Higher National Unit Specification

General information

Unit title: Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: HT8N 35

Superclass: GA

Publication date: September 2017

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 2

Unit purpose

This unit is designed to enable learners to understand the definition of pedagogy and the role it plays in Childhood Practice. Research suggests understanding pedagogical practice can make a positive difference to children and young people’s experiences. By undertaking this unit learners will explore the opportunities and challenges of a variety of pedagogical approaches. After identifying strategies relevant to own practice learners can plan and implement strategies and through evaluation inform future practice.

To enable learners to complete this unit ideally they should be appropriately employed or supervised as part of a work placement within a childhood practice setting but there is no need to work directly with children.

Outcomes

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

1. Analyse the term pedagogy and the factors which can influence it.
2. Evaluate a range of national and international Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches in childhood practice.
3. Implement effective strategies in national and international pedagogy.
4. Evaluate effective pedagogical strategies.

Credit points and level

2 Higher National Unit credits at SCQF level 8: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8)
Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches (SCQF level 8)

Recommended entry to the unit

Learners should have good communication skills, both written and oral, preferably through achievement of Higher English or a Communication unit at SCQF level 6. Ideally the candidates should have achieved a relevant qualification at SCQF level 7, eg HNC SVQ level 3 or equivalent. Ideally they should be appropriately employed or supervised as part of a work placement within a childhood practice setting but there is no need for them to work directly with children.

Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following Core Skills components:

- Complete Core Skill: None
- Core Skill component: Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6
  Reviewing and Evaluating at SCQF level 6

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the support notes of this unit specification.

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.

If being taught, as part of the HND Childhood Practice, it is recommended that this unit should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the HND group award.

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.
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.

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. Learners 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

Analyse the term pedagogy and the factors which can influence it.

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Definitions of the term pedagogy for childhood practice
♦ Personal qualities and attributes that contribute to effective pedagogy
♦ Environmental and cultural influences that impact on pedagogical approaches

Outcome 2

Evaluate a range of national and international Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches to childhood practice.

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Contemporary pedagogical theories
♦ Scottish Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches to early learning and childcare
♦ International Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches to early learning and childcare
♦ Pedagogy and reflective practice

Outcome 3

Implement effective strategies in national and international pedagogy.

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Child led practice
♦ Social pedagogical interactions
♦ Diversity and differentiation
♦ Creativity and critical thinking
♦ Evaluation of learning and development
Higher National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

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Outcome 4

Evaluate effective pedagogical strategies.

Knowledge and/or skills

♦ Effective planning
♦ Collaborative working
♦ Observation and analysis of pedagogical strategy
♦ Using reflection to inform future practice

Evidence requirements for this unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills across all outcomes by showing that they can:

♦ explore definitions for the term pedagogy.
♦ critically analyse the personal qualities and attributes that affect effective pedagogy in childhood practice.
♦ critically analyse the environmental factors which influence pedagogy in Childhood Practice.
♦ explain theories influencing pedagogical approaches.
♦ critically analyse two Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches one Scottish and one international.
♦ evaluate effective pedagogical strategies.
♦ explain how one strategy could be relevant to practice and implement it.
♦ evaluate the implemented strategy.
♦ reflections to inform future practice.

This unit can be undertaken as a standalone unit for CPD, however it is recommended that there will be integration between this unit and the mandatory units of the PDA/HND Childhood Practice to facilitate integration of assessment.

♦ Evidence for Outcomes 1 and 2 could be assessed through group presentations to meet all evidence requirements including a reflective statement of 1,000 words.
♦ Outcomes 3 and 4 could take the form of an academic essay of 2,000 words which evaluates effective pedagogical strategies and identifies 1 strategy that could be relevant to the learners practice. Once implemented evaluation of the strategy should inform future practice.
Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches (SCQF level 8)

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 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this unit

This unit is included in the framework of the PDA Childhood Practice and HND Childhood Practice. It is recommended that it should be delivered and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes in an integrated fashion.

This unit is designed to enable learners to understand the definition of pedagogy and the role it plays in Early Learning and Childcare. Learners will explore the opportunities and challenges of a variety of pedagogical approaches. After identifying strategies relevant to own practice learners can plan and implement strategies and through evaluation inform future practice.

Outcome 1

This unit aims to enable learners to gain an understanding of the term pedagogy in relation to childhood practice.

Effective pedagogy is an important aspect of childhood practice and has direct relevance to a child’s experience.

Learners should explore the many definitions of pedagogy. Originating from a Greek word meaning to ‘lead a child’.

The general meaning of ‘The science of teaching’ should be explored further including ‘any conscious action by one person designed to enhance learning in another’ (Mortimore, 1999, pg3) Understanding pedagogy and its impact on learning.

It is what one needs to know, and the skills one needs to command, in order to make and justify the many kinds of decisions of which teaching is constituted (Alexander, 2004, pg11) Still No Pedagogy?

Pedagogy is defined as any activity undertaken to promote learning. It encompasses both the direct actions that practitioners undertake, eg modelling, questioning and indirect activity such as planning, observing and recording. (Scottish Executive, 2006) Insight 28
Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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‘set of instructional techniques and strategies, which enable learning to take place and provide opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions within a particular social and material context. It refers to the interactive process between teacher and learner and to the learning environment’ (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002) SPEEL

Oberhuemer’s use of the phrase *early childhood pedagogue* to represent ‘early childhood professionals whose practice is shaped by their unique interpretation of a wide range of personal, professional and contextual factors that influence education.’

*Conceptualising the Early Childhood Pedagogue* (2005)

Exploring these and other definitions, learners will understand the term and be able to understand its application in practice.

By exploring the personal qualities, including the small everyday human actions and responses that are essential for effective pedagogy, are highlighted. The importance of empathy, attunement, equity, reflectiveness, knowledge of development, flexibility, resourcefulness, creativity and variety of roles and range of strategies should be explored.

C.R. Rogers (1969), stated:
I see the facilitation of learning as the aim of education … We know … that the initiation of such learning rests not upon the teaching skills of the leader, not upon his scholarly knowledge of the field, not upon his curricular planning, not upon his use of audio-visual aids, not upon the programmed learning he utilizes, not upon his lectures and presentations, not upon an abundance of books, though each of these at one time or another be utilized as an important resource. No, the facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities which exist in the personal relationship between the facilitator and the learner. (pp. 105–106)

When analysing environmental and cultural factors, hospitable space, choice, consistency, inclusion, organisation, challenge and team working and how these can enhance the process of development and learning could be explored.

Consideration should be given to the internal factors of space and resources in order to provide the factors above. Also important are the ethos of relationships of staff within establishments and their impact including parental/ families’ attitudes and involvement. In addition learners should consider the external factors including local authority influence, funding, cultural and organisational values.


Eaude, T (2011) Thinking Through Pedagogy for Primary and Early Years. Exeter: Learning Matters

Outcome 2

Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches have evolved over time in response to emerging theories, cultural heritage and research.

Learners should consider a range of pedagogical theories which have been used in the development of approaches. While approaches may have the same underpinning theory, the way they have been put into practice varies.

Frobel, Piaget, Montessori, Vygotsky, Bruner, Loris Malaguzzi are some that could be considered.

Research suggests two types of curriculum approaches: the early education approach and the comprehensive/social pedagogy approach.

The early education approach coming from behaviourist or social learning theories that views learning as an input by the environment. Following this approach sets concrete learning goals, and often assess children’s knowledge by using standardised tests and/or monitor child outcomes frequently. Within this approach, child outcomes are regarded as very important. This approach uses adult led instructional techniques.

The comprehensive / social pedagogy approach focuses more on the experiences and actual pedagogical practices rather than child outcomes and achievements. Assessments through formal testing are less common in social pedagogy approaches, although children’s development can be monitored in a more qualitative fashion (eg storybooks by ECEC staff that include children’s work). Some systems with this approach (eg the Reggio Emilia approach in Italy) strongly object to knowledge assessment of ECEC-aged children against any predetermined set of standards (OECD, 2014)

In more recent years, countries have been moving towards combining the early education and social pedagogy approach.

The Scottish approaches could include Pre-birth to three, Curriculum for Excellence, Building the Ambition, Playwork Principles, National Play Strategy, Nurture programmes.

The term pedagogy is more commonly used in many other parts of the world. The ways early learning and childcare is approached varies, there are generalised aims such as fulfilling and promoting development, however there are differences in how early years experiences are delivered. Learners will have the opportunity to look at a range of these.

International approaches could include Te Whariki, Reggio Emilia Approach, Montessori Approach, Forest School, Experiential Education and The course of study for Kindergarten Japan.

Te Whariki is the New Zealand’s Ministry of Education’s early childhood curriculum policy statement. It is a framework for providing early learning and development within a sociocultural context. It emphasises the learning partnership between teachers, parents and families. Cultural values and language are key. Adults weave a holistic curriculum in
response to children’s learning and development in the early childhood setting and the wider context of the child’s world. Ministry of Education. New Zealand. The Reggio Emilia Approach is an educational philosophy based on the image of the child, and of human beings, as possessing strong potentials for development and as a subject of rights who learns and grows in the relationships with others. Inherent in the Reggio approach are the following factors: the image of the child, expressive arts in the preschool establishment, progettazione, community and parent-school relationships, environment and teachers as learners. Reggio children (2017)

Montessori approach is a method of education that is based on self-directed activity, hands-on learning and collaborative play. Montessori approach is based on five basic principles that represent how Montessori educators implement the Montessori Method. These principles include: respect for the child, the absorbent mind, sensitive periods, the prepared environment, and autoeducation.

Forest School is a specialised learning approach that sits within and compliments the wider context of outdoor and woodland education. Forest School is a process that offers all learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees. The idea of longer term regular session is one of the principles in addition to learner-centred processes and promoting holistic development of those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.

Experiential Education, focuses on the process of education and is based on the principle that there are two key dimensions to high quality: the provision ensures children’s emotional well-being and practitioners stimulate a level of involvement in children that supports deep-learning through sustained concentration, intrinsic motivation and working at the limits of existing understanding. (Insight, 2006)

Japan — The course of study for Kindergarten — The principles in the curricula influence overall pedagogy/pedagogical approaches. The importance of individuality of children and the development of independent decision-making skills, relationship building and play-based learning is highlighted.

Further information and additional International approaches can be found.


Youtube has videos of the projects mentioned in the resource pack.

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Outcome 3

By examining approaches learners can identify their effective strategies.

The strategies that support different approaches could include:

Child-led practice — what does this mean, the balance between child initiated and adult initiated activities rather than child or adult led could be explored. It could be useful to explore research on the pedagogy of play.

Social pedagogical interactions — ensuring children, young people and their families feel welcomed, respected and valued. The ways children and young people are supported to build confidence and feel a sense of belonging and are willing to try new experiences. How families are included in children’s development and learning. Social pedagogy, working with families to develop all aspects of their wellbeing might be included.

Diversity and differentiation — positive attitudes towards diversity and difference, effective Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches to promote learning and accommodate different paces of learning. A balance, for individuals, between structure and freedom, challenge and enjoyment, risk and safety amongst others can be considered. It could be useful to explore reality pedagogy where the importance of children and young people’s voice and agency for example are highlighted.

Creative and critical thinking — Children are born creative and competent thinkers and learners, they are actively involved in their play and gathering information, ideas and knowledge to build their development and learning. Learners should have an understanding of children and young people as autonomous thinkers and active learners. How an approach encourages children and young people to take risks and learn from mistakes and build effective coping strategies for development and learning

Evaluation of learning and development — a range of Assessment for Learning approaches and how they are recorded should be considered. Assessment for learning Early Childhood Exemplars by Margaret Carr Wendy Lee Carolyn Jones would be one useful resource. Knowledge of the process of play and reflective practice to respond to children and young people.

Having had the opportunity to analyse a range of strategies learners can now identify a strategy that may enhance their practice and/or facilitate learning.

Rather than replicating an approach learners should identify which elements could be relevant to their own practice.

What may be effective practice in one pedagogical approach may need to be adapted to meet the needs of a different groups or cultures.

By reflecting on their own practice learners can identify a relevant strategy and implement it.
Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches (SCQF level 8)

Outcome 4

When planning, it's important learners identify the relevance of the strategy to their practice and what needs to be considered.

The Early Years Collaborative Model for Improvement may be a useful way to do this, Plan Do Study Act or SWOT analysis.

Learners will be able to demonstrate an understanding of what has to be considered when implementing new strategies. Who should be consulted and identify a clear way to communicate their plan.

When evaluating the implementation, learners can reflect on the context, the collaboration with other professionals and if they enabled and facilitated learning.

A range of methods to evaluate could be used including local approaches to recording and assessing children's learning, observation, learning stories, Floor books, consultation with children, consultation with parents, How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare

What learners have learned from their evaluations should inform their future practice.

To do this they are able to use the knowledge gained in Outcomes 1, 2 and 3

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

This unit can be undertaken as a standalone unit for CPD, however, it is recommended that there will be integration between this unit and the mandatory units of the PDA/HND Childhood Practice to facilitate integration of assessment.

It is recommended that this unit is delivered through lectures, group work, practical classroom activities, visits by professionals and visits to appropriate childhood practice settings. There are a variety of media resources that can be used to support the delivery of this unit.

Learners should explore the term pedagogy and critically analyse the personal qualities and the environmental influences before analysing a range of pedagogical approaches.

Learners should be encouraged to undertake autonomous learning through research of a variety of Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches and the theory supporting them.

Once a range of approaches have been analysed, learners will then identify a range of effective strategies and reflecting on their own practice consider ways of incorporating two interrelated strategies into their own setting.

Consideration should be given to the reasons for the learner's choice of effective strategies. A plan to implement the strategies should be produced and once implemented candidates should evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented strategies. The findings of the evaluation could be used to inform future practice.
Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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Useful sources include:


Eaude, T (2011) Thinking Through Pedagogy for Primary and Early Years. Exeter: Learning Matters

Education Scotland (2016) Pedagogical Leadership in Early Learning and Childcare

Education Scotland (2016) Transforming Pedagogy across the Early Level


Scottish Government (2016) How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare


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Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

SSSC (2015) Standards for Childhood Practice — Some Relevant Benchmarks

1. Managers/lead practitioners value and demonstrate a commitment to inclusion, diversity, social justice, anti-discrimination and protecting and caring for children and young people.
2. Managers/lead practitioners value themselves and others by taking responsibility for their own professional learning and development and that of the workers for whom they are responsible.
3. Managers/lead practitioners value, respect and show commitment to the parents and carers, families, communities and other agencies and partnerships with whom they work.
4. Managers/lead practitioners have a broad and balanced knowledge and understanding of children and young people and childhoods which underpins their practice and is used to inform their leadership of others.
5. Managers/lead practitioners have a critical understanding of the content of relevant organisational frameworks and statements of principles for supporting and enabling play, rest and other opportunities and experiences.
6. Managers/lead practitioners have a critical understanding of concepts and theories of curriculum and pedagogy.
7. Managers/lead practitioners have a critical understanding of the theories and principles required to analyse and critically evaluate the programmes provided by the service.
8. Managers/lead practitioners have a broad and integrated knowledge and understanding of the scope and nature of relevant organisational frameworks and their ongoing development.
9. Managers/lead practitioners have a working knowledge of the breadth of the service and the professional roles and responsibilities of early learning and child care workers within it.
10. Managers/lead practitioners have the knowledge and understanding needed to support evidence informed practice.
11. Managers/lead practitioners coordinate and lead the provision of environments that are safe, secure, caring and nurturing and inclusive.
12. Managers/lead practitioners lead and support the development of positive and caring relationships with each child and family.
13. Managers/lead practitioners coordinate and lead the provision of balanced and flexible programmes that support play and learning opportunities and encourage children and young people to be healthy, active and achieving.
14. Managers/lead practitioners coordinate and support the tracking of children and young people’s progress and the planning and management of transitions.
15. Managers/lead practitioners engage in professional reflection for continuing improvement.
16. Managers/lead practitioners promote and actively lead others in working with partners and carers, families and communities.
17. Managers/lead practitioners take responsibility for identifying and supporting their own personal learning and professional development needs.
Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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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.

It is recommended that there will be integration between this unit and the mandatory units of the PDA/HND Childhood Practice to facilitate integration of assessment.

Outcomes 1 and 2 could be assessed through a group presentation supported by a reflective statement of 1,000 words.

Outcomes 3 and 4 could take the form of an academic essay of 2,000 words which evaluates effective pedagogical strategies and identifies two strategies that could be relevant to the learners practice. Once implemented evaluation of the strategies should inform future practice.

For candidates without access to a suitable workplace, a centre devised case study could be used.

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.
Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches (SCQF level 8)

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

This unit has the Critical Thinking and Reviewing and Evaluating components of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when learners achieve the unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to show they have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6 and Reviewing and Evaluating at SCQF level 6.

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

- **Communication** — written communication will be developed through candidates producing written work in a variety of formats; oral communication will be developed through discussion, debate and evidence of engagement with other candidates, professionals and key people.
- **Working with Others** — will be developed as candidates will be required to work collaboratively with colleagues from their own and other service areas in the preparation and research for their assessments.
- **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)** — candidates will develop their ICT skills through research and the presentation of written assignments.
## History of changes to unit

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<th>Version</th>
<th>Description of change</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Core Skills Components Critical Thinking and Reviewing and Evaluating at SCQF level 6 embedded.</td>
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General information for learners

Unit title: See unit writer brief

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 is designed to provide you with an understanding of Pedagogy and the role it plays in Early Learning and Childcare.

You will have the opportunity to explore a variety of Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches and identify effective strategies for learning.

On successful completion of this unit you will be able to:

♦ analyse the term pedagogy and the factors which can influence it.
♦ evaluate a range of national and international Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches in childhood practice.
♦ implement effective strategies in national and international pedagogy.
♦ evaluate effective pedagogical strategies.

You will have the opportunity to undertake a work placement if you are not already in employment, and this will facilitate your learning.

In order to achieve this unit you are required to present sufficient evidence that you have met all the evidence requirements for each outcome.

There are opportunities for you 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 Skill components.

If you use the internet to conduct research you will also have opportunities to develop skills in Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

You will be encouraged to undertake autonomous learning through research of a variety of Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches and the theory informing them.