carer e.g. turning up late, showing signs of drug or alcohol abuse
- Untreated wounds or medical conditions
- Children left unsupervised.

Circumstances not requiring intervention

- poor eaters
- chronic illness or medical condition causing failure to thrive in physical development.

The difference between deliberate neglect and unintentional neglect should be explored. Unintentional neglect could be a result of poor parenting because of lack of understanding of children's needs or because parents are of limited ability. Appropriate action such as family support should be discussed as an alternative to removing children from the family home.

Physical signs and behavioural indicators of emotional abuse

It is recognised that emotional abuse is often difficult to identify and it is sometimes only as an adult that individuals can articulate the emotional abuse they suffered as children.

- Delay in emotional development
- Poor self-perception e.g. seeing self as 'ugly' or 'stupid'
- Unduly distressed by criticism
- Self hatred.
- Self harm
- Difficulty in relating to others
- Clinginess.

Circumstances not requiring child protection intervention.

- Short term emotional problems e.g. new baby, loss or separation from parent or other close relative
- Minor argument with friends
- Bullying at school (which requires investigation, but not child protection intervention).

Physical signs and behavioural indicators of sexual abuse

- Abnormal interest in /knowledge of sexual matters
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour towards other children or adults
- Abnormal sexual behaviour in play
- Excessive masturbation
- Physical signs e.g. soreness, itching, bruising, abrasion or discharge in genital area.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Child Protection: An Introduction (Intermediate 2)

Circumstances not requiring child protection intervention

- Normal developmental interest in bodily functions, body parts.
- Normal experimentation with masturbation.

Physical signs and behavioural indicators of non-organic failure to thrive

This term relates to children whose growth and development is significantly behind the normal milestones and where the reasons for their failure to thrive cannot be attributed to physical or genetic causes. The signs of non –organic failure to thrive go beyond the signs of neglect.

The child's failure to thrive might arise from

- Inadequate ante natal care
- Foetal abuse e.g maternal use of alcohol or drugs
- Lack of emotional support or normal attachment

Legislation, agencies, policies and procedures

- The key principles of Children (Scotland) Act 1995, in particular the 'paramouncy principle' based on UN Convention on Rights of the Child
- Childrens' Panel system of hearings and role of Reporter to the Panel
- Relationship between legislation and local authority guidelines on child protection
- Role of Police
- Social Services
- Medical services
- Relevant voluntary agencies such as Children 1st, Childline, Kidscape, Aberlour Child Care Trust, Parentline, Scotland, Women's Aid

The importance of multi-agency approach and inter-agency communication during investigation of a child protection case should be stated.

Key steps following the raising of initial concerns should be outlined and role of relevant agencies explained.

Possible outcomes of a child protection investigation should be explained e.g., no intervention required, family support, Child Protection Register, Child Protection Order Exclusion Order.