

**Unit title:** Maintenance of a Safe Environment for Children (National 4)

**Unit code:** HX1T 74

**Superclass:** PT

**Publication date:** August 2018

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 03

## Unit purpose

This unit enables the learner to develop an awareness of the key aspects of current health and safety legislation related to an Early Learning and Childcare environment. It allows learners the opportunity to identify potential risks within settings and to demonstrate possible strategies for dealing with these. These strategies should give learners an awareness of their own responsibilities and the employer's responsibilities in maintaining a safe environment. There is no requirement for learners to have a placement to complete this unit but they may visit workplace settings or other appropriate settings.

This unit is an optional unit in the Skills for Work Course: Early Learning and Childcare (National 4) but is also suitable for learners wishing to study the unit on its own. The unit is suitable for learners who may be considering employment in the Early Learning and Childcare sector or who wish to progress to further levels of study in Early Learning and Childcare.

## Outcomes

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

- 1 Demonstrate an awareness of current health and safety legislation which relates to working in an Early Learning and Childcare environment.
- 2 Explain potential risks in an Early Learning and Childcare environment for children.
- 3 Explain the benefits of strategies for minimising risks in an Early Learning and Childcare environment.

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## **Credit points and level**

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 4: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4)

## **Recommended entry to the unit**

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. However, centres should note that this Unit is at National 4.

## **Core Skills**

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

Complete Core Skill	None
Core Skill component	Critical Thinking at SCQF level 4

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 course, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the course to which it contributes.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

## **Equality and inclusion**

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

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

# National unit specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

## Outcome 1

Demonstrate an awareness of current health and safety legislation which relates to working in an Early Learning and Childcare environment.

### Performance criteria

- (a) Identify the key aspects of current legislation in relation to health and safety in an Early Learning and Childcare environment.
- (b) Identify employer responsibilities in relation to maintaining a safe and healthy environment in an Early Learning and Childcare setting.
- (c) Identify employee responsibilities in relation to safe working practices in an Early Learning and Childcare setting.

## Outcome 2

Explain potential risks in an Early Learning and Childcare environment for children.

### Performance criteria

- (a) Explain potential risks in an indoor Early Learning and Childcare environment.
- (b) Explain potential risks in an outdoor Early Learning and Childcare environment.

## Outcome 3

Explain the benefits of strategies for minimising risks in an Early Learning and Childcare environment.

### Performance criteria

- (a) Explain the benefits of strategies for minimising risks to health and safety in an indoor Early Learning and Childcare environment.
- (b) Explain the benefits of strategies for minimising risks to health and safety in an outdoor Early Learning and Childcare environment.

## Evidence requirements for this unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all outcomes and performance criteria.

### Outcome 1:

Learners should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the key aspects of current health and safety legislation in relation to employer/employee responsibilities.

### Outcomes 2 and 3:

A minimum of **two** potential risks for both indoor and outdoor Early Learning and Childcare environments should be identified.

A minimum of **two** strategies and benefits for minimising risks in **both** indoor and outdoor Early Learning and Childcare environments should be identified with an explanation of the benefits of each.

The standard to be applied is exemplified in the assessment support pack 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: Statement of standards

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## Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this unit. Employability is a key aspect of Skills for Work and is present throughout the unit. In addition, there are a number of other skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop as they undertake this unit, these can be drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the unit where there are appropriate opportunities.

### **1 Literacy**

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

### **2 Numeracy**

- 2.3 Information handling

### **3 Health and Wellbeing**

- 3.1 Personal learning
- 3.2 Emotional wellbeing
- 3.3 Physical wellbeing
- 3.4 Physical for, and making, choices and changes
- 3.5 Relationships

### **4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship**

- 4.1 Employability
- 4.2 Information and communication technology (ICT)
- 4.3 Working with others
- 4.6 Citizenship

### **5 Thinking Skills**

- 5.1 Remembering
- 5.2 Understanding
- 5.3 Applying
- 5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Amplification of these is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills should be at the same SCQF level as the unit and be consistent with the SCQF level descriptor. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the *National Unit Support Notes*.

# National Unit Support Notes

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Unit support notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

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

## Guidance on the content and context for this unit

### Outcome 1

Learners should develop an awareness of key aspects of current health and safety legislation which relates to Early Learning and Childcare settings. Teachers/lecturers should ensure that the legislation presented to learners is current and includes the requirements of the employer and the employee in relation to:

- ◆ Health and Safety at Work
- ◆ Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- ◆ The Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences
- ◆ Food Safety

It is intended that learners should understand relevant, key points arising from the legislation rather than study the various pieces of legislation in detail. In particular, learners should become aware of their responsibilities and the employer's responsibilities with regard to safe practices. Learners should explore a variety of situations where health and safety are important when caring for children both indoors and out, eg carelessness with litter, crossing roads safely, handling play materials.

Learners should be made aware of the meaning of risk:

- ◆ A risk is the likelihood of harm; the degree of risk will depend on several factors including:
  - the possibility of harm
  - the potential severity of that harm
  - who might be affected by that harm

Learners should use this information to identify potential risks within a variety of Early Learning and Childcare settings. Learners should think of these in relation to the age and developmental stage of children 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 in relation to the area, equipment and activity undertaken within the Early Learning and Childcare environment. It has to be noted that areas, equipment and activity are interrelated. Care should be taken to include risks in an outdoor environment.

The following examples might be explored and learners should be encouraged to expand this list with their own examples, especially for outdoors. The following list is not exhaustive:

<b>Areas</b>	<b>Potential risk</b>
Food preparation and storage areas	Incorrect food storage and handling
Snack/eating areas	Incorrect disposal of waste material, spilled drinks Allergies
Toilet/nappy change areas	Risk of spread of infection due to inadequate hygiene
First aid areas	Risk of spread of infection
Waste disposal/storage areas	Risk of spread of infection (including risks for 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
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Potential risk</b>
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
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Potential risk</b>
Nature/environment based activities	Risk of spread of infection
Pet care	Inadequate hygiene Allergies
Cooking/baking activities	Inappropriate use of equipment (knives, cookers) Allergies Burns
Messy play — water, sand, art, craft	Use of dangerous equipment, eg scissors, knives, risk of spread of infection, danger of slipping
Outings	Inadequate staffing/supervision levels

### Outcome 3

For a range of identified risks, learners should get the opportunity to explore appropriate strategies to minimise risks to health and safety in accordance with current legislation for both indoors and outdoors environments. Learners should be able to explain some of the benefits of using such strategies.

Learners and centres may wish to identify examples of good practice with which they are familiar. This may include exploring procedures adopted in specific circumstances including:

- ◆ waste or litter disposal (waste should include body fluids)
- ◆ toilet areas (or nappy changing areas)
- ◆ food preparation areas
- ◆ minor incidents
- ◆ fault reporting
- ◆ routine maintenance
- ◆ fire safety
- ◆ entrance security

The following table contains examples of the potential benefits for minimising risks within an Early Learning and Childcare environment for children and others. This list is not exhaustive:

<b>Areas/circumstances</b>	<b>Potential benefit of minimising risk for children and others</b>
Food preparation and storage areas	Control of infection Reduced risk of food poisoning
Snack/eating areas	Control of infection Reduced risk of food poisoning and allergic reactions
Toilet/nappy change areas	Control of infection
First aid areas	Control of infection
Waste disposal/storage areas	Control of infection/ vermin and pests
Entrance/exit sites	Increased security Reduction in accidents Improved fire safety awareness
Security of areas	Improved child protection
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Potential benefit of minimising risk for children and others</b>
Cots/prams/baby relax chairs/changing mats	Control of infection
Toys/books/resources	Control of infection Reduction in accidents
Food preparation and serving equipment	Control of infection Reduction in accidents



<b>Activity</b>	<b>Potential benefit of minimising risk for children and others</b>
Nature/environment based activities	Control of infection
Pet care	Control of infection Reduction of allergic reactions
Cooking/baking activities	Control of infection Reduction of allergic reactions Reduction of accidents and burns
Messy play — water, sand, art, craft	Control of infection Reduction of accidents
Outings	Increased child safety
Appropriate clothing	Maintain correct body temperature

### **Employability skills**

In this unit learners will have the opportunity to be assessed for:

- ◆ working co-operatively with others
- ◆ demonstrating a responsible attitude in all aspects of working with children
- ◆ maintaining a tidy, organised and safe environment
- ◆ health and safety awareness
- ◆ understanding roles and responsibilities

Through teaching and learning the unit provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of good communication.

### **Generic Statement for Skills for Work: Early Learning and Childcare**

#### **National 4**

The following statements apply to this unit and to all units included within the Skills for Work: Early Learning and Childcare course at National 4

#### **National 4**

**Children** refer to:

- ◆ Baby (birth to 18 months)
- ◆ Toddler (18 months to 36 months)
- ◆ Young Child (3–5 years)
- ◆ Child (primary school age)

The learner should have the opportunity to consider pregnancy as it impacts on the development and wellbeing of the child.

Each child will progress in their own way and at their own rate as there are no set rules for when a child stops being a baby and starts being a toddler or a slightly older child or teenager.

## Aspects of development

Studying aspects of development highlights the fact that development starts during pregnancy and learning and play from birth. Learning and development should be considered as a continuous action; one which a new born baby does instinctively from birth and continues for each individual at their own rate and pace.

Some of the principles to be considered are:

- ◆ All children develop at different rates, but developmental milestones usually follow the same sequence.
- ◆ The development of the child is integrated and although aspects of development are studied separately it is important to recognise that children develop in an integrated holistic way.
- ◆ The development of the child is often measured against a 'norm', which is useful in providing a broad framework for the study of child development. It should be pointed out to learners that this may also have a negative side in that children who fall outwith the norm might be labelled as different.
- ◆ Development is determined partly by heredity and partly by the environment.

Development is holistic. Children and young people grow and acquire skills in all aspects of development as they mature. For example, as they acquire physical skills they will also be developing language and cognitive, social and emotional skills.

## Aspects of development

- ◆ Physical development relates to the development of the body. Milestones relate to the development of gross motor and fine motor skills and changes in the body at puberty.
- ◆ Social and Emotional development is learning about feelings and relating with other people in socially appropriate ways. Milestones relate to expressions of emotion, awareness of other people and appropriate reactions to them.
- ◆ Cognitive development is the development of the mind or the thinking part of the brain. Milestones include the development of concepts and memory.
- ◆ Language development is about learning to speak and communicate. Milestones include early babbling, using single words, holding conversations, and debating from a reasoned point of view.

## Children's rights

Learners should always have the opportunity to consider the rights of children and young people in relation to the unit. They should consider the importance of knowing and respecting all children and young people as individuals, and that the prime role of all early and childcare services is to promote the development and wellbeing of children and young people.

## Additional support needs

Within the delivery of the unit being studied, learners should always have the opportunity to consider the impact of the topic on children and young people with an additional support need. Children and young people may have additional needs for a variety of reasons: disability and health needs; family circumstances and social and emotional factors. These may be relatively minor or life altering; short term, long term or ongoing, and therefore should be considered within each unit delivery.

## Personal reflection

During each unit, learners should be encouraged to consider their own personal development and how well they are improving and enhancing their employability skills for working in Early Learning and Childcare.

## Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit

In the delivery of this unit, teachers/lecturers should use a largely experiential approach and should take into account individual learning styles of learners when planning the delivery of the unit. Teacher-led approaches will be needed to establish key points of knowledge and understanding. Some of the methods employed could be:

- ◆ group exercises
- ◆ interactive games
- ◆ case studies/scenarios
- ◆ role play
- ◆ worksheets
- ◆ poster/leaflet making
- ◆ video material
- ◆ workshops
- ◆ visits to various settings — including outdoors
- ◆ use of appropriate websites:
  - [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
  - [www.foodstandards.gov.uk](http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk)
  - [www.rospa.com](http://www.rospa.com)
- ◆ visiting speakers — learners should be encouraged to invite the speaker in writing and to contact with thanks following visits
- ◆ visits to playparks, soft play or other environments for children

## Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only.

### Outcomes 1, 2 and 3

Evidence can be generated for some or all of the outcomes using the following types of assessment, such as:

- ◆ Practical activity — real or simulated
- ◆ Peer assessment or group tasks
- ◆ Case study
- ◆ Leaflets, booklets and posters
- ◆ Mind maps and floor books
- ◆ Presentations
- ◆ Role play, drama, creative activity
- ◆ Practical simulation observation
- ◆ Short answer questions/multiple choice tests — digitally if available
- ◆ Digital evidence such as an e-portfolio, website, blog, wiki, video, digital platform
- ◆ SOLAR Assessment

Evidence can be generated using many different types of assessment. These are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners and their needs. Evidence can be generated holistically across the outcomes or individually. There may also be opportunities for integration of assessment across Units within the group award.

The assessment requirements for this unit are 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 assessment support pack for this unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this unit, they should be of a comparable standard. Assessment should be carried out under supervision.

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.

## **Opportunities for e-assessment**

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

## **Opportunities for developing Core Skills**

This Unit has the Critical Thinking component 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 4.

When planning, discussing and participating in group activities, learners will have opportunities to work co-operatively with others. Aspects of oral and written communication could be developed in group discussions and group planning in completing reports.

## **General information for learners**

**Unit title:** Maintenance of a Safe Environment for Children  
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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 enables you to develop awareness of the key aspects of current health and safety legislation which relates to Early Learning and Childcare settings. It also explains risks in Early Learning and Childcare settings. You will gain an understanding of strategies which may minimise such risks and the benefits of reducing risk. You may be assessed in a variety of ways to demonstrate your understanding of Health and Safety in an Early Learning and Childcare environment.

This Unit has the Critical Thinking component of Problem Solving embedded in it. This means that when you achieve the Unit, your Core Skills profile will also be updated to show you have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 4.

## Administrative information

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**Superclass:** PT

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### History of changes to National Unit Specification

Version	Description of change	Date
03	Minor amends to wording of outcomes 1 and 3 on page 1 to match outcome titles on page 3.	August 2018
02	Core Skills Component Critical Thinking at SCQF level 4 embedded.	February 2018

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**NOTE:** readers are advised to check SQA's website: [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk) to ensure they are using the most up-to-date version of the unit specification.

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