

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Maintenance of a Safe Environment for Children (Intermediate 1)
CODE	DM5V 10
COURSE	Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 1)

SUMMARY

This Unit enables the candidate to develop an awareness of current health and safety legislation related to an early education and childcare environment. It allows candidates the opportunity to identify potential risks and hazards within settings, to carry out a risk assessment and to demonstrate possible strategies for dealing with these. These strategies should give candidates an awareness of their own responsibilities and the employer's responsibilities in maintaining a safe environment. There is no requirement for candidates to have a placement to complete this Unit but they may visit workplace settings.

This Unit is an optional Unit in the Course *Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 1)* 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 early education and childcare sector or who wish to progress to further levels of study in early education and childcare.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate an awareness of current health and safety legislation which relates to working in an early education and childcare environment.
- 2 Explain potential risks and hazards in an early education and childcare environment for children aged 0–12 years.
- 3 Within a real or simulated context, carry out a risk assessment in an early education and childcare environment.
- 4 Within a real or simulated context, demonstrate strategies for minimising risks in an early education and childcare environment.

Administrative Information

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Maintenance of a Safe Environment for Children (Intermediate 1)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. However, centres should note that this Unit is at Intermediate 1 which is equivalent to Standard Grade, General level.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 1 (6 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 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

UNIT Maintenance of a Safe Environment for Children (Intermediate 1)

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 an awareness of current health and safety legislation which relates to working in an early education and childcare environment.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify the key legislation in relation to health and safety in an early education and childcare environment.
- (b) Describe current health and safety requirements relating to an early education and childcare environment.
- (c) Identify employer responsibilities in relation to maintaining a safe and healthy environment in an early education and childcare setting.
- (d) Identify employee responsibilities in relation to safe working practices in an early education and childcare setting.

OUTCOME 2

Explain potential risks and hazards in an early education and childcare environment for children aged 0–12 years.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Explain the difference between a risk and a hazard in an early education and childcare environment.
- (b) Describe potential risks and hazards in an indoor early education and childcare environment.
- (c) Describe potential risks and hazards in an outdoor early education and childcare environment.

OUTCOME 3

Within a real or simulated context, carry out a risk assessment in an early education and childcare environment.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Plan a risk assessment in an early education and childcare environment in accordance with specified stages.
- (b) Using the plan, carry out a risk assessment in an early education and childcare environment.
- (c) Complete a risk assessment report.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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OUTCOME 4

Within a real or simulated context, demonstrate strategies for minimising risks in an early education and childcare environment.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Working with others, demonstrate two strategies for minimising risks to health and safety in an indoor early education and childcare environment.
- (b) Working with others, demonstrate two strategies for minimising risks to health and safety in an outdoor early education and childcare environment.
- (c) Review the strategies used to minimise risks.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

The evidence for Outcomes 1 and 2 in this Unit will be gathered through:

A short answer/multiple choice test covering aspects of health and safety, including risks and hazards carried out under controlled, supervised conditions and lasting no more than 30 minutes. Achievement in this test can be decided by the use of a cut-off score.

The evidence for Outcomes 3 and 4 in this Unit will be gathered through:

A folio of the candidate's work containing the following:

- ◆ a brief plan for carrying out a risk assessment in an indoor or outdoor environment
- ◆ a completed risk assessment report for the risk assessment carried out
- ◆ a summary of the strategies used for minimising risks — two for indoor environments **and** two for outdoor environments
- ◆ a brief review of the strategies used

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.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Maintenance of a Safe Environment for Children (Intermediate 1)

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

Outcome 1

Candidates should develop an awareness of key aspects of current health and safety legislation which relates to early education and childcare settings. Teachers/lecturers should ensure that the legislation presented to candidates is current and includes the requirements of the employer and the employee in relation to:

- ◆ Health and Safety at Work
- ◆ Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- ◆ The Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences
- ◆ Food Safety

It is intended that candidates should understand relevant, key points arising from the legislation rather than study the various pieces of legislation in detail. In particular, candidates should become aware of their responsibilities and the employer's responsibilities with regard to safe practices. Candidates should explore a variety of situations where health and safety are important when caring for children both indoors and out — eg carelessness with litter, crossing roads safely, handling play materials.

Outcome 2

Candidates should be made aware of the difference in meaning between hazard and risk:

- ◆ a hazard is something with the potential to cause harm
- ◆ a risk is the likelihood of harm from a hazard; the degree of risk will depend on several factors including:
 - the likelihood of that hazard causing harm
 - the potential severity of that harm
 - who might be affected by that harm

Candidates should use this information to identify potential risks and hazards within a variety of early education and childcare settings. Candidates should think of these in relation to the age and developmental stage of children aged 0–12 years that they may encounter. They should also examine the additional risks that may be relevant to children who have additional support needs.

For each case it may be appropriate to consider potential risks or hazards in relation to the area, equipment and activity undertaken within the early education and childcare environment. It has to be noted that areas, equipment and activity are interrelated. Care should be taken to include hazards and risks in an outdoor environment.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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The following examples might be explored and candidates should be encouraged to expand this list with their own examples, especially for outdoors:

Areas	Potential Risk or Hazard
Food preparation and storage areas	Incorrect food storage and handling
Snack/eating areas	Incorrect disposal of waste material, spilled drinks
Toilet/nappy change areas	Inadequate personal handling
First aid areas	Risk of spread of infection
Waste disposal/storage areas	Risk of spread of infection (including risks for vermin and pests)
Entrance/exit sites	Failure to secure windows and doors Obstruction of fire exits/movement pathways
Security of areas	Failure to check callers' rights of entry
Equipment	Potential Risk or Hazard
Cots/prams/baby relax chairs/changing mats	Inadequate, unhygienic, poorly maintained equipment
Toys/books/resources	Risk of infection, potentially harmful equipment (glue, paint, scissors, etc)
Food preparation and serving equipment	Incorrect storage and cleaning of equipment, unsafe handling of equipment
Activity	Potential Risk or Hazard
Nature/environment based activities	Risk of spread of infection
Dressing up clothes	First aid emergencies
Pet care	Inadequate hygiene
Cooking/baking activities	Inappropriate use of equipment (knives, cookers)
Messy play — water, sand, art, craft	Use of dangerous equipment, eg scissors, knives, risk of spread of infection, danger of slipping
Outings	Inadequate staffing/supervision levels

Outcome 3

Candidates should have experience of various types of situation requiring a risk assessment: indoors, outdoors; types of equipment, etc, and be able to recognise hazards.

The Health and Safety Executive (www.hse.gov.uk) recommends that risk assessment includes the following steps:

- 1 Identify hazards.
- 2 Decide who might be harmed and in what way.
- 3 Evaluate the risk and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done.
- 4 Record the findings.
- 5 Review the assessment and revise if necessary.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Candidates should then have the opportunity for a variety of situations/equipment to plan and carry out risk assessments.

Outcome 4

For a range of identified hazards, candidates should get the opportunity to explore appropriate strategies to minimise risks to health and safety in accordance with current legislation.

Candidates and centres may wish to identify examples of good practice with which they are familiar. This may include exploring procedures adopted in specific circumstances including:

- ◆ waste or litter disposal (waste should include body fluids)
- ◆ toilet areas (or nappy changing areas)
- ◆ food preparation areas
- ◆ minor incidents
- ◆ fault reporting
- ◆ routine maintenance

Employability Skills

In this Unit candidates will have the opportunity to be assessed for:

- ◆ working co-operatively with others
- ◆ planning and preparation
- ◆ demonstrating a responsible attitude in all aspects of working with children
- ◆ reviewing and evaluating own skills development
- ◆ maintaining a tidy, organised and safe environment
- ◆ health and safety awareness
- ◆ organisational skills
- ◆ understanding roles and responsibilities

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

- ◆ good communication

