



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Childhood: Comparative Play Theories

Unit code: FD7D 36

Superclass: PN

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to allow candidates to explore and compare contemporary views of play across disciplines (such as playwork, early education, psychology, biology and sociology), and consider in critical detail conflicting concepts of play.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Develop knowledge and understanding of contemporary theories of play.
- 2 Analyse different perspectives of play across disciplines.
- 3 Compare and evaluate concepts of play.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

Candidates should already have qualifications that meet the requirements of the Scottish Social Services Council for practitioner (SCQF level 7) and have relevant qualifications at SCQF level 8.

Candidates should be working at lead practitioner or manager level within a day care service for children and young people.

Candidates should have well-developed communication and interpersonal skills and be able to demonstrate the ability to think analytically and reflectively.

General information (cont)

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 9: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 9*)

**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 are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication, Working with Others and Problem Solving* in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Candidates who use the Internet to conduct research will also have opportunities to develop skills in *Information and Communications Technology* and *Numeracy* depending on the variety of data gathered and how the data is presented.

Context for delivery

This Unit is an optional Unit within the Childhood Practice award (SCQF level .9)

Assessment

The Assessment for this Unit is a holistic and integrated assessment across all three Outcomes.

There are two possible methods of assessment for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding for the three Outcomes:

- ◆ Candidates will be required to produce a comparative academic essay (2000 words) analysing and evaluating contemporary theories and concepts of play.
- ◆ Candidates will be required to deliver in a spoken presentation format, with handout (up to 20 minutes delivery with 10 minutes of questions, four pages for the handout) that demonstrates how the candidate analysed and evaluated contemporary theories and concepts of play. This spoken presentation may be supported by the use of power point this would also allow candidates to enhance IT skills.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Childhood: Comparative Play Theories

Unit code: FD7D 36

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Please refer to *Knowledge and/or Skills for the Unit* and *Evidence Requirements for the Unit* after the Outcomes.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Develop knowledge and understanding of contemporary theories of play.

Knowledge and/or Skills

Candidates should demonstrate ability to:

- ◆ Identify and explain, in sufficient detail for the purpose, essential concepts and theories
- ◆ Research, in a variety of methods and from varied sources, contemporary theories of play, some of which are at the forefront of current thinking
- ◆ Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of underlying theories and are able to justify their relevance to children's holistic needs

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Use a selection of skills and techniques for research from literature, articles and web-based sources
- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge that shows a broad and integrated knowledge and understanding across a range of contemporary theories of play
- ◆ Describe theories in support of a clearly articulated position on the role of play in children's lives

Assessment Guidelines

The Assessment for this Unit is a holistic and integrated assessment across all three Outcomes.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Childhood: Comparative Play Theories

Outcome 2

Analyse different perspectives of play across disciplines.

Knowledge and/or Skills

Candidates should demonstrate ability to:

- ◆ Explain the importance of current thinking on adults' relationships to children across different disciplines
- ◆ Select and use appropriate terminology to explain key concepts
- ◆ Identify where concepts and theories are appropriate for a different professional context and apply them

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Drawing on different disciplines and different theoretical perspectives to inform and challenge their understanding of concepts such as childcare and playwork
- ◆ Demonstrate the blurring of boundaries between care, education, health, social welfare and play in a changing society
- ◆ Demonstrating knowledge that is detailed in their own practice, yet demonstrate awareness of other approaches
- ◆ Demonstrate a critical understanding of the evolving nature of the workforce and the likely implications of this on professional responsibilities

Assessment Guidelines

The Assessment for this Unit is a holistic and integrated assessment across all three Outcomes.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Childhood: Comparative Play Theories

Outcome 3

Compare and evaluate concepts of play.

Knowledge and/or Skills

Candidates should demonstrate ability to:

- ◆ Draw on a range of sources of evidence to question and be critical of practice and to support innovation and change
- ◆ Identify, justify and use methods of analysis, enquiry and production which are appropriate to tasks
- ◆ Summarise essential and other important aspects of key concepts, coherently pulling information together by justifying links between aspects

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Use different sources to critique and improve their own and others' practice, in reference to contemporary theories of play
- ◆ Use appropriate tools to compare and contrast key concepts
- ◆ Critically evaluating theories using their own perspective and other current thinking

Assessment Guidelines

The Assessment for this Unit is a holistic and integrated assessment across all three Outcomes.

Candidates will demonstrate:

- ◆ A critical understanding of a selection of the principal contemporary theories and concepts of play, some of which are at the forefront of current thinking
- ◆ A broad and integrated knowledge and understanding of different perspectives of play across disciplines
- ◆ Routine methods of enquiry and research
- ◆ Critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues

There are two possible methods of assessment for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding for these Outcomes:

- ◆ Candidates will produce a comparative academic essay (2000 words) analysing and evaluating contemporary theories and concepts of play.

or

- ◆ Candidates will deliver in a spoken presentation format, with handout (up to 20 minutes delivery with 10 minutes of questions, four pages for the handout) that demonstrates how the candidate analysed and evaluated contemporary theories and concepts of play.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Childhood: Comparative Play Theories

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 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

Outcome 1 – Develop knowledge and understanding of contemporary theories of play.

- ◆ Current thinking in play – Hughes; Sturrock; Lester; Russell; Maudsley; Else; Bruce; Ouvry; Garvey; Lindon; Brown; Sutton-Smith; Kane; Burghardt; Pellis and Pellis; Frost, Wortham and Reifel; Gill; Goleman
- ◆ Play as a process, not as an Outcome
- ◆ Play that is satisfying ‘in the moment’
- ◆ Play as a means of learning
- ◆ Play and compound flexibility
- ◆ Play’s contribution to brain architecture
- ◆ Current values and principles underpinning work with children, eg Playwork Principles, Workplace values and principles
- ◆ Research skills and techniques for research from literature, articles and web-based sources

Outcome 2 – Analyse different perspectives of play across disciplines.

- ◆ The impact of different perspectives of play for practice with children, eg playwork, early education, psychology, biology and sociology
- ◆ Different perspectives of the role of adults in supporting children’s play; ie adult led-child/led practice; cognitive, behavioural, developmental, biological, sociological, ludic
- ◆ Awareness of the dominant paradigms in their own and related children’s services
- ◆ Understanding of the current children’s workforce
- ◆ Knowledge of the changing dominant perspective of children over time
- ◆ The impact of legislation at national and international level

Outcome 3 – Compare and evaluate concepts of play.

- ◆ The play expectations of children and adults
- ◆ Educational paradigms
- ◆ Economic perspectives
- ◆ Using theory to inform practice
- ◆ Narrative analysis
- ◆ Discourse analysis
- ◆ Use of tables and charts to highlight similarities and differences

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood: Comparative Play Theories

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

Useful Resources/Addresses/References

It is not expected for tutors or candidates to use all these resources, however, these are a sample of available literature across the disciplines relating to play.

BBC4 (6 June 2008) [A Revolution in Childhood](#)

Boddy J, Cameron C, Mooney A, Moss P, Petrie P and Statham J (2005) [Introducing Pedagogy into the Children's Workforce Children's Workforce Strategy: A response to the consultation document](#) {Online}

Brown F (2003) [Playwork: theory and practice](#) London: Open University Press

Brown F and Taylor C (2008) [Foundations of Playwork](#) Maidenhead: Open University Press

Bruce T (2001) [Learning Through Play - Babies, Toddlers and the Foundation Years](#) London: Hodder Education

Bruner J (1966) [Toward a Theory of Instruction](#) Harvard University Press

Burghardt G (2005) [The Genesis of Animal Play: Testing the Limits](#) Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

Children's Play Council (2004) [Planning for Play](#) London: Children's Play Council

Cobb E (1977) [The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood](#) Dallas: Spring Publications

Cole-Hamilton I and Gill T (2002) [Making the Case for Play](#) London: NCB

Cole-Hamilton I, Harrop A and Street C (2002) [Making the Case for Play – Gathering the Evidence](#) London: National Children's Bureau

Else P (2009) [The Value of Play](#) London: Continuum

Erikson E (1977) [Childhood and Society](#) London: Paladin

Frost JL, Wortham SC and Reifel S (2008) [Play and Child Development](#) Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education Inc

Garvey C (1990) [Play](#) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press

Gill T (2007) [No Fear: Growing up in a Risk-averse Society](#) London: Gulbenkian

Goleman D (1996) [Emotional Intelligence](#) London: Bloomsbury

Gopnik A, Meltzoff AN and Kuhl P (1999) [How Babies Think: The Science of Childhood](#) London: Weidenfield and Nicholson

Hughes B (2001) [Evolutionary playwork and reflective analytic practice](#) London: Routledge

Hughes B (2006) [Play Types – Speculations and Possibilities](#) London: London Centre for Playwork Education and Training

Huizinga J (1938) [Homo Ludens](#) London: Routledge

Johnson MH (2008) [Brain development in childhood: A literature review and synthesis for the Byron Review on the impact of new technologies on children](#). Accessed from <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/byronreview/>

Kane P (2004) [The Play Ethic: A Manifesto for a Different Way of Living](#) London: Macmillan

Lester S and Russell W (2008) [Play for a change, Full Report](#) London: National Children's Bureau

Lindon J (2001) [Understanding Children's Play](#) Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes Ltd.

Moyles J (2005) [The Excellence of Play](#) London: Open University Press

National Playing Fields Association, Children's Play Council and PLAYLINK (2000) [Best Play: What Play Provision Should Do for Children](#) London: NPFA accessible from www.tiny.cc/AztUk

NCB (2006) [Play and Health](#) London: National Children's Bureau accessible from www.tiny.cc/PtR3b

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood: Comparative Play Theories

- Nutbrown C (Ed.) (1996) Respectful Educators - Capable Learners London: Paul Chapman
- Nutbrown K (2005) Key Concepts in Early Childhood Education and Care London: Sage Publications Ltd
- Pellis S and Pellis V (2009) The Playful Brain: Venturing To the Limits Of Neuroscience Oneworld Publications
- Petrie and others (2005) Pedagogy – a holistic, personal approach to work with children and young people, across services Briefing Paper June 2005 London: Thomas Coram Research Unit
- Playlink (2001) Making sense: playwork in practice London: Playlink
- Playwork Principles Scrutiny Group (2005) Playwork Principles Held in trust by Play Wales and accessed from <http://www.playwales.org.uk/page.asp?id=50>
- Pound L (2005) How Children Learn: From Montessori to Vygotsky - Educational Theories and Approaches Made Easy Step Forward Publishing Ltd
- Roopnarine JL (Editor, 2003) Play and Educational Theory and Practice, Play and Culture Studies Vol. 5. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger
- Sapsford R and Jupp V (2006) (eds) Data Collection and Analysis (2nd edition) London: Sage
- Sturrock G and Else P (1998) Therapeutic Playwork Reader one (2005) Southampton: Common Threads
- Sutton-Smith B (1997) The Ambiguity of Play London: Harvard University Press
- UNCRC (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child United Nations accessed from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>
- Vygotsky L (1978) Mind and society: The development of higher mental processes London: Harvard University Press
- Winnicott DW (1971) Playing and Reality London: Penguin
- Wood E (2005) Play, Learning and the Early Childhood Curriculum London: Sage Publications Ltd

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill(s) of *Communication, Working with Others* and *Problem Solving* in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Candidates who use the Internet to conduct research will also have opportunities to develop skills in *Information and Communications Technology* and *Numeracy* depending on the variety of data gathered and the form in which the data is presented.

Open learning

It may be possible to deliver the Unit by this route and if the Unit is delivered by open learning methods, additional resources will be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Childhood: Comparative Play Theories

This Unit is mandatory for this level of study and is designed to enable you to develop your knowledge and understanding of contemporary theories of play; that is, theories discussed in the field since the year 2000. On completing the Unit you will be able to analyse, compare and critically evaluate different perspectives of play across disciplines such as playwork, early education, psychology, biology and sociology.

This Unit has been designed to allow you to explore, compare and consider conflicting views of play across a variety of disciplines such as playwork, early education, psychology, biology and sociology.

This Unit is intended for those working at a lead practitioner or manager level within a day care service for children and young people. You should already have qualifications that meet the requirements of the SSSC for practitioner (SCQF level 7) and have relevant qualifications at SCQF level 8.

Overall you will be expected to demonstrate:

- ◆ A critical understanding of a selection of the principal contemporary theories and concepts of play, some of which are at the forefront of current thinking
- ◆ A broad and integrated knowledge and understanding of different perspectives of play across disciplines
- ◆ Routine methods of enquiry and research
- ◆ Critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues
- ◆ Work that is well structured, convincingly argued and evidenced, and technically accurate

In order to complete this Unit successfully, you will be required to achieve a satisfactory level of performance by producing a comparative academic essay (2000 words), or spoken presentation (20 minutes) which analyses and evaluates contemporary theories and concepts of play across a variety of disciplines. At this level, you will be expected to include a variety of contemporary theories of play critically commenting on the similarities and contrasts.