

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Supporting a Curriculum in an Early Education and
Childcare Setting: Workplace Experience (Higher)

CODE DM67 12

COURSE

SUMMARY

This Unit allows the candidate to develop and demonstrate the practical skills required to support a curriculum within an early education and childcare setting. Working within an early education and childcare setting under supervision, the candidate will demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of current curriculum models used to support the care, learning and development of the child aged 3-8 years. They will support a variety of curricular experiences by contributing to the planning process, through implementation and evaluation. They will demonstrate the role of the adult and the importance of working as part of a team. Candidates are required to have a suitable placement within an early education and childcare setting for children within the age range 3–8 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 be employed, in the childcare and education sector working under supervision or who wish to progress onto higher level early education and childcare qualifications.

OUTCOMES

1. Whilst working under supervision in an early education and childcare setting, evaluate a curriculum model used to support the learning and development of the child.
2. Whilst working under supervision in an early education and childcare setting, support a variety of curricular experiences.
3. Whilst working under supervision in an early education and childcare setting, evaluate the various roles adults play in supporting children's learning through a curriculum.

Administrative Information

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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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 also benefit if they had some knowledge and understanding of child development up to the age of 8 years and an understanding of the basic principles of play.

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

- ◆ Standard Grade at Credit level in any relevant subject
- ◆ A Course or Unit in Care at Intermediate 2
- ◆ Courses or Units in any relevant subject at Intermediate 2
- ◆ Scottish Group Award at Intermediate 2
- ◆ SVQ or SVQ Units at level 2 in a related subject.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**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

UNIT Supporting a Curriculum in an Early Education and Childcare Setting: Workplace Experience (Higher)

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

Whilst working under supervision in an early education and childcare setting, evaluate a curriculum model used to support the care, learning and development of the child.

Performance Criteria

- a) Describe an early education and childcare setting that uses a curriculum framework to support the care, learning and development of the child.
- b) Describe a curriculum model used within the early education and childcare setting described in PC(a).
- c) Evaluate how the curriculum model described in PC(b) is used within the setting to support the care, learning and development of the child.

OUTCOME 2

Whilst working under supervision in an early education and childcare setting, support a variety of curricular experiences.

Performance Criteria

- a) Whilst working under supervision in an early education and childcare setting, support the planning of curricular experiences.
- b) Whilst working under supervision in an early education and childcare setting, support the implementation of curricular experiences.
- c) Whilst working under supervision in an early education and childcare setting, contribute to the evaluation of planned curricular experiences.

OUTCOME 3

Whilst working under supervision in an early education and childcare setting, evaluate the various roles adults play in supporting children's learning through a curriculum.

Performance Criteria

- a) Working under supervision, candidates should evaluate their own role in supporting curricular experiences within an early education and childcare setting.
- b) Contribute to the work of the team in supporting curricular experiences within an early education and childcare setting.
- c) Explain the role of parents in supporting the provision of a curriculum within the early education and childcare setting described in Outcome 1.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Supporting a Curriculum in an Early Education and Childcare Setting: Workplace Experience (Higher)

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 should be a folio of evidence gathered in the workplace. This folio should include:

- ◆ A description of an early education and child care setting
- ◆ A description of the curriculum model used within the early education and childcare setting chosen
- ◆ An evaluation of how this curriculum model supports the learning and development of the child
- ◆ Three records of personal involvement, including an evaluation of the role of the adult
- ◆ An explanation of how parents contribute to the curriculum within the early education and childcare setting chosen.

Specific Advice

Where possible the evidence should be gathered from one placement but the candidate may work across the age ranges 3-5, 5-8. This folio should be signed and dated by the candidate's workplace supervisor. The supervisor must be eligible for registration at practitioner level with the Scottish Social Services Council.

Outcome 1: This must be carried out for the setting in which the candidate describes curricular experiences in Outcomes 2 and 3.

Outcome 2: Three experiences, each from different curricular areas should be described.

Outcome 3 (a) and (b): The role of the adult and contribution to the team should be described for each of the three curricular experiences above.

Outcomes 2 and 3 (a) and (b) should be integrated in the three records of personal involvement. These should be signed and dated by the supervisor as verification of actual practice, and marked by centre staff. These records of involvement should provide evidence of the candidate's contribution to the planning, implementation and evaluation of curricular experiences whilst working under supervision – both their own role and their contribution to the team. These records of personal involvement should be carried out throughout the placement.

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.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Supporting a Curriculum in an Early Education and Childcare Setting: Workplace Experience (Higher)

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

PC (a): Candidates should give a detailed description of the early education and childcare setting in which they are placed or are employed. Candidates could describe the type of setting and the environment in which it is set. They should give a detailed description of the physical, material and human resources available to support the care, learning and development of the child. This might include a plan of the building and playrooms, an outline of staffing and a description of some of the activities on offer. Candidates might wish to include leaflets and literature produced by the setting but this should be ancillary material that the candidate uses to write their own description.

PC (b): Following discussion with their supervisor, candidates should identify and describe the curriculum model used within the setting. Candidates could also consider informal curriculum guidance that may exist within the setting. This may be in the form of guidelines or good practice statements. Candidates should have appropriate access to the curriculum model used within the setting to inform their practice.

PC (c): Candidates should evaluate how the curriculum model is used to support the care, learning and development of the child. They should relate this to the principles and purpose of the curriculum model and relate these to actual practice. It is unlikely that candidates would complete this section at the start of their placement but use it as a tool to reflect on their own practice and the practice of others at the end of their placement.

Outcome 2

In supporting a variety of curricular experiences the candidates should be aware of the cycle of planning within an early education and childcare setting.

PC (a): Candidates should demonstrate how planning informs the curriculum in their work placement. Candidates should be aware of the importance of observation, recording and sharing information with others. Candidates could examine a variety of means of recording and planning according to national and local guidelines. This may include planning sheets in early years settings or Records of Work in a primary school setting. Candidates should be aware of the use of short, medium and long term planning and could demonstrate how these support the care, learning and development of the child within a child centred curriculum model.

PC (b): Candidates should contribute to a variety of curricular experiences at various levels. If appropriate to the setting, they should demonstrate importance of play; either free flow or adult led. Consideration should be given to other means of delivery of the curriculum particularly in the context of primary education.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Supporting a Curriculum in an Early Education and Childcare Setting: Workplace Experience (Higher)

PCs (a) and (b): Candidates could demonstrate some of the following when contributing to the planning and implementation of curricular experiences:

- ◆ Selection of resources
- ◆ Layout
- ◆ Presentation.

Selection of Resources:

When contributing to the selecting of resources, the following should be considered:

- ◆ Resources are age appropriate and meet the developmental needs of children including those with additional support needs
- ◆ Resources reflect a multicultural society
- ◆ Resources provide opportunities to stimulate and extend interest
- ◆ Resources meet health and safety guidelines
- ◆ Resources are clean and complete, e.g. puzzles or games with no pieces missing
- ◆ Material resources do not need to be commercially produced but that materials can be adapted or made to fit the purpose.
- ◆ All resources are readily available when required. Candidates should consider this particularly in relation to shared resources
- ◆ Sufficiency of resources.

Layout: When considering the layout of resources the following should be considered:

- ◆ Accessibility: particular consideration should be given to children who may have additional support needs
- ◆ Health and safety issues
- ◆ Attractiveness of the area to the child
- ◆ Location: children should be encouraged to explore, appreciate and respect their surroundings.
- ◆ Areas should be maintained according to the practice of the setting. Children should be encouraged to leave areas prepared for the next child to use but it is the role of the adult to maintain resources
- ◆ Flow of movement from one area to another encouraging children to connect experiences.

Presentation: When considering the presentation of resources the following should be considered:

- ◆ Displays should be attractive and be accessible to the child and the maintenance of them should be on-going.
- ◆ Labels should be correctly spelt and appropriate script used. Candidates could explore the use of ICT to produce written material for presentation purposes.
- ◆ Art work and pictures should be appropriately mounted and displayed.

PC (c): Candidates should evaluate their contribution in consultation with others and see evaluation as part of the planning cycle. From their evaluation they should begin to consider how to develop the curricular needs of the child further and how evaluation can be used to plan effectively to meet the needs of the child. Candidates should have the opportunity, within placement, to examine mechanisms for sharing and recording evaluations of curricular experiences. Candidates should look at both formal and informal evaluations and ways of passing on information, gained from evaluations, to others, particularly parents.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Supporting a Curriculum in an Early Education and Childcare Setting: Workplace Experience (Higher)

Outcome 3

PC (a): Candidates should evaluate their role as a worker with delegated responsibility for providing care and support to children. Candidates should reflect and evaluate on their own practice and may also look at the practice of colleagues. Candidates should explore the vital role adults have to play in supporting children in their learning by considering their individual needs and achievements, and the range of learning experiences that will help children to progress in different aspects of learning and development. They could consider their role in relation to the planning cycle already described, e.g. as planner, facilitator, motivator and assessor. They could consider the skills required to carry out these roles.

Candidates could reflect on the sensitivity of their interventions and interactions in extending learning through play, increasing challenges for children or developing interests further. Children learn best in a safe environment when they feel secure and confident and candidates should look at the ways in which they supported children to feel secure within the early education and childcare setting. Candidates could reflect on their role in relation to working with individuals, small groups (2-4 children) and large groups (5-8 children).

PC (b): Candidates should demonstrate an awareness of the importance of working as part of a team within an early education and childcare setting. They should be aware of the multi-disciplinary approach used within many early education and childcare settings and should investigate the roles and responsibilities of possible team members. Candidates should know the advantages to the child and parent of working as part of a team. Candidates could describe examples of how effective teamwork relies on flexible roles, clearly defined aims and objectives, good communication skills (verbal and non-verbal), openness, trust and reliability. They could also describe ways of dealing constructively with conflict within a team.

PC (c): Candidates should be aware that the parent/carer is central in supporting and extending children's learning. This can be encouraged by interacting with parents in developing relationships through initiatives like home visits, story sacks, a library, PTA, letters, pamphlets, parents evenings and supporting the language of the home. Parents are their child's primary educators and candidates must take account of the child's previous learning, showing an awareness of gathering information from the parent and their views on their child's care and education through formal and informal contact. The viewpoint of parents is unique, in their understanding of their child's abilities in a variety of different contexts. Candidates can be made aware of the influence of this during the settling in period for the child. Candidates should be aware of the importance of profiles and observations in informing the interaction between carers and parents. Whilst it is not the role of the candidate at this level to be directly involved with parents, candidates, following discussion with their supervisor, should be able to describe how parents support the curriculum within their particular setting. Candidates should, however, be aware of the role that they may play in building positive relationships with parents.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Supporting a Curriculum in an Early Education and Childcare Setting: Workplace Experience (Higher)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

It is important to emphasise that the Unit involves the demonstration of practical competences and the application of knowledge and understanding in the work setting. For this, regular tutorial meetings with candidates which explore aspects of workplace practice and which support candidates in the process of self evaluation and recording of evidence (log reporting, etc) will be essential. A combination of tutorial support and placement supervision would facilitate candidates' progress through the Unit. A named workplace supervisor should monitor candidate progress in partnership with tutor(s). It is also essential that delivering centres regularly meet with supervisors to aid understanding and establish candidate progress. Written materials in the form of structured log books, task/project sheets, evaluation records and questions, reports on progress could also be used to ensure effective progress throughout the Unit.

Centres should continue to offer placement experiences to candidates according to principles of best practice or in an appropriate setting. It is suggested that candidates would benefit from experiencing working with children from across the age range 3-8 years. Placements could be offered to candidates across the early education and childcare sector, including the local authority, private and voluntary sectors. Centres should ensure that placements offer high quality curriculum based provision. This could be assured by placing candidates in settings that have partnership agreements with local Childcare Partnerships. Candidates should have enough time in placement to ensure that all Outcomes and Performance Criteria are met. Candidates should be able to complete the Unit in a placement that only provides part day provision, e.g. playgroup, private nursery.

This Unit can be delivered in a flexible manner, i.e as distance learning although measures should be taken by the Centre to ensure the validity of the candidates practice.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

This is laid out clearly with the Evidence requirements of the Unit. Integration of assessment across outcomes and Units should be considered, particularly with other Units in the *National Certificate Group Award: Early Education and Childcare* that have workplace elements. This will allow candidates to see the holistic nature of the early education and childcare curricular provision. The assessment of this Unit should be on-going and should allow the candidate the opportunity to develop as well as demonstrate the skills required to meet the learning outcomes and performance criteria of the Unit.

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).