



Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification

General information

This graded unit has been validated as part of the Childhood Practice award at SCQF level 8. Centres are required to develop a project-based assessment in accordance with this validated specification.

Graded unit title: Childhood Practice: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

Graded unit code: HV81 35

Type of project: Investigation

Publication date: August 2018

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 03

Graded unit purpose

This graded unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the Professional Development Award in Childhood Practice at SCQF level 8:

- ◆ to examine a range of theoretical and practice based perspectives relating to advanced practice and leadership in a childhood practice setting
- ◆ to acquire knowledge and skills needed to lead on legislative and policy requirement within a Childhood Practice setting
- ◆ to critically analyse the role of professional practice within a childhood practice context
- ◆ to demonstrate clearly the importance of integrated working and collaborative practice
- ◆ to demonstrate a knowledge of research skills and their role in linking theory and practice.
- ◆ to synthesis ideas and concepts learned across the award via a project based integrated unit

This unit is included in the framework of the HND Childhood Practice and it is expected that candidates have a relevant qualification at SCQF level 7, eg HNC, SVQ level 3 or equivalent. They should also be working in a childhood practice setting or have access to a suitable work placement.

Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: General information (cont)

Credit points and level

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

Recommended entry to the graded unit

It is recommended that the learner should have completed or be in the process of completing the following units relating to the above principal aims prior to undertaking this graded unit:

Childhood Practice: Enhanced Professional Practice
Childhood Practice: Leadership and Team Working
Childhood Practice: Integrated Working and Collaborative Practice
Childhood Practice: Policy to Practice
Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches

Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill Problem Solving at SCQF level 6

Core Skill component None

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

Assessment support pack

The assessment support pack for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable instrument of assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the assessment support pack to ensure a comparable standard. Assessment support packs are available on SQA's secure website.

Equality and inclusion

This graded unit 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 SQA's website:
www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners

Graded unit title: Childhood Practice: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

Assessment

This graded unit will be assessed by the use of a project-based investigation developed by centres. The project should provide the learner with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of this graded unit.

The project undertaken by the learner must be a complex task which involves:

- ◆ variables which are complex or unfamiliar
- ◆ relationships which need to be clarified
- ◆ a context which may be unfamiliar to the learner

The project must require the learner to:

- ◆ analyse the task and decide on a course of action for undertaking the project.
- ◆ plan and organise work and carry it through to completion.
- ◆ reflect on what has been done and draw conclusions for the future.
- ◆ produce evidence of meeting the aims which this Graded unit has been designed to cover.

This graded unit will be assessed by the use of an investigation which will include:

- ◆ a plan of action
- ◆ an investigation report with conclusions and recommendations
- ◆ evidence showing evaluation of the investigation report
- ◆ a reflection of the candidate's role in the process

The investigation should provide the candidate with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates she/he has met the aims of the group award that this graded unit covers.

The *Childhood Practice: Graded Unit 2* is a professional activity and practitioners have obligations to children and young people, to their employers, to one another, to colleagues in other disciplines and to society. To conduct research in professional practice, practitioners must conform to a Code of Ethics for social service and childhood practice research. The primary objective of a Code of Ethics in research is to express the values and principles which are integral childhood practice and to provide a code of ethical behaviour while completing the research activity.

Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners (cont)

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Conditions of assessment

The learner should be given a date for completion of the project. However, the instructions for the project should be distributed to allow the learner sufficient time to assimilate the details and carry out the project. During the time between the distribution of the project instructions and the completion date, assessors may answer questions, provide clarification, guidance and reasonable assistance.

Reasonable assistance is the term used by SQA to describe the difference between providing learners with some direction to generate the required evidence for assessment and providing too much support which would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable assistance is part of all learning and teaching processes. In relation to the assessment of Higher National Project-based Graded Units, assessors may provide advice, clarification, and guidance during the time between the distribution of the project instructions and the completion date, ie at each stage of the project.

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify learner responses, either by requiring a written amendment or by oral questioning, where there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements. In either case, such instances must be formally noted by the assessor, either in writing or recording, and be made available to the internal and external verifier. In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, learners must be given the opportunity for remediation at each stage of the project.

The evidence for a Higher National Project-based Graded Unit is generated over time and involves three distinct stages, each of which has to be achieved before the next is undertaken. This means that any re-assessment of stages must be undertaken before proceeding to the next stage. The overall grade is derived from the total number of marks *across all* sections, and should reflect the ability of the learner to work autonomously and the amount of support required. In relation to Higher National Project-based Graded Units, learners who have failed any stage of the project and have been unable to provide the necessary evidence through remediation must be given the opportunity for re-assessment of that stage.

Any learner who has failed their graded unit or wishes to upgrade their award must be given a re-assessment opportunity, or in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. In the case of project-based graded units, this must be done using a substantially different project.

The final grading given must reflect the quality of the learner's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Learners must be awarded the highest grade achieved — whether through first submission or through any re-assessment, remediation, and/or reasonable assistance provided.

Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners (cont)

Graded unit title: Childhood Practice: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

Although the topic should be agreed with the tutor, the tutor's role is as a facilitator and so to achieve high marks candidates will need to demonstrate a high degree of autonomy throughout the project.

At SCQF level 8, candidates should work independently. It is up to centres to take reasonable steps to ensure that the project is the work of the candidate. For example, centres may wish to informally question candidates at various stages on their knowledge and understanding of the project on which they have embarked. Centres should ensure that where research etc., is carried out in other establishments or under the supervision of others that the candidate does not receive undue assistance.

Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners (cont)

Graded unit title: Childhood Practice: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

Evidence requirements for this graded unit

The following table specifies the minimum evidence required to pass each stage.

The project consists of three stages: an action plan; an investigation report and an evaluation. Each task has a marking allocation. This is **30/30/40**. Marks **cannot** be redistributed between stages. There is a suggested distribution of marks in the Support Notes for each of the three stages.

The project consists of three stages: planning; developing; and evaluating. The following table specifies the minimum evidence required to pass each stage.

Project stage	Minimum evidence requirements	% Mark allocation
Stage 1 — Planning	<p>The learner must submit an Action Plan that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the title of the investigation ◆ the aims of the investigation ◆ the rationale for pursuing the investigation and the intended overall Outcome (purpose) ◆ the main research issues (or questions) that must be dealt with ◆ timescale for major stages of the research ◆ a brief literature review consisting of relevant, referenced titles (book, journal, magazine or internet sources) and an indication of their possible contribution to the investigation ◆ reference to appropriate Code of Ethics 	30% of marks
	<i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Planning stage.</i>	

Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners (cont)

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Project stage	Minimum evidence requirements	% Mark allocation
Stage 2 — Developing	<p>The learner must produce an Investigation Report that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ presents the information to a standard format as follows: title; contents or index; abstract; introduction, aim and objectives; methods; results; discussion; conclusions and recommendations; references; appendices ◆ subjects the data gathered to summary and analysis to compile the results (this is applicable to both numeric data and written information, such as, the answers to some questionnaire or interview questions) ◆ subjects the results to interpretation <p><i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Developing stage.</i></p>	30% of marks

Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners (cont)

Graded unit title: Childhood Practice: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

Project stage	Minimum evidence requirements	% Mark allocation
Stage 3 — Evaluating	<p>The learner must produce an Evaluative Report that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ briefly outlines the aims and purpose of the investigation ◆ summarises any changes that were made, gives the reasons for them and explains how the action plan was modified as a result – including the review of literature ◆ assesses their use of research methods to generate reliable data ◆ assesses the completeness and accuracy of their interpretation of the data ◆ suggests further related areas of research that could be undertaken ◆ considers ethical issues relating to the generation and analysis of data. <p>As part of the evaluating stage the candidate must produce an abstract that should be placed after the action plan but before the investigation report as a summary of the work undertaken.</p> <p><i>The learner must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above in order to pass the Evaluating stage.</i></p>	40% of marks

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Assessing and grading learners

The overall project will be marked out of **100**. Only whole marks should be used.

The percentage of marks allocated to each stage of the project is outlined in the **evidence requirements**.

It is a requirement that learners must meet the minimum *evidence requirements* for the *Planning stage before progressing to the Developing stage before progressing to the Evaluating stage*. Learners may produce evidence over and above that specified in the minimum *evidence requirements* and deserve more than half the available marks for that stage. Assessors should use the Grade Related Criteria outlined below to judge learner performance.

Learners are required to work independently to meet the *evidence requirements* of the graded unit. At the same time, learners need appropriate support. SQA uses the term reasonable assistance to describe the balance between supporting learners in their project and not providing too much assistance.

At the end of *each* stage there should be opportunities for remediation and re-assessment of learners for that particular stage. This includes the final *Evaluation* stage. Any re-assessment should be carried out in line with the centre's own assessment policy.

Grade Related Criteria	
Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the criteria for each of the three phases of the investigation (see below) are met to a high standard and the report clearly integrates these three phases ◆ the candidate has accurately matched the performance of the investigation to its aims and purpose ◆ necessary background details, the handling of data and its interpretation ◆ information is presented in an accurate and technically appropriate fashion ◆ the candidate demonstrates a clear understanding of knowledge and skills presented in the selected Units of the group award and is able to apply them to new situations. 	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the criteria for each of the three phases of the investigation are met but the relationship between the phases is not always clearly demonstrated ◆ the candidate has related the performance of the investigation to its aims and purpose though the investigation of some areas may not be as thorough as expected ◆ the report is generally accurate, clearly written and uses appropriate language ◆ the summarising of data or its interpretation may not reveal all the information expected. the candidate demonstrates a good understanding of knowledge and skills presented in the selected units of the group award but does not always apply them to new situations.

Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Specification: Designing the project and assessing learners (cont)

Graded unit title: Childhood Practice: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

The project will be marked out of 100. Assessors will mark each stage of the project, taking into account the criteria outlined. The marks will then be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the project. Assessors will then assign an overall grade to the candidate for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries.

A = 70%–100%

B = 60%–69%

C = 50%–59%

NOTE: The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified below for each stage of the project in order to achieve the graded unit.



Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Support Notes

Graded unit title: Childhood Practice: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment of this graded unit

Below is a suggested marking scheme for each stage of this project which has been provided for guidance only and is not mandatory. Centres may prefer to devise their own scheme.

Please also consult Guidance on Grading Table when deciding on overall grade for the candidate.

General guidance

The suggested overall word count for this investigation is 6,000 words. The suggested word count for each section is:

Stage 1 — Planning (1,000)

Stage 2 — Developing (1,500)

Stage 3 — Evaluating (2,000 including the abstract of about 200 words)

Learners should not be constricted by this advice however they should be encouraged not to write significantly more or less than the suggested word count (within a margin of 10%).

Learners should indicate their actual word count at the end of each section. The word count does not include information that they may choose to put in an appendix or their reference section.

Suggested allocation of marks

Planning

This stage is worth **30 marks**. As part of the planning stage the candidate is expected to include short literature review (500 words), and be encouraged to draw on a variety of current and relevant sources and demonstrate evidence of actual reading. The length of the review should be proportionate to the mark allocated within the minimum evidence requirements for this section, about 500 words. Candidates should be encouraged to relate the literature discussed to the actual aims of the investigation.

The planning stage is assessed by a planning document and an individual interview. The assessor's role is as a facilitator and to gain high marks the candidate must demonstrate a high degree of autonomy in planning activities.

Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Support Notes (cont)

Graded unit title: Childhood Practice: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

For the planning stage the marks could be allocated in the following way:

Up to **5 marks** for a clearly stated purpose for the research that provides an explanation of:

- ◆ The area from which the research will be drawn
- ◆ How it relates to childhood practice
- ◆ How it relates to the mandatory units of the award
- ◆ What it intends to achieve

Up to **2 marks** for clearly stating how it will be conducted conforming to childhood practice research code of ethics.

Up to **10 marks** for precise aims of the research, the research questions that arise from them and the methods that will be applied to answer these research questions. The timescale for the major stages of the project should also be established.

Up to **10 marks** for the literature review as detailed in the minimum evidence requirements.

Up to **3 marks** for the degree of autonomy shown by the candidate in the development of the action plan.

Developing

This stage is worth **30 marks**. The candidate must achieve all of the minimum evidence specified above to pass the developing stage. Assessment is based on a written report of the activity.

Up to **5 marks** for presenting the report in the standard format specified (minimum evidence requirements) to produce a complete and coherent account.

Up to **5 marks** where application of the methods has been appropriate and has generated sufficient, reliable data for interpretation.

Up to **5 marks** for the clear presentation of raw data as summarised results.

Up to **15 marks** for the valid interpretation of the results in relation to their literature review that allows the candidate to draw clear conclusions.

Evaluating

This stage is worth **40 marks**. As part of this stage the candidate is expected to produce an abstract of approximately **200 words** of the work. This abstract should be placed before the Investigation Report as a summary of the work undertaken. Candidates could be shown examples of abstracts from other pieces of research or from academic journals. The abstract should be objective, concise and reflect the scope of the work.

Higher National Project-based Graded Unit Support Notes (cont)

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As part of the evaluation process, the candidate is expected to discuss further areas of study that may have arisen from the investigation. They are required to identify likely methodological approaches and give an indication of relevant literature. They are not expected to carry out another literature review and it is sufficient for candidates to indicate possible referenced titles from a variety of sources.

The evaluating stage is assessed by a written evaluation that may be embedded in the discussion section. The marks for this stage should be allocated in the following way:

Up to **5 marks** for the abstract.

Up to **20 marks** for evaluating the investigation against its initial aims to establish the degree to which the aims have been achieved.

The evaluation against the aims should include:

- ◆ The candidate's application of the method(s) to generate sufficient and reliable data
- ◆ Any limitations to their interpretation of the data (see Stage 2)
- ◆ The reasons for any changes, if necessary, in the action plan
- ◆ Ethical considerations taken into account when generating and interpreting data

It is essential that the aims and the purpose of the investigation be re-presented as a benchmark for the evaluation. Also evaluation that lacks critical reflection should be penalised in the marking of this section.

Up to **10 marks** for discussing further areas of study that could be undertaken, following the conclusion drawn in the investigation report. This should not be limited to a statement of topics but should give some indication of the research issues, likely methodological approaches needed and brief literature search. Candidates may acknowledge further study that arises from unforeseen difficulties in the original work.

Up to **5 marks** for identifying knowledge/skills from the mandatory units of the group award that have been applied/developed during the investigation.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

This Unit has the Core Skill 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 Problem Solving at SCQF level 6.

There are also opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication and Working with Others* in this unit, although there is no automatic certification of these.

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

History of changes to graded unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Core Skill of Problem Solving at SCQF level 6 embedded.	24/11/17
03	Update of Conditions of Assessment.	06/08/18

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General information for learners

Graded unit title: Childhood Practice: Graded Unit 2 (SCQF level 8)

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 has been designed to allow you to integrate your learning across a range of Units in the HND in Childhood Practice at SCQF level 8. You should be able to draw upon your learning and assignments from the mandatory units and your workplace practice. You should clearly state how it will be conducted conforming to childhood practice research code of ethics. You should be aware that any references to the individual(s) must be anonymised and the permission of that individual(s) obtained. You will have the opportunity to discuss and agree on the topic of the investigation to be undertaken with your tutor prior to carrying out the investigation.

You will explore theories and perspectives relating to childhood practice and draw on your experiences in practice/placement.

This graded unit will give you the opportunity to synthesis learning gained from the following mandatory units:

Childhood Practice: Enhanced Professional Practice
Childhood Practice: Leadership and Team Working
Childhood Practice: Integrated Working and Collaborative Practice
Childhood Practice: Policy to Practice
Childhood Practice: Pedagogical Approaches

On completion of this graded unit, you will be able to demonstrate that you have achieved the following principal aims of the HND in Childhood Practice at SCQF level 8:

- ◆ to examine a range of theoretical and practice based perspectives relating to advanced practice and leadership in a childhood practice setting
- ◆ to acquire knowledge and skills needed to lead on legislative and policy requirement within a childhood practice setting
- ◆ to critically analyse the role of professional practice within a childhood practice context
- ◆ to demonstrate clearly the importance of integrated working and collaborative practice
- ◆ to demonstrate a knowledge of research skills and their role in linking theory and practice.
- ◆ to synthesis ideas and concepts learned across the award via a project based integrated unit

The timing of the graded unit is at the discretion of your centre however it is an autonomous piece of work and you are expected to carry out the work with minimal support from your tutor. You will have an individual interview with your tutor to discuss your proposal and action plan. You will complete the graded unit near the end of this award to enable you to draw on the knowledge and skills that you have developed throughout this course, however your assessor may discuss the graded unit with you at the start of the programme to enable you to begin the reflect upon suitable topics and areas for research.

This Unit has the Core Skill of Problem Solving embedded in it, so when you achieve this Unit your Core Skills profile will be updated to show that you have achieved Problem Solving at SCQF level 6.