



## Higher National Unit specification

### General information

**Unit title:** Lifespan Development Theoretical Approaches  
(SCQF level 7)

**Unit code:** H8WM 34

**Superclass:** PK

**Publication date:** February 2015

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

This Unit enables learners to understand the stages and strands of human development across the lifespan. Drawing on contemporary debate and research will further enhance learners' understanding of the complexities of human development and enable them to consider contributions from psychological approaches related to all ages and stages of human development.

### Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate an understanding of the stages and strands of development relevant to own work role.
- 2 Compare, contrast and evaluate the contribution of psychology towards understanding human development.
- 3 Explain how a range of life experiences can affect human development and behaviours.

### Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

### Recommended entry to the Unit

Learners for this award should have effective communication and interpersonal skills and be able to use these skills to give an account of their experiences, reflect on them, make valid conclusions and express strengths and development needs, both personal and organisational.

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This may be demonstrated by relevant qualifications at SCQF level 5 or above with relevant experience in a social services or other relevant setting as a student or a care worker, or SVQ level 3 in Health and Social Care, Early Education or one of their predecessor qualifications.

### **Core Skills**

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

### **Context for delivery**

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment.

Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

### **Equality and inclusion**

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

## **Higher 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 SQA.

### **Outcome 1**

Demonstrate an understanding of the stages and strands of development relevant to own work role.

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Pre birth
- ◆ Birth-18 months
- ◆ Early childhood
- ◆ Adolescence
- ◆ Adulthood
- ◆ Older age

### **Outcome 2**

Compare, contrast and evaluate the contribution of psychology towards understanding human development.

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Neuroscience
- ◆ Nature nurture debate
- ◆ Cognition language and learning
- ◆ Social and personality development
- ◆ Emotional intelligence

### **Outcome 3**

Explain how a range of life experiences can affect human development and behaviours.

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Research methods
- ◆ Holistic psychology
- ◆ Play and learning
- ◆ Roles of family life
- ◆ Wellbeing and resilience

## **Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)**

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### **Evidence Requirements for this Unit**

Centres are encouraged to adopt a holistic approach to the assessment of this Unit where it forms part of a Group Award.

Where it is delivered alone it is recommended that all Outcomes should be assessed together.

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills across all Outcomes by showing that they can:

- ◆ define three stages of development illustrating three ways each stage can affect individual needs.
- ◆ describe and evaluate the concept of neuroscience in one area of human development.
- ◆ identify and describe two stages and two developmental strands of human development.
- ◆ using a situation from practice compare and contrast the impact of two psychological models of human development.
- ◆ describe and evaluate three life experiences that can effect wellbeing and resilience.

### **Assessment for this Unit may be undertaken through**

Assessment for this Unit could be through a variety of assessment methods. For direct entry learners centres may wish to use some pre produced scenario materials.



## Higher National Unit Support Notes

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Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and 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

This Unit is part of the mandatory section of both HNC Social Services and HNC Children and Young People. The guidance contains material for children and adult services. Separate Assessment Support Packs are provided for Children's care and Adult care. In all settings, there is a sharp focus on the application of knowledge and skills to enhance those supported by the learner. Learners will either be in a work role or have a work placement in an organisation able to provide experiences appropriate the content of the Unit.

Lifespan development covers the stages and strands of human development. The specific stages of human development are; pre-birth, childhood, adulthood, and older adulthood. The strands of human development consider nature, what you are born with, what you inherit from your parents and nurture, and what you learn as you grow up and go through life.

All learners will be required to draw upon a range of stages appropriate to their setting.

#### Outcome 1

This Outcome takes a comprehensive approach to understanding childhood development drawing upon sociological, biological and psychological considerations.

It considers the areas pre-birth, 0–36 months, childhood and adolescence.

Pioneers of early childhood education such as Bowlby, should be considered, alongside his contemporaries such as Rutter and Kramer as providing differing views to Bowlby with regard to the way in which their theories influence current practice models. It is essential to explore contemporary theories of child development including the importance of brain development research.

Adults have a powerful role to play in children's development; it is their role to be the 'technical' support, to allow a child to reach their full potential. The adult in supporting development, should therefore be explored by learners.

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Over time, theorists, studying the development of children, have questioned the accepted developmental norms and the idea that child development is a linear process for many aspects of children's development.

The work of Bower & Wishart, 1972; Baillargeon and DeVos, (1991) could be considered.

Other important contributions to our understanding of how children learn come from: Gopnik's (2010) Gopnik highlights how neuroscientists have a much greater understanding of how the brain mechanism allows learning to occur. Dr M Suzanne Zeedyk, who is a Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology at Dundee University has over the last 25 years, undertaken extensive research into babies' innate abilities to communication and connect with other people.

*The National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare: Building the Ambition*, supports Scottish Government's ambitious and transformational expansion of early learning and childcare based on the Children and Young People Act (2014) this should be comprehensively examined.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>

Other articles that may be of interest are:

DVD — *The Connected Baby* available at <http://www.theconnectedbaby.org/home>

Gopnik, A. (2010) *How Babies Think*. Scientific American, Psychology pp 76-81.

Zeedyk, S. *What About the Children? Children at Peace with Themselves: The importance of nurturing an emotionally secure generation*

Available at <http://whataboutthechildren.org.uk>

Western Trust (2013) *Seminar Promotes: Early Year's Intervention in the Prevention of Murder and Serious Violence* — John Carnochan.

Available at [www.westerntrust.hscni.net/about/2591.htm](http://www.westerntrust.hscni.net/about/2591.htm)

Fox, N.A. (2012) *Community violence, toxic stress and develop brains*. *Early Childhood Matters* — Harvard University.

Marshall, J. (2011) *Infant Neurosensory Development: Considerations for Infant Child Care*. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, No. 39, pp 175-181.

Carnochan, J. *An interview with John Carnochan*. Co-director of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit 'We need to get back to the idea of viewing public service as a vocation'.

Available at [www.vps.earlychildhoodmagazine.org](http://www.vps.earlychildhoodmagazine.org)

Gopnik, A. *Commentary on Susan Carey 'The Origin of Concepts'*. Behavioural and Brain Sciences

Reddy, V. and Trevarthen C. *What We Learn about Babies from engaging with their Emotions*.

Gerhardt, S. *Why Love Matters, Why affection Shapes a Babies Brain*.

Available at

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/earlyyears/prebirthtothree/nationalguidance/keyprinciples/relationships.asp>

Quite often in literature, the definition of the stage is related to chronological age, this approach can overlook the subjective experience of children as well as changing roles within society and our increasing knowledge of the development of the brain.

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Learners should draw upon a widely used pattern of strands or aspects appropriate to their setting such as:

Social, Physical, Emotional, Cognitive, Cultural and Spiritual (SPECES)

**or**

Social, Physical, Emotional, Cognitive and Language (SPECCL)

While all learners require an understanding of all patterns for the purpose of assessment centres should select the pattern is that it is appropriate to the learner's employment group and or setting.

Spirituality is another important area, as along with the other strands, this overlaps into other areas. Learners may be able to produce quite complex images to illustrate the areas of overlap within concept or mind maps.

This approach could be particularly useful and effective if, for example, the learner wishes to show the significance of the contribution family and community make towards satisfying some needs, for example, emotional and social or to belong within society.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979), ecological approach to child development helps us to understand that practitioner's need to see the child within his/her individual context — child part of family/family part of community. This approach considers too, how environmental factors also affect the development of a child.

### Outcome 2

This Outcome will enable learners to recognise and reflect over the contribution psychology makes to their own practice. The first part of the Outcome will assist them to identify how different approaches contribute to their tool kit of practice with a focus on achieving Outcomes for children, while the second and third allow them to explore contributions from psychology at a more advanced theoretical level.

The term integrated psychological approaches can be interpreted informally as when learners combine elements from their study of psychology to build upon their practice such as when a learner considers conditioned behaviour from their studies of Behavioural psychology and deprivation from Attachment theory.

### Neuroscience

The development of neuroscience is moving at great speed therefore anything included here is only up to date on the day it was written, for that reason, it is suggested that learners work together to research specific areas related to their practice.

They should be directed to the web site <http://www.brainfacts.org/educators/educator-resources/educator-resources/knowning-neurons/> asked to explore specific areas there, and report their finding back to the class group.

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An example of this for care in older people's services would be to follow the link 'Across the Lifespan', select youth and aging and research the areas identified. Following Healthy Ageing asks the question: Why do some people preserve their memory into old age while others do not? Research is ongoing to answer this question. While science has yet to find a way to stop the ageing process and prevent degenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia, neuroscientists are actively researching this area and have already found several strategies that may help maintain or improve brain health as we age.

Also valuable is the work of Dan Siegel he discusses why brain integration matters at this link:

<http://reply.psychotherapynetworker.org/dm?id=123B2CBE149111FD65A67CBB9608402485F0C1150E6D60D8>

Zeedyk's neurobiological research extends to how the brain develops and it is not by the gaining of new brain cells (neurons), but by constantly forming connections between the cells (synapses). Put in simply terms it is very much like a road transport system, when many roads join up then there is a pathway for vehicle to travel along. This is like the brain, when connections are made they form neural pathways along which messages can be sent. For example 'I am about to be held' or 'I am about to be hit', and depending on whatever message is sent the child's body will release the appropriate hormone to cope with the expectation of what is about to happen, eg cortisol for stress, and oxytocin for calm.

Full articles and interviews with Dr. Suzanne Zeedyk can be found at:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/earlyyears/prebirthtothree/nationalguidance/keyprinciples/relationships.asp> on relationships along with those of Professor Colwyn Trevarthen, Robin Balbernie and Dr Maria Robinson.

Of interest may also be the work of Robin Balbirnie which features in the Pre-Birth to Three guidance. The national guidance and the accompanying staff support materials.

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/earlyyears/prebirthtothree/>

Balbernie, R. (2001) Circuits and circumstances: the neurobiological consequences of early relationship experiences and how they shape later behaviour. *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, Vol. 27, No. 3, pp 237-255.

Brain facts provides guidance for all ages and stages of development with useful articles updated regularly <http://www.brainfacts.org/>

### Nature and Nurture

In discussing the interplay between nature and nurture towards understanding of developmental strands and aspects, it could be useful to integrate these with stages and strands of childhood development in the concept/mind maps.

Nature may provide for some particularly sensitive aspects of learning covering issues such as language acquisition. Whilst nurture can harness, encourage or dissuade development both areas contribute to the blend that is human development and by integrating these into the illustration of needs this will paint a more accurate picture.



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Best practice, is achieved by embedding the nature nurture debate within an integrated assessment context. The nature nurture debate provides excellent opportunities for classroom debate. The strands or aspects as listed in the Evidence Requirements still need to be satisfied including the nature nurture debate in context.

### Stages of cognitive development

Cognitive development refers to how a person perceives, thinks, and gains understanding of his or her world through the interaction of genetic and learned factors. Among the areas of cognitive development are information processing, intelligence, reasoning, language development, and memory.

<http://www.healthofchildren.com/C/Cognitive-Development.html#ixzz3FwmjGTEU>

Learners could research the various theories of cognitive development and the relationship to the current thinking around brain development.

<http://www.healthofchildren.com/C/Cognitive-Development.html#ixzz3FwnYT7Js>

The two are equally valid routes for learners to explore. Centres may blend formal and informal ways. While we do not promote any one approach, it is noted, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and Cognitive Behavioural Approach are models used extensively across NHS settings. The adoption of this approach by the NHS may change through time it would be expected lecturers and facilitators are aware of dominant thought and current approaches.

NHS Choices provide an accessible overview and effective video presentation of CBT at <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Cognitive-behavioural-therapy/Pages/Introduction.aspx> Whilst the Royal College of Psychiatry asserts;

CBT can help you to change how you think 'Cognitive' and what you do 'Behaviour'. These changes can help you to feel better. Unlike some of the other talking treatments, CBT focuses on the 'here and now' problems and difficulties. Instead of focusing on the causes of your distress or symptoms in the past, it looks for ways to improve your state of mind now.

### Language development

Learners should explore the work of Skinner, Chomsky, Vygotsky. The main theorist associated with the learning perspective is B F Skinner. Skinner argued that adults shape the speech of children by reinforcing the babbling of infants that sound most like words.

The nativist theory, proposed by Noam Chomsky, argues that language is a unique human accomplishment Chomsky says that all children have what is called an innate language acquisition device (LAD). Theoretically, the LAD is an area of the brain that has a set of universal syntactic rules for all languages.

Other researchers such as Vygotsky embrace an interactionist perspective, consisting of social-interactionist theories of language development. In such approaches, children learn language in the interactive and communicative context, learning language forms for meaningful moves of communication.

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### Social and Personality development

Social development involves learning the values, knowledge and skills that enable children to relate to others effectively and to contribute in positive ways to family, school and the community.

The learners should have an understanding of critical aspects of social and emotional development during childhood and adolescence. This understanding may include exploration of

- ◆ Becoming aware of self
- ◆ Building confidence and self-esteem
- ◆ Self-knowledge
- ◆ Living and learning with others

Marion Dowling's book *Young Children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development* (2005) is a useful text as is *Lifespan Development: Helen Bee and Denise Boyd* (2005).

### Emotional Intelligence

There is increasing recognition that emotional abilities have been under-rated in the role that they play in helping to ensure a successful and fulfilling life.

Goleman (1996) describes emotional intelligence as the ability to identify and respond sensitively to one's own and others' feelings

Learners could explore the provision of an environment, which aids children to developing emotional stamina, which enables them to withstand difficulties in life and stress as well as having insights into and empathy with others. Exploration of the concepts of Inter-personal skills (knowing about one's own feelings) Intra-personal skills (tuning into the feelings of others) and Identity (defined as a sense of uniqueness and of individuality) would help learners to contribute to children's holistic development.

Transitions can be exciting and challenging but it is still essential that these are handled sensitively, inclusively and positively. Dunlop and Fabian (2007,) shows that 'the way in which the first transitions are handled could potentially have a significant impact on the child's capacity to cope with change in the short and long term'.

Learners should consider how transitions need careful planning, effective partnerships and communication between all concerned to ensure the wellbeing of children.

It is important to foster early children's socio-cognitive skills because they have a bigger impact on children's social and academic development when acquired at a young age. Socio-cognitive skills describe and predict people's mental states and allow children to develop a strong social cognition.

Developing social and cognitive awareness is especially important during infancy to prepare children to interact with the social world.

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### Outcome 3

The focus of this Outcome is on how a range of experiences can affect development and behaviours. In order to understand these learners will be required to consider research methods, the role of play and learning, health, wellbeing and resilience, holistic approaches to development and changes across childhood and beyond.

The Outcome provides learners with the opportunity to conduct some research in groups and to present their findings to the whole class.

Research Why Is Research So Important?

Research gives early childhood practitioners and policymakers essential knowledge to use in making decisions on behalf of young children and families. The goal is to integrate the best available research evidence with the wisdom and values of professionals and families.

Learners should consider what makes good research, eg:

- ◆ Does it pose an important question, that can be, investigated empirically and that contributes to the knowledge base in childhood practice?
- ◆ Does it build on relevant theory and previous research?

Ethical standards are critically important when conducting research with young children and research procedures must never harm children, physically or psychologically, and should be conducted with their knowledge and consent.

Learners could also explore the key issue of ethical research with children. *NAEYC's Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment* presents general ethical principles, although it does not specifically discuss research with children and can be found at; <http://www.naeyc.org/resources/research/ethical>

### Psychological Approaches:

Given the vocational context of this Unit, it is more valuable for learners to explore the rich tapestry psychology offers in developing practice than to focus on purely theoretical work. Centres should present an overview of a selection of psychological approaches, themes and theories.

The main schools of psychology include:

- ◆ Behaviourism
- ◆ Humanism
- ◆ Psychodynamic
- ◆ Cognitive
- ◆ Neurobiological

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Other schools of psychology include:

- ◆ Psychosocial
- ◆ Attachment
- ◆ Loss
- ◆ Transition
- ◆ Social Learning Theory

Learners could then provide a synopsis of an underlying approach or theory.

The work of Erikson and Berne, have their foundations in the psychodynamic approach; also worth noting, it heavily influenced the work of Bowlby. When contrasting the two, learners may want to explore the significance of child-mother attachment in Bowlby's work to the focus of need satisfaction in Maslow.

See also the research 'Baby Bonds' — the link to the research in the following article:  
<http://www.suttontrust.com/news/news/40-of-children-miss-out-on-the-parenting-needed-to-succeed-in/>

**And**

Visit [www.saia.org.uk](http://www.saia.org.uk) for the 'Scottish Attachment In Action' website

### **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

Maslow (1943) wanted to understand what motivates people. He believed that people possess a set of motivation systems unrelated to rewards or unconscious desires. He stated that people are motivated to achieve certain needs. When one need is fulfilled a person seeks to fulfil the next one, and so on.

The earliest and most widespread version of the hierarchy of needs (1943, 1954) includes five motivational needs often depicted as levels within a pyramid. This five-stage model can be divided into basic needs, (eg physiological, safety, love, and esteem) and growth needs, (self-actualization).

### **Play and learning**

Play is a major contributor to child development, health and wellbeing and learning. Tools designed to measure children's playfulness can be adapted to help understand adults and older adults along with people with learning disabilities and people with other disabilities particularly in terms of involvement and psychological wellbeing. The Leuven scale is a case in point and is a helpful tool to encourage involvement and wellbeing.

Additionally it has resonance across the entire life span. Older adults may have stronger senses of belonging, improved self-esteem and general satisfaction from playing games and competitions (Yarnal & Qian, 2011). Their work immediately suggests playfulness contributes towards being 'upbeat' and 'spontaneous'. These two features alone can contribute significantly to an individual's experience of long-term care.

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There has been an abundance of research around play and its positive effects on early childhood learning and development. In general, research shows strong links between creative play and language, physical, cognitive, and social development. Play is a healthy, essential part of childhood. Learners should explore their own views on play, and how those views, relate to current thinking.

In acknowledging that play is a major contributor to child development, health and wellbeing and learning learners could consider a recent paper by Christine Stephen, University of Stirling '*Pedagogy: the Silent Partner in Early Learning*' in which she discusses the challenges around play and strengthens the argument that play is an essential aspect of children's development.

<http://academic.research.microsoft.com/Paper/5054704.aspx>

The recent publication of the '*Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Vision*' confirms the government's commitment to play as an important part of their vision for Scotland's children. It defines play as follows 'play encompasses children's behaviour which is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. It is performed for no external goal or reward and is fundamental and integral part of healthy development.'

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/06/5675>

In 'Building the Ambition' National Practice guidance on Early Learning and Childcare Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 highlights the difficulties in defining play and the misinterpretation of the intrinsic value of play to children. Learners should be familiar with this crucial document and the case studies should be used to deepen understanding of the challenges that practitioners face in planning activities with children.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0045/00458455.pdf>

Few studies of adult playfulness exist, but limited research on older adults and playfulness suggests that playfulness in later life improves cognitive, emotional, social, and psychological functioning and healthy aging overall.

Step 1 determines the characteristics of older-adult playfulness, extending Barnett's (2007) study of young-adult playfulness and recruiting participants from a different age group (older adults rather than younger adults). Based on findings from Step 1, in Step 2 the authors develop the Older Adult Playfulness (OAP) scale to measure playfulness in older adults. In Step 3, they validate the reliability of the OAP scale. A forthcoming manuscript will report on the relationship between older adult playfulness and healthy aging (Step 4).

<http://www.journalofplay.org/sites/www.journalofplay.org/files/pdf-articles/4-1-article-yarnal-older-adult-playfulness.pdf>

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The NHS Choices video *Playground for the Over-60s* available at <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/fitness/Pages/physical-activity-guidelines-for-older-adults.aspx> Provides evidence to support the importance of physical activity and also contains sound bites from some of the participants. It is perhaps worth noting that few of them actually stop playing as they talk! Their comments include such things as how the playground has helped their confidence, how troubles are diminished; it also challenges fear and promotes independence. Physically it strengthens muscles and improves balance, however, just as importantly the social side, socialising and having a good laugh and enjoying oneself, also assists mental health. As one of the participants concludes, 'When you stop laughing, stop playing you grow old'!

Older-adult playfulness could be a crucial component of healthy aging, particularly if associated with a positive affective state.

Play is not just restricted to physical exercise but extends out to artistic expression, creativity and public performance. The work of Out of the Darkness Theatre Company (<http://www.odtheatre.org.uk/>) along with research 'exploring the role of arts in the delivery of adult social care with a particular emphasis of workforce development' available at <http://www.iriss.org.uk/resources/arts-and-social-care>

Events organised through 'Luminate' take place across Scotland throughout October, and spotlights arts activities by and for older people <http://www.luminatescotland.org/>

These help to see the dynamic contribution and therapeutic benefits from artistic engagement and play. Learners may also wish to consider other interventions or contributions from; art therapy, horticultural therapy and expressive writing within the context of play.

Age UK's pages on health and wellbeing consider the role of happiness in old age available at; <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/health-wellbeing/keeping-your-body-healthy/is-this-the-happiest-time-of-your-life/> provides a comprehensive look at attitudes and happiness.

Undoubtedly, therefore, play ought not to be the preserve of children. As a therapeutic approach, it has the potential to work towards successful Outcomes for us all.

### **Roles of Family Life:**

As a society, we continue to hold the nuclear model to be the preferred family structure for raising children. However, as parents, children, aunts, uncles and grandparents, we regularly reach beyond our nuclear family model, or are forced, to through bereavement or divorce, and live lives that look very different. Increasingly evidence shows that this nuclear family is only sustainable with the support of the wider family around it. Where the two-parent household has broken down it is often grandparents and the wider family who step in to fill the gap, cushioning any adverse experiences that children may have.

Through this changing family picture, the role that grandparents and the wider family play is significant; but it can be hidden, is often taken for granted, and is little understood.

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This multiplicity of roles (simultaneously as mother, carer, grandmother, and step grandmother) and circumstances requires the family to adapt. It also means that the nuclear model becomes less and less relevant. Increasingly we live our lives as family networks, which may have a nuclear 'hub' at the centre, but this does not and cannot exist in isolation.

<http://www.grandparentsplus.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/RethinkingFamilyLife.pdf>  
<http://www.sharecare.com/health/parent-child-relationship/what-role-families-play-lives>

Parents provide the foundational role of support, nurturance, and guidance for their children. That role includes the fundamental right to direct the child's upbringing. It is essential that society support parents by respecting their natural right and present legal authority to make decisions for their children, including educational and medical decisions. Parents, in this context, include biological and adoptive parents, as well as guardians and custodial grandparents.

Parents and families are the single most important influence in the lives of children and young people. Good parenting is crucial to children and young people's social, emotional, cognitive and physical development. Those who grow up in a loving and nurturing environment are more likely to develop into healthy and happy teenagers with high aspirations and a good chance of realising their full potential.

[https://www.google.co.uk/?gws\\_rd=ssl#q=role+of+family+life](https://www.google.co.uk/?gws_rd=ssl#q=role+of+family+life)

Social scientists have different answers to this question. This issue is one of the most controversial and politicised topics in psychology, family studies and mental health today. There are contrasting views about the basic question: Is the 'traditional' nuclear family with the presence of the biological father, essential for the wellbeing of children? Those who believe the answer is yes quote research to support their position (Blankenhorn, 1995, Popenoe (1996).

Learners should consider the impact on children of separation/divorce, and consider how these can result in a wide range of issues, for example: conflict, neglect, abuse of all sorts, shame, conditional love, faulty disciplinary styles, gender prejudice, sexuality intolerance, denial of feelings and family facts, emotional dysregulation, rampant anxiety and much more are present in such families. The burden is then carried beyond the early family, often untreated — making for the defining term adult child (of a dysfunctional family).

### **Wellbeing and resilience**

Wellbeing and resilience are linked; over the course of life. Quality of life will depend upon a degree of resilience to life events. Wellbeing describes a psychological state at any point in time. Resilience, however, is less about a point in time, it takes into account past experience which helps to build mental toughness. Research indicates that resilience in children is based largely, upon good relationships with family and a feeling of belonging in their early learning and childcare setting.

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Learners should also explore the GIRFEC approach which is designed to be flexible enough to support all children and families whatever their need, whenever they need it. It is about responding in a meaningful, supportive way, working with parents wherever possible. It takes into account that everyone involved with the family has an important part to play and puts the wellbeing of children and families at the heart of any support.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>

Wellbeing is at the heart of the Scottish Governments Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach. It is a consistent way for people to work with all children and young people. It is the bedrock for all children's services and can be used by practitioners in adult services, who work with parents or carers. When working with children or young people, the My World Triangle from GIRFEC can be used, at every stage, to think about the whole world of the child or young person and may provide a discussion point for learners.

It is important to consider how modern life impacts on the mental health of everyone including young children and how a setting that looks after the mental health and wellbeing can compensate for traumatic events such as transitions and build resilience.

### Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit is designed to be delivered as part of the Group Award for direct entry learners, it can also be used for workers as continuous professional development.

It provides evidence of knowledge and understanding that can be used to evidence Units from the SVQ level 3 Health and Social Services and the SVQ level 3 Social Services Children and Young People.

Learners wishing to use the Outcomes of their work for this purpose are advised to complete the assignment based on either work based practice or placement experience.

It is recommended that learners work through this Unit in class groups and small groups in order to be able to give and receive feedback.

Group and individual presentations provide opportunities for each learner to demonstrate their learning and increase their self-awareness.

### Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.



## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Lifespan Development Theoretical Approaches  
(SCQF level 7)

Learning for this Unit is suitable for the use of relevant learning materials use of online learning/video resources relating to human development is encouraged.

Some self-directed learning and research are also encouraged in order that learners recognise the importance of this to their own self-development.

An understanding of both theory and its relation to practice are required for all Outcomes. Hence, assessment must include both the requirement to discuss various issues and the opportunity to relate these to practice. Where learners are already in relevant employment, they should write about real work situations.

In order to achieve this Unit, learners are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the Knowledge and Skills requirements for each Outcome.

Outcome 1: Centres are encouraged to adopt mind or concept mapping for illustrating the stages and strands or aspects of human development is particularly open to photographic and or image representations. Learners could produce a concept/mind map for each stage of human development.

Outcome 2: Assignment evaluating the concept of neuroscience in one area of development.

Outcome 3: Provides an opportunity for assessment to be in the form of a case study in which learners compare and contrast two significantly different psychological approaches.

### Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at [www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment).

### Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

Learners will have the opportunity to develop the following Core Skills:

**Communication:** Written Communications will be developed through learners producing written work in a variety of formats; oral communication will be developed through discussion, debate and evidence of engagement with other learners, professionals and key people.

**Working with Others:** Will be developed as learners will be required to work collaboratively with colleagues from their own and other service areas in the preparation and research for their assignments.

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Lifespan Development Theoretical Approaches  
(SCQF level 7)

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** Learners will develop their *ICT* skills through research and the presentation of written assignments.

## History of changes to Unit

| Version | Description of change | Date |
|---------|-----------------------|------|
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## General information for learners

### **Unit title:** Lifespan Development Theoretical Approaches (SCQF level 7)

This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This Unit aims to enable you to learn and reflect over the stages and strands of human development across the lifespan. By drawing on contemporary debate and research, it will further enhance your understanding of the complexities of human development. It also considers contributions from psychological approaches.

The Unit provides you with the opportunity to reflect over how humans develop over the life course and introduces you to how psychology can inform your practice.

You will learn about the stages of human development from pre-birth to end of life. You will become familiar with the different stages of human development and give examples of how different strands can be satisfied at each of these different stages. Human development is very complex and multi-faceted and this Outcome gives you the opportunity to reflect over the processes involved.

You will then study contributions made by psychology towards our understanding of human development. Psychology helps us to develop our practice into a professional status. You will learn a variety of approaches and key features from psychology, and discover how these help us to understand the people we support better.

You will look at new developments from the field of neuroscience, and learn how these now inform the nature nurture debate. The major goal of neuroscience is to understand how groups of neurons interact to generate behaviour. Neuroscientists study the actions of molecules, genes, and cells they also explore the complex interactions involved in bodily function, decision-making, emotion, learning, and more. They seek to understand diseases and disorders that occur when interactions do not happen or go wrong.

You will also look at social and personality development, and learn how this changes across our lifespan. Finally you will also have the opportunity to evaluate; consider the strengths and weaknesses, and to demonstrate the use of research methods that can be used in the context of your practice.

Your learning will be formally assessed this will be by assignments you will be given relating to each of the Unit Outcomes.

You will also have the opportunity to develop the following Core Skills:

*Communication:* Written Communications will be developed through you producing written work in a variety of formats. Oral Communication; will be developed through discussion, debate and evidence of engagement with other learners, professionals and key people.

*Working with Others;* will be developed as you will be required to work collaboratively with colleagues from your class or from your own and other service areas in the preparation and research for assignments.

## **General information for learners**

**Unit title:** Lifespan Development Theoretical Approaches  
(SCQF level 7)

*Information and Communication Technology (ICT):* you will develop ICT skills through research and the presentation of written assignments.