National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Partnerships in Early Education and Childcare (Intermediate 2)

CODE DM5W 11

COURSE

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to introduce candidates to the concept of partnership within the early education and childcare sector. Candidates will explore the skills required to establish and maintain relationships within early education and childcare partnerships. Candidates will explain what is meant by the term 'partnership' and gain knowledge and understanding of the potential benefits of partnerships for children, parents and childcare providers.

This Unit is an optional Unit in the *National Certificate Group Award: Early Education and Childcare (Higher)* 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, in the early education and childcare sector, working under supervision. They may wish to progress on to higher level early education and childcare qualifications.

OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature, roles and responsibilities of partnership.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the potential benefits of partnership in early education and childcare.
3. Evaluate the skills required by the adult to support partnerships in early education and childcare.

Administrative Information

Superclass: PQ

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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.

However, candidates would benefit if they had some knowledge and understanding of different types of early education and childcare settings.

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

- Standard Grade at General level in any relevant subject
- A Course or Unit in Care at Intermediate 1
- Courses or Units in any relevant subject at Intermediate 1
- SVQ or SVQ Units at level 2 in a related subject.

CREDIT VALUE

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

**SCQF 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 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

Demonstrate an understanding of the nature, roles and responsibilities of partnership.

Performance Criteria

a) Explain the principles for establishing a successful partnership.
b) Describe a range of formal and informal partnerships.
c) Investigate a range of formal and informal partnerships within the early education and childcare sector.
d) Explain the importance of formal and informal partnerships within the early education and childcare sector.

OUTCOME 2

Demonstrate an understanding of the potential benefits of partnership in early education and childcare.

Performance Criteria

a) Explain how children may benefit from partnerships in early education and childcare.
b) Explain how parents may benefit from partnerships in early education and childcare.
c) Explain how a variety of early education and childcare providers may benefit from partnership.
d) Explain the importance of developing and maintaining links between members of partnerships in early education and childcare.

OUTCOME 3

Evaluate the skills required by the adult to support partnerships in early education and childcare.

Performance Criteria

a) Describe the interpersonal skills required for supporting partnerships in early education and childcare.
b) Explain the importance of listening and non-verbal communication skills in supporting partnerships in early education and childcare.
c) Explain the importance of verbal communication skills in supporting partnerships in early education and childcare.
d) Evaluate how these skills contribute to supporting partnerships in early education and childcare.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Written and/or recorded oral evidence is required to demonstrate that the candidate has achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

The evidence for this Unit should be obtained under controlled, supervised conditions and should last no more than one hour thirty minutes. A single question paper with both extended and restricted response questions, such as illustrated in the National Assessment Bank item for this Unit, could be used. This should be taken on the completion of the Unit. Achievement can be decided by the use of a cut off score.

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

PC (a) focuses on a general definition of partnership and the principles underlying establishing a successful partnership. The candidate should consider:

- the number of people needed to form a partnership
- common aims and ideals
- co-operation
- identifying and accepting roles and responsibilities
- communication
- mutual respect.

PC (b) focuses on different types of partnership. The candidate should consider:

Informal partnerships, such as:

- a pressure group seeking to improve or change local facilities
- a group of students engaged in a common project
- a parent/teacher association
- a mother and toddler group
- people engaged in fund raising activities for a specific purpose.

Formal statutory partnerships, such as:

- business partnerships
- marriage
- agreements with service providers, e.g. banks, mobile phone companies
- rent agreements.

For PC (c) the candidate should expand on the meaning of partnership to include early education and childcare partnerships, relating them to current national and local initiatives. They should consider a range of formal and informal partnerships, large and small.

Outcome 2

PC (a) focuses on the benefits to the care, learning and development of the child. It is important that candidates keep up to date with national and local initiatives and strategies that support partnership. Candidates should focus on the advantages to children of the establishment of a childcare strategy in which all stakeholders are involved. Candidates should consider the importance of local authority, private and voluntary providers working together to develop a common early years strategy.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Candidates should also be encouraged to investigate formal/informal partnerships that may occur within individual settings and how these benefit the child. When people work together in partnership it has a significant effect in the way children value themselves and those around them. These partnerships include:

- story sack initiatives
- parents volunteering within setting
- home visiting schemes
- local fund raising initiatives
- parent management groups
- school boards
- open evenings
- social events
- joint training sessions with other early education and childcare providers
- local early education and childcare forums.

PC (b) focuses on the potential benefits to parents of partnership within early education and childcare. Candidates should focus on consultation with parents, which should be an integral part of early education and childcare planning, and relate this to current local and national policies. Candidates should consider that parents will feel more involved and valued if they are encouraged to contribute to early education and childcare decisions. Candidates should be aware that parents may, for a variety of reasons, engage in partnership at differing levels but that any contribution should be valued and respected.

PCs (c) and (d): Candidates should consider the value of all early education and childcare providers communicating with each other and the benefits of understanding the provision each offers. Through sharing experience, knowledge and expertise, early education and childcare providers can learn from each other about the care, learning and development needs of children. Candidates should also focus on the importance of continued shared communication between partnership members so that they can be encouraged to develop a mutual understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities in the provision of early education and childcare.

Outcome 3

This outcome encourages the candidate to focus on the skills required to support any partnership within early education and childcare.

PC (a): Any partnership must be based on mutual respect. Candidates should respect the values and beliefs of others and respect the choices that others may make. They should consider the interpersonal skills that are needed to form effective partnerships with others. Candidates should also consider the following skills, to help them identify:

- empathy
- verbal and non-verbal communication
- listening
- understanding and valuing cultural and religious background
- unconditional regard
- respect.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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PCs (b) and (c) focus on the communication skills required for establishing and maintaining effective relationships with all those involved in partnerships in early education and childcare, including parents, colleagues and other professionals. Candidates should focus on the importance of:

- Listening skills — knowing how to listen, the importance of allowing silence, acceptance, recognition of others' knowledge and experience, being non-judgemental.
- Non-verbal communication — body language (positive and negative), eye contact, smiling, sign language, written communication.
- Verbal communication — appropriate language, explanation, non-condescension, encouragement.

The candidate should investigate practical applications to encourage the above. For example:

- Newsletters and information pamphlets in a variety of languages
- Informal contact when picking up children
- Web-sites
- Regular meetings.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

In the first instance candidates should be encouraged to draw on their own experiences of partnership and if they have a work placement, reflect on the partnerships involved. Candidates should also be encouraged to examine their own skills and qualities and should reflect on areas of personal development that would strengthen their own partnerships. Candidates could make posters, pamphlets, etc to encourage communication.

In delivering this Unit there should be a balance between teacher/lecturer presentation and candidate - centred learning. Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 can be explored using a variety of methods:

- Small group exercises
- Case studies
- Worksheets
- Individual research including the use of appropriate websites
- Video/audio material
- Visiting speakers involved in early education and childcare partnership
- Investigation of models of partnership adopted locally
- Examination of current local and national Childcare Partnership policy and practice
- Visiting parent group representatives.

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. Assessment should always be carried out under supervision. Assessment time allocated for this Unit should not exceed one hour thirty minutes.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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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).