

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Play in Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 2)

CODE DM41 11

COURSE Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 2)

SUMMARY

This Unit allows candidates to develop an understanding of the benefits of a variety of types of play to children aged 0–12 years. The candidate will learn how children benefit from a range of play experiences through planning, setting up and reviewing play experiences, either in a real or simulated context. The candidate does not require to have a work placement to complete this Unit but may benefit from visiting early education and childcare settings which offer high quality child-centred play provision.

This Unit is a mandatory Unit in the Course *Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 2)*, but is also suitable for candidates wishing to study the Unit on its own. The Unit is suitable for candidates who may be considering employment in the childcare and education sector and who wish to progress to further levels of study in early education and childcare.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the benefits of play experiences for children aged 0–12 years.
- 2 Plan play experiences for children aged 0–12 years.
- 3 In a real or simulated context, implement planned play experiences for children aged 0–12 years.
- 4 Evaluate planned play experiences for children aged 0–12 years.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ the Unit *Play in Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 1)*
- ◆ a Course or Unit in Care at Intermediate 1

Administrative Information

Superclass: GA

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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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 in this Unit.

Opportunities for developing aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in *Guidance on Learning and Teaching Approaches for 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

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the benefits of play experiences for children aged 0–12 years.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Explain how children aged 0–12 years benefit from play.
- (b) Explain how play supports the individual development of the child.
- (c) Describe the role of the adult in supporting play.

OUTCOME 2

Plan play experiences for children aged 0–12 years.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Each plan briefly describes the aims of the play experience in relation to the care, learning and development of the child.
- (b) The role of the adult in the play experience is clearly described.
- (c) The planned time allocated is appropriate to the experience and age group.
- (d) Each plan takes account of the importance of consulting with others.
- (e) Appropriate resources are described for the play experience.
- (f) Each plan takes account of health and safety considerations.

OUTCOME 3

In a real or simulated context, implement planned play experiences for children aged 0–12 years.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Prepare resources to set up planned play experiences.
- (b) Set up play experiences in accordance with plans and health and safety requirements.
- (c) Participate in play experiences.
- (d) Observe and record the play experiences.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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OUTCOME 4

Evaluate planned play experiences for children aged 0–12 years.

Performance Criteria

- (a) The planning process is evaluated in terms of meeting the care, learning and development needs of the child.
- (b) The implementation of the planned play experience is evaluated.
- (c) Own contribution to planning and implementing the play experience is evaluated in terms of strengths and areas for improvement.
- (d) Action points for the future are identified in light of feedback.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Details of the mandatory content for this Unit can be found in the Appendix at the end of this Unit Specification.

Written/oral evidence is required for this Unit to demonstrate that the candidate has achieved all of the Outcomes and Performance Criteria:

Candidates will be assessed by means of a short case study and a folio.

The case study, with associated questions relating to Outcome 1, will be conducted in controlled supervised conditions within a time limit of 30 minutes. Achievement in this case study may be decided by the use of a cut-off score. The case study will provide evidence that the candidate is able to:

- ◆ describe **at least two** benefits of play for children between the ages of 0–12 years
- ◆ explain **at least two** benefits of play to support the individual development of children between the ages of 0–12 years
- ◆ describe the role of the adult in supporting play

The folio will contain:

- ◆ two plans for play experiences:
 - a plan for a type of play experience for one of the specified age groups within the range 0–12 years as specified in the Appendix to the Statement of Standards
 - a plan for a different type of play experience for a different age group within the range 0–12 years as specified in the Appendix to the Statement of Standards
- ◆ a record of candidate's involvement in two planned play experiences

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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- ◆ a review of each of the play experiences for the two age groups, in terms of:
 - how effective the planning process was in terms of meeting the development needs of the children
 - how effective the implementation of the play experience was
 - the effectiveness of own contribution to planning and implementing the play experience. This must include strengths and areas for improvement
 - action points for the future, in light of feedback
- ◆ teacher/lecturer comment:
 - the teacher/lecturer must complete a comment sheet covering the candidate's planning, setting up and review of their two play experiences.

The National Assessment Bank item (NAB) for this Unit provides details of the assignments, and a record of personal involvement template. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the NAB to ensure a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Play in Early Education and Childcare (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

The mandatory content for this Unit can be found in the Appendix at the end of the Statement of Standards.

The content of this Unit is designed to develop the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the nature and value of play and how it contributes to a child's care, learning and development. It is also designed to develop skills in planning and setting up play experiences, and in reviewing both the planning process and the implementation of play experiences.

Candidates will learn that play experiences, if designed around children's needs, will harness the children's own inquisitiveness and encourage them to explore their surroundings and engender a love of learning although they, and perhaps even the parent, will not recognise that they are learning. The child is simply enjoying new experiences.

Candidates will also learn the importance of supporting children through this process and ensuring that artificial barriers to the development process are not introduced. Candidates should demonstrate an understanding of this appropriate to the level of this Unit.

It is important to recognise that some candidates may not have experienced a variety of play experiences. They will have the opportunity to discuss play types and experiences, and be given guidance in how these experiences contribute to the child's care, learning and development. Candidates will also gain an understanding of the role of the adult in the various play situations and throughout the age ranges of the children.

The content of the Unit will cover:

- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the benefits of play for children
- ◆ planning play experiences across the age range and different types of experiences
- ◆ setting up the planned play experiences in a real or simulated context
- ◆ reflecting on how the plan and the experience worked

Employability Skills

In this Unit candidates will be assessed for:

- ◆ working co-operatively with others
- ◆ planning and preparation
- ◆ reviewing and evaluating own skills development
- ◆ time management skills
- ◆ health and safety awareness
- ◆ understanding roles and responsibilities

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Through teaching and learning the Unit provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of:

- ♦ dressing appropriately for working with children
- ♦ demonstrating a responsible attitude in all aspects of working with children

Knowledge and understanding

Candidates will, through a variety of methods, develop knowledge and understanding of how different types of play and play experiences benefit children. They should be given the opportunity to define play, and explore their own ideas and childhood play experiences, prior to exploring children's play. Some candidates may have had very limited play experiences as a child and it may be necessary for them to explore play experiences before asking the question 'What is play and why is it important?' Some characteristics of play will be identified:

- ♦ children play every day
- ♦ play is essential to children's care, learning and development
- ♦ children play for its own sake
- ♦ play is an essential need of every child
- ♦ play is the right of every child
- ♦ children choose to play, and what they want to play

Candidates should have the opportunity to identify play experiences suitable for different ages of children, and then identify the benefits of these experiences for the child. This means exploring age appropriate play experiences, eg a three-year-old can play with puppets as can a twelve-year-old but they are involved in the experience at their level of development and may derive different benefits from the experience. The benefits of play for children should be identified in terms of their development and well-being, ie social, physical, cognitive, linguistic and emotional. Candidates should have the opportunity to identify the benefits of play to support individual development. In particular, a child with an identified or individual need can be supported through quality play experiences.

The Appendix to the Statement of Standards for this Unit states the mandatory types of play which **must** be covered. Other types of play may be included in addition. In the following list, there are suggested play experiences in each play type. Not all experiences should be covered and the list of experiences is not prescriptive.

Play types and play experiences:

Symbolic play

- ♦ play with toys
- ♦ junk modelling
- ♦ role play
- ♦ imaginative play
- ♦ dance and drama

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Books and play which supports language enrichment

- ◆ reading stories
- ◆ sharing stories and making up stories
- ◆ making books with children
- ◆ imaginative play
- ◆ role play
- ◆ puppets
- ◆ story boards
- ◆ drama
- ◆ songs with actions
- ◆ poetry and rhymes
- ◆ traditional stories

Creative play

- ◆ musical activities
- ◆ crafts
- ◆ construction
- ◆ drawing, painting, etc
- ◆ clay, dough, sculpting, etc
- ◆ movement and dance
- ◆ imaginative play and drama
- ◆ junk modelling
- ◆ sewing, weaving, tie-dye, t-shirt painting and textiles

Discovery Play

- ◆ sensory play
- ◆ exploratory play
- ◆ water play
- ◆ sand play
- ◆ play using natural elements
- ◆ environmental activities
- ◆ 'loose parts' (*items that can be moved from place to place, carried, rolled, lifted, piled one on top of the other or combined to create new structures or experiences*)

Vigorous play

- ◆ running, jumping, racing, chasing
- ◆ group games
- ◆ parachute games
- ◆ dance
- ◆ bikes, scooters, tricycles, go-karts, roller blades, skateboards, etc
- ◆ play with equipment — climbing frames, swings, slides, tunnels, etc
- ◆ outdoor activities
- ◆ adventure play
- ◆ circus skills
- ◆ earth balls, egg balls, etc
- ◆ soft play or bouncy castles, etc

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Play with Technology

- ◆ using real tools
- ◆ cooking, baking
- ◆ working with wood and tools
- ◆ scientific play
- ◆ taking things apart — clocks, radios, etc
- ◆ using computers
- ◆ using the internet
- ◆ audio/visual activities, ie making films, taking photographs, etc
- ◆ using CAD/ games software

Games

- ◆ physical games
- ◆ group games
- ◆ ball games
- ◆ team games
- ◆ board games
- ◆ dance and singing games
- ◆ traditional games
- ◆ sports

Planning play experiences

Candidates should be able to describe the role of the adult in planning play experiences for children aged 0–12 years. In this Unit, candidates are being asked to plan specific play experiences for children, that is ‘activity planning’. They are not being asked to make long or medium-term plans.

Candidates will learn that the keys to good practice in planning in an early education and childcare setting are:

- ◆ involving the children
- ◆ individual needs and interests of children

Candidates must have the opportunity to plan play experiences, either in practical workshop sessions, or within early education and childcare settings. The play experiences should cover a range of types of play and age groups:

- ◆ babies and toddlers (0–3 years)
- ◆ pre-school age children (3–5 years)
- ◆ early school age children (5–8 years)
- ◆ older primary children (8–12 years)

The candidates should show an understanding of different early education and childcare settings when planning for play experiences, for example, play experiences are different in a baby room, from an open access play provision. The play space will be different, as will the resources available.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Play in Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 2)

Set up planned play experiences

Candidates should be given the opportunity to set up their planned play experiences. This can either be in an early education and childcare setting, or more likely, in a realistic simulation, ie of a playroom. The candidate must set up for the play experiences taking into account their planning, health and safety, play space, and the best play experience for children within the age ranges.

Candidates should also have the opportunity to discuss the role of the adult in supporting play experiences. Adults should listen to children; observe children; make suggestions; organise materials and equipment; facilitate play experience; and identify the benefits of play experience.

Candidates should identify the benefits of adults ‘joining in play’ and also the benefits of the adults as observers of play. They should become aware of the skills adults need when taking part in play with children, ie:

- ◆ encouraging children
- ◆ listening to children
- ◆ deciding to join in or not
- ◆ responding to unexpected opportunities for play
- ◆ positive interaction with children
- ◆ recognising when to change play or activities or resources
- ◆ allowing children to take ownership of play experiences
- ◆ allowing children to extend and develop play experiences
- ◆ being flexible
- ◆ praising children

They should consider a variety of scenarios and discuss the benefits to the child of adults ‘playing’ or not. They should have the opportunity to discuss the type of ‘joining in’ that is most beneficial, and they should consider a list of skills for ‘joining in’ play, such as:

- ◆ play when invited to play by a child
- ◆ join in when the play needs some support
- ◆ play when direction is needed for the play
- ◆ play when children may harm themselves or others
- ◆ don’t take over play; don’t tell everyone what to do
- ◆ don’t make a list of rules for a child-invented game

Candidates should have the opportunity to identify children’s play cues and children’s levels of participation in play experiences. This may be done using video, Information and Communication Technology or observation within an early education and childcare setting. They should have the opportunity to discuss these ‘real’ play experiences in light of their knowledge of the above skills. Candidates should participate in observation of children at play, in terms of their level of interest, enjoyment, concentration and participation. This should assist with their planning of play experiences that meet individual needs and interests; and provide stimulation, challenge and fun; and offer choice, flexibility and variety.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Play in Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 2)

Evaluating planned play experiences

The evaluation should be based on the planning, and the reason for providing the play experience:

- ◆ did the planning work?
- ◆ did the play experiences do what they set out to do?
- ◆ what were the benefits to the children?

Candidates should consider what information is required in order to evaluate play experiences. They should observe the children whilst playing, listen to the children during and after the play experience and get feedback from the staff team or adults involved.

In group discussion, simple questions can be asked that will inform the evaluation process, ie:

Planning

- ◆ Was the preparation adequate?
- ◆ Were all the materials and resources available?
- ◆ Were these the best resources for this play experience?
- ◆ Was there enough time for the play experience?
- ◆ How easy was the play experience to support, supervise or direct?
- ◆ Was the play experience appropriate for the space available, time allocated, etc?

Implementation

- ◆ Did the child/ children show signs of enjoying themselves?
- ◆ Were the children focussed on the play experience or were they easily distracted?
- ◆ Did the play experience stimulate discussion and conversation?
- ◆ Did the children participate fully? If not, why not?
- ◆ Was the play experience appropriate for the age of the children involved?

Benefits to the child

- ◆ What opportunities for learning occurred, if any?
- ◆ What feedback did you get from the children involved?
- ◆ What were the social, physical, cognitive, emotional and linguistic benefits?

Candidates should have the opportunity to evaluate their own role in the play process. They should consider the contribution they made to:

- ◆ planning play experiences
- ◆ setting up of play experiences
- ◆ group discussion in relation to evaluation

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Play in Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 2)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

It would be appropriate to integrate Outcomes in this Unit, bringing theory and practice together. The delivery of this Unit should be experiential and lecturer presentation should be minimal. Candidates must be given opportunities for practical workshop sessions, covering all of the types of play mentioned in the Appendix to the Statement of Standards. Centres should organise resources to enable candidates to simulate the play environment across the age range.

Candidates should have access to relevant documentation and guidelines, as well as up-to-date topical periodicals, magazines and catalogues. Visits to, or visiting speakers from early education and childcare settings and libraries would be beneficial for candidates. When inviting speakers and arranging visits, candidates, under supervision, should be encouraged to take responsibility for writing letters, making phone calls to arrange hospitality, etc.

A variety of teaching/learning methods could be used throughout the Unit:

- ◆ small group discussion
- ◆ case studies
- ◆ individual and group research — paper-based and web-based reference material could be used
- ◆ outside speakers from early education and childcare settings
- ◆ video/audio material
- ◆ practical workshop sessions
- ◆ teacher/lecturer-led activities

By using a combination of these methods, candidates will develop knowledge and understanding and practical skills in planning, setting up and evaluating play experiences.

In this Unit there are opportunities to build up an understanding of the challenges of working in an early education and childcare setting; of the need for careful planning of play experiences, the wide variety of different play activities and their importance to the child's development. Through observation, experience and reflection, the candidates will become more aware of the demands of working in the sector and of the skills, qualities, attitudes and knowledge-base required of prospective employees. There are good opportunities in this Unit for self-evaluation and for seeking feedback from others. These are skills that employers value. Candidates will also learn to take account of health and safety considerations in workplace settings. This will enhance their awareness of the responsibilities of employees and employers in the workplace.

Core Skills

Opportunities for developing aspects of Core Skills should be incorporated where they arise naturally in the teaching and learning process. In this Unit, candidates will work co-operatively with others in carrying out practical investigations into play; in planning, setting up and evaluating play experiences. Opportunities for developing aspects of written and/or oral communication will arise during class discussions, group interactions and evaluations of play plans.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Play in Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 2)

This Unit is a mandatory Unit in the Intermediate 2 Early Education and Childcare Course. It is recommended that it should be delivered within the context of this Course. There are good opportunities to integrate aspects of this Unit with the Unit *Working in Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 2)*. Candidates will be able to monitor and review their employability skills and attitudes in relation to the practical play activities in this Unit.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The evidence for the folio may be gathered at different points throughout the Unit. Implementation of planned play experiences may be in real or simulated workplace settings.

The assessment for this Unit is laid out clearly in the Evidence Requirements section of the Statement of Standards of this Specification. The standard to be applied is exemplified in the National Assessment Bank item for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard. Assessment should be carried out under supervision.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

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. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

National Unit Specification: Appendix to the statement of standards

UNIT Play in Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 2)

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

Mandatory list of play types:

- ◆ symbolic play
- ◆ books and play that supports language enrichment
- ◆ creative play
- ◆ discovery play
- ◆ vigorous play
- ◆ play with technology
- ◆ games

The age range for this Unit is 0–12 years, divided into the following age groups:

- ◆ 0–3 years
- ◆ 3–5 years
- ◆ 5–8 years
- ◆ 8–12 years