

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Maintenance of a Safe Environment for Children
(Intermediate 2)

CODE DM5V 11

COURSE

SUMMARY

This Unit enables the candidate to develop an awareness of current health and safety legislation which relates to the early education and childcare environment. It allows candidates the opportunity to identify and assess potential risks and hazards within settings and gives them the opportunity to develop an awareness of appropriate practice in relation to the provision of a safe environment for children aged 0-12 years.

This Unit is an optional Unit in the *National Certificate Group Award: Early Education and Childcare (Higher)* but is also suitable for candidates wishing to study the Unit on its own. The Unit is suitable for candidates who wish to gain employment, or may already be employed, in the early education and childcare sector working under supervision. This Unit is also suitable for candidates who may wish to progress on to higher level early education and childcare qualifications.

OUTCOMES

1. Explain current health and safety legislation which relates to working in an early education and childcare environment.
2. Explain potential risks and hazards in an early education and childcare environment.
3. Describe how potential risks and hazards in an early education and childcare environment can be prevented or minimised.
4. Explain the main principles of safe manual handling relevant to working in an early education and childcare environment.

Administrative Information

Superclass: PL

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RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre there are a variety of prior learning experiences which are relevant to candidates wishing to undertake this Unit.

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

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

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

CREDIT VALUE

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

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this Unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit Specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Explain current health and safety legislation which relates to working in an early education and childcare environment.

Performance Criteria

- a) Describe current health and safety legislation which relates to working in an early education and childcare environment.
- b) Explain the role of the employer in relation to complying with relevant legislation.
- c) Explain the role of the employee in relation to complying with relevant legislation.

OUTCOME 2

Explain potential risks and hazards in an early education and childcare environment.

Performance Criteria

- a) Describe possible risks and hazards that may occur in a variety of early education and childcare environments.
- b) Explain the importance of carrying out a risk assessment in relation to providing a safe early education and childcare environment.

OUTCOME 3

Describe how potential risks and hazards in an early education and childcare environment can be prevented or minimised.

Performance Criteria

- a) Describe strategies for minimising risks to health and safety in an early education and childcare environment.
- b) Describe procedures for dealing with health and safety incidents in an early education and childcare environment.

OUTCOME 4

Explain the main principles of safe manual handling relevant to working in an early education and childcare environment.

Performance Criteria

- a) Describe current manual handling regulations.
- b) Explain the main principles in preparing to carry out safe manual handling.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

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

The evidence for this Unit should be obtained under controlled, supervised conditions and should last no more than one hour thirty minutes. A single question paper based on short case studies/scenarios with associated extended and restricted response questions, as illustrated in the National Assessment Bank item for this Unit, could be used. This single question paper should be taken upon the completion of the Unit. Achievement can be decided by the use of a cut off score. Outcome 1 could be assessed separately using an open book supervised task based on candidate's investigative work.

The standard to be applied is exemplified in the National Assessment Bank item for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

Specific Advice

Outcome 1: At least **two** pieces of current legislation should be described.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

Candidates should explore current legislation which relates to health and safety in the early education and childcare setting. Teachers/lecturers should ensure legislation presented to candidates is current. These presently include:

- ◆ Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- ◆ Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH regulations 1994)
- ◆ The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR 1995)
- ◆ Food Safety Act (1990)

Candidates may also wish to consider national and local requirements in relation to the regulations for the inspection of premises for registration. They could refer to the National Care Standards: Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16. Candidates are not required to have an in-depth knowledge of legislation but should be allowed to develop an understanding of the basic principles. Both the employer's and employee's responsibilities under this regulation should be highlighted and emphasis should be placed on the responsibility of identifying, reporting and recording hazards or risks to health and safety. The appropriate procedures for doing this should be explored and candidates should be encouraged to draw on any experience they may have within early education and childcare settings, to establish individual setting's guidance and policy relating to the legislation.

Outcome 2

Candidates should be aware of the meaning of the terms 'risk' and 'hazard' prior to examining the nature of risk assessment:

- ◆ A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm.
- ◆ A risk is the likelihood of potential harm from a hazard being realised.

The extent a of risk will depend upon:

1. the likelihood of that harm occurring
2. the potential severity of that harm
3. the population which might be affected by the harm.

These definitions form the basis of risk assessment. To carry out a risk assessment, the Health and Safety Executive (www.hse.gov.uk) recommends that the following steps are taken:

1. Look for hazards.
2. Decide who might be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risk and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done.
4. Record your findings.
5. Review your assessment and revise if necessary.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Candidates should use this information to identify potential risks and hazards within a variety of early education and childcare settings. Candidates should think of these in relation to the age and developmental stage of children, aged 0-12 years, that they may encounter. They should also examine the additional risks that may be relevant to children who have additional support needs.

For each case it may be appropriate to consider potential risks or hazards in relation to the area, equipment and activity undertaken within the early education and childcare environment. It has to be noted that areas, equipment and activity are interrelated. This could include exploration of the following examples and candidates should be encouraged to expand this list with their own examples:

Areas	Potential Risk or Hazard
Food preparation and storage areas	Incorrect food storage and handling
Snack/eating areas	Incorrect disposal of waste material, spilled drinks
Toilet/nappy changing areas	Inadequate personal handling
First aid areas	Risk of the spread of infection
Waste disposal/storage areas	Risk of the spread of infection (including risks of vermin and pests)
Entrance/exit sites	Failure to secure windows and doors Obstruction of fire exits/movement pathways
Security of areas	Failure to check callers' rights of entry
Equipment	Potential Risk or Hazard
Cots/prams/baby relax chairs/changing mats	Inadequate, unhygienic, poorly maintained equipment
Toys/books/resources	Risk of infection, potentially harmful equipment (glue, paint, scissors, etc)
Food preparation and serving equipment	Incorrect storage and cleaning of equipment, unsafe handling of equipment
Activity	Potential Risk or Hazard
Nature/environment based activities	Risk of spread of infection
Dressing up clothes	First aid emergencies
Pet care	Inadequate hygiene
Cooking/baking activities	Inappropriate use of equipment (knives, cookers) Incorrect food storage and handling
Messy play – water, sand, art, craft	Use of dangerous equipment, (scissors, knives) Risk of the spread of infection, danger of slipping.
Outings	Inadequate staffing/supervision levels

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Outcome 3

For a range of potential risks or hazards identified, candidates should get the opportunity to establish appropriate strategies to minimise or prevent risk to health and safety. This should be in accordance with current legislation and policy and should be closely linked to Outcomes 1 and 4.

Candidates should have the opportunity to explore actual procedures for dealing with health and safety incidents. This may involve the candidates working through scenarios and establishing appropriate procedures. Candidates should be aware of the importance of incident/accident reporting and recording and their actual role and responsibilities in relation to this. Candidates and lecturers may wish to draw on examples of procedure or 'good practice' that they are aware of within early education and childcare settings. This may include work in relation to the description of procedures adopted in specific circumstances. These may include procedures:

- ◆ for the disposal of waste
- ◆ adopted for ensuring the cleanliness of the early education and childcare environment including food preparation and cooking/serving/toilet areas and toilet facilities
- ◆ for dealing with minor incidents
- ◆ for the reporting of faulty equipment
- ◆ for the routine maintenance of resources
- ◆ for dealing with power supplies.

Outcome 4

During the study for this outcome, candidates should be reminded of work undertaken in Outcome 1 in relation to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; in particular the responsibilities of both the employer and employee in ensuring health, safety and welfare at work. Candidates should then be introduced to the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. The lecturer should ensure that regulations presented to candidates are current.

Discussion should centre on the dangers associated with poor manual handling techniques and the tasks which may be involved within the early education and childcare setting, for example the moving of equipment and the lifting of children.

Approaches to safe moving and handling procedures, for example - the neuromuscular approach, could be explained and where appropriate a qualified trainer could be invited to demonstrate correct methods to candidates. However it should be noted, that this input is intended to provide the candidate with an awareness of safe manual handling procedures, but it does not imply competence in this area. This is not a mandatory element of this Unit.

Main principles in preparing to carry out safe manual handling should be explored by the candidate. This should include the application of a risk assessment by the candidate. Principles to be considered in relation to safe manual handling, should involve the candidate thinking about:

What is to be done?

Does it involve:

- ◆ Difficult or sharp bodily movements
- ◆ Excessive lifting or lowering/bending
- ◆ Excessive distance to travel
- ◆ Risk of sudden movement
- ◆ Prolonged effort?

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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What is to be moved?

Is it:

- ◆ Difficult to grasp
- ◆ Unstable/heavy
- ◆ Excessively hot/cold/sharp
- ◆ Unpredictable?

Where is it to be moved to?

Is there:

- ◆ Poor lighting
- ◆ Constraints on space preventing good movement
- ◆ Uneven slippery surfaces
- ◆ Difficult level/steps to negotiate?

What are my capabilities?

Does the job:

- ◆ Require unusual strength
- ◆ require special information
- ◆ create a hazard for me?

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

In delivering this Unit there should be a balance between teacher/lecturer presentation and candidate centred learning. Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 can be explored using a variety of methods:

- ◆ Small group exercises
- ◆ Case studies/scenarios
- ◆ Worksheets
- ◆ Individual research including the use of appropriate websites: www.hse.gov.uk and www.foodstandards.gov.uk contain a mine of relevant information for both the candidate and lecturer
- ◆ Video/audio material
- ◆ Examination of a range of health and safety legislation and policy documents
- ◆ Examination of procedures/documentation from a variety of settings
- ◆ Visits to early education and childcare settings to establish what policy and procedures are adopted
- ◆ Demonstration of safe manual handling techniques
- ◆ Visits to appropriate settings, e.g. parks to carry out risk assessments.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The assessment for this Unit is laid out clearly in the Evidence Requirements section of the Statement of Standards of this specification. The standard to be applied is exemplified in the National Assessment Bank item for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard. Assessment should always be carried out under supervision. A variety of approaches could be used. Assessment time allocated for this Unit should not exceed one hour thirty minutes

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).