National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT   Supporting Language, Literacy and Numeracy in an Educational Setting (SCQF level 6)

CODE   F7J4 12

SUMMARY

This Unit enables the candidate to develop an awareness of the significance of language, literacy and numeracy in relation to the development and learning of children and young people. It explores ways of promoting language, literacy and numeracy in educational settings and shows how adults can support language, literacy and numeracy for children and young people from birth to 18 years.

This Unit is an optional Unit in the National Certificate Group Award in Early Education and Childcare, and the PDA in Education Support Assistance at SCQF level 6, but is also suitable for candidates wishing to study the Unit on its own. The Unit is suitable for candidates who wish to gain employment, or may already be employed, as Education Support Assistants in the educational sector, working under supervision. They may wish to progress on to higher level qualifications in the childcare sector.

OUTCOMES

1   Explain the importance of language and communication in the development and learning of children and young people.
2   Evaluate the importance of literacy in the development and learning of children and young people.
3   Evaluate the importance of numeracy in the development and learning of children and young people.
4   Evaluate the role of the adult in supporting effective provision for language, literacy and numeracy.

Administrative Information

Superclass: GB

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Version: 01

Additional copies of this unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The cost for each unit specification is £2.50. (A handling charge of £1.95 will apply to all orders for priced items.)

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RECOMMENDED ENTRY

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

Candidates would benefit from having some prior knowledge and understanding of the principles of child development*.*

They may also benefit from having attained one of the following, or equivalent:

♦   Standard Grade at Credit level in any relevant subject
♦   A Course or Unit in Care at Intermediate 2
♦   Courses or Units in any relevant subject at Intermediate 2
♦   Scottish Group Award at Intermediate 2
♦   SVQ or SVQ Units at level 2 in a related subject

CREDIT VALUE

1 SQA Credit at SCQF level 6 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

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. However, the Unit provides opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of Core Skills.

These opportunities are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

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

Explain the importance of language and communication in the development and learning of children and young people.

Performance Criteria

a)   Define the terms 'language' and 'communication'.
b)   Describe the uses of language.
c)   Describe the different stages of progression in language development.
d)   Explain how language relates to all aspects of the development and learning of children and young people.

OUTCOME 2

Evaluate the importance of literacy in the development and learning of children and young people.

Performance Criteria

a)   Explain the term 'literacy'.
b)   Explain reasons for the importance of the development of literacy skills.
c)   Evaluate a range of resources, experiences and activities that could promote the development of literacy skills in children and young people.

OUTCOME 3

Evaluate the importance of numeracy in the development and learning of children and young people.

Performance Criteria

a)   Explain the term 'numeracy'.
b)   Explain reasons for the importance of the development of numeracy skills.
c)   Evaluate a range of resources, experiences and activities that could promote the development of numeracy skills in children and young people.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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OUTCOME 4

Evaluate the role of the adult in supporting effective provision for language, literacy and numeracy.

Performance Criteria

a)   Discuss the importance of the role of the adult in presenting opportunities for language, literacy and numeracy.
b)   Describe ways in which adults can use signs and symbols in the environment to support understanding of the written word among children and young people.
c)   Explain ways in which the adult acts as a role model in language, literacy and numeracy.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNIT

The evidence for this Unit should be obtained by a question paper with both extended and restricted response questions and two investigative reports such as illustrated in the National Assessment Bank item for this Unit.

Specific Advice

Outcomes 1, 2(a) and (b), 3(a) and (b)

Evidence for these Outcomes and Performance Criteria shall be obtained with a single question paper with both restricted and extended response questions. This should be taken under controlled, supervised conditions and should last no more than one hour. This should be taken on the completion of the Unit. Achievement can be decided by the use of a cut off score.

Outcomes 2(c), 3(c) and 4

Evidence for these Performance Criteria will be through two investigative reports, based on two of the following: language, literacy and numeracy in children and young people at Early, First, Second or Third levels as outlined in *A Curriculum for Excellence*. These can be completed in class time or in the candidate's own time. Each report should be no more than 500 words. Each report will contain the following:

1   A detailed description of a resource, an experience or an activity that would promote language, literacy or numeracy in children and young people at Early, First, Second or Third levels as outlined in *A Curriculum for Excellence*.
2   An explanation of how the example described supports the learning and development of the child or young person.
3   An explanation of the role the adult would take in presenting the opportunity described.

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 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

In defining the terms 'language' and 'communication', candidates should be encouraged to view the terms in their widest sense to include body language, dialects, accent, and standard English. The uses of languages should identify the many varied purposes and should include:

♦ listening and understanding (receptive speech)
♦ talking (expressive speech)
♦ reading
♦ writing

Whilst emphasising the interdependence of language use, candidates should consider how these theories of language suggest that language can support and/or impede the different aspects of development. It is envisaged that candidates will be encouraged to make meaningful connections between these theoretical concepts and any practical work with children or young people. Candidates should consider issues of laterality in relation to the development of language, literacy and numeracy and in considering resources candidates should be made aware of a range of needs, for example the left–handed child or young person or issues relating to the development of eye-hand co-ordination.

Candidates' attention should be drawn to the issues surrounding bilingualism. A wide range of factors which may highlight lack of progression in the development of language in children and young people could be identified and discussed. Candidates should consider such factors as lack of responsiveness, hearing loss, or dysfunctional speech. In working with children and young people, Candidates may either notice signs which indicate some kind of lack of progression or they may receive information which alerts them to an existing or potential difficulty.

Although the individuality of the rate of progress of the child or young person must be stressed, the recognised stages of language development should be investigated. Candidates should be aware of developmental milestones including: babbling, first words, vocalising, making two or three word sentences, simple and more complex sentences, debating/arguing and reasoning.

Outcome 2

Literacy is very complex to define – it is more than "the ability to engage with written language". Early literacy is related to all the skills which equip us to engage meaningfully with reading and writing. Literacy is a sophisticated extension of spoken language. It has its roots in symbols, representations, and mark making.

Candidates should consider the wide-ranging reasons surrounding the importance of the development of early literacy skills. This extensive list should include factors such as confidence building and

reading readiness. Candidates should be encouraged to understand that learning to read and write is a continuous process which begins at a very early stage. Before being able to heighten the levels of awareness of the child or young person of the purposes of print, they must themselves explore this area.

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Candidates should be given the opportunity to investigate a variety of resources, experiences and activities which promote language and literacy. The holistic nature of these should be explored with the candidates. Candidates could explore both commercially produced resources and also home made resources across the age range. Candidates may consider the vast array of opportunities which adults should provide for children and young people to support the development of their literacy skills. The importance of creating opportunities to listen to children and young people should be stressed.

Candidates themselves should be aware of the importance of presenting books and other resources in a positive fashion to children and young people. They should recognise that skill in motivating children and young people to want to learn to read is an invaluable gift. Opportunities in presenting books, stories, poems and rhymes should include careful consideration of the following:

♦ Age range of the reader
♦ Criteria for selection
♦ Building an area devoted to books and reading
♦ Using an area devoted to story telling and listening to stories or extracts from appropriate books and other reading materials
♦ Storytelling techniques
♦ Related activities
♦ Caring for, using and displaying resources
♦ Use of drama, puppets and other appropriate resources to enhance the enjoyment and understanding of stories/extracts from books
♦ Purpose of books
♦ Use of ICT to support the development
♦ Stories in languages other than English
♦ Use of books for reference
♦ The importance of materials and resources for reading for information
♦ Book-making with children and young people

Outcome 3
Numeracy plays an important part in daily life and in defining numeracy candidates should be encouraged to look at the scope of the topic.

Some of the areas of numeracy in an educational setting are:
♦ Counting
♦ Matching
♦ Ordering
♦ Sorting
♦ Making and recognising patterns and colours
♦ Adding and subtracting
♦ Measuring, weight, length and time
♦ Volume and capacity
♦ Shape, position and movement
♦ Sequencing and ordering
♦ Development of mathematical language.

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Candidates should add to this list and begin to identify the integrated nature of resources, experiences and activities that promote numeracy and mathematical skills. Candidates should explore resources, both commercial and home made, and experiences that have a numeracy focus but they should also investigate resources and experiences that have numeracy embedded within them.

Candidates should be encouraged to consider resources and experiences that integrate learning; for example, songs, stories and rhymes that promote language, literacy and numeracy. Children and young people need to experience numeracy, rather than it being taught in a formal, abstract way. Candidates could relate this to Piagetian stages of cognitive development. Unlike language, there are no particular milestones for acquiring numerical concepts and gaining these concepts is often linked to the positive experiences that children and young people are offered primarily at home and within educational settings. In identifying the importance of numeracy, the 'life skills' nature of numeracy should be emphasised to the candidate. The future ability of the child or young person to count, measure and use money will equip them to carry out everyday tasks in adult life.

Outcome 4
In presenting opportunities for language, literacy and numeracy candidates should be aware of issues relating to the resourcing, layout and presentation of materials and activities, particularly in ensuring that the developmental needs of all children and young people are met, including those with additional support needs. They should be accessible to all children and young people. The role of the adult in selecting, presenting and evaluating these should be explored in relation to a variety of educational settings. Candidates may, where appropriate to the setting, refer to formal and informal curricular advice on the promotion of language, literacy and numeracy.

Looking at and recognising signs, symbols and environmental print is fundamental to the way children and young people develop an awareness of the written word. Adults should take as many opportunities as possible to develop this awareness in children and young people. Candidates should be encouraged to appreciate that the idea of symbols and representation encompasses objects which appeal to the children and young people, pictures, role play for example, as well as print itself. They should identify the many uses and opportunities within the world of representation. Candidates should examine and describe ways in which they could present children and young people with opportunities for meaningful use of symbols. Candidates should explore the use of symbols in the environment and be encouraged to look at ways of simulating these into learning environments.

Candidates should be aware of themselves as role models in all of the outlined areas which have been discussed above. Some candidates may have a negative view of numeracy and mathematics and any such negative attitudes and the underpinning reasons should be explored.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT
In delivering this Unit there should be a balance between teacher/lecturer presentation and candidate centred learning. Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 can be explored using a variety of methods:

♦   Small group exercises
♦   Case studies
♦   Worksheets
♦   Individual research including the use of relevant web-sites
♦   Video/audio material
♦   Practical workshops

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♦ Use of text books, periodical and journals
♦ Attendance at storytelling/poetry workshops
♦ Outside speakers, e.g. curriculum specialists
♦ Outdoor trips, e.g. to the local environment/community to survey the use of symbols and print, or to the local library.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Candidates will have the opportunity to develop aspects of Written and Oral Communication through the investigation while promoting language and literacy and numeracy.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

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. As indicated, question paper based assessment should be carried out under supervision.

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 *Introduction to Assessment Arrangements*.