
Unit title:	Play in Early Learning and Childcare (National 4)
Unit code:	HX1R 74
Superclass:	PT
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Unit purpose

This is an introductory unit which allows learners to develop a basic understanding of a variety of types of play and how play contributes to the development of the child. It should allow learners to explore a variety of play types and describe a range of play experiences within different types of play. The learners should demonstrate an understanding of the appropriateness and value of play opportunities for the learning and development of children. The learners will have the opportunity to plan for practical play experiences.

This unit is a mandatory unit in the National 4 Course Early Learning and Childcare, 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 and 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 Explain how play contributes to children's learning and development.
- 2 Explain the potential benefits of a planned play experience for children's learning and development.

Credit points and level

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

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Recommended entry to the unit

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. However, centres should note that this unit is at National 4 which is equivalent to Standard Grade, General level.

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes for this unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this unit.

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.

National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

Unit title: Play in Early Learning and Childcare (National 4)

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

Explain how play contributes to children's learning and development.

Performance criteria

- (a) Identify a range of types of play for children.
- (b) Describe a range of play experiences from identified play types which are appropriate to the age range of the children.
- (c) Explain how different types of play contribute to children's learning and development.

Outcome 2

Explain the potential benefits of a planned play experience for children's learning and development.

Performance criteria

- (a) Identify a play experience which contributes to the learning and development of children.
- (b) Produce a play plan for the identified play experience.
- (c) Explain the potential benefits of this type of play experience for children's learning and development.

Evidence requirements for this unit

Outcome 1

Learners must identify a minimum of **five** different types of play.

Learners must describe a play experience from **three** of the identified types of play and explain how these experiences contribute to children's learning and development.

Outcome 2

Learners must produce a play plan for one identified play experience and explain a minimum of **three** potential benefits for this type of play.

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

The types of play identified below must be incorporated as a minimum into evidence requirements for the unit.

- ◆ symbolic play
- ◆ books and play which supports language enrichment
- ◆ creative play
- ◆ discovery play
- ◆ vigorous play
- ◆ play with technology
- ◆ games

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 (cont)

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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

3 Health and Wellbeing

- 3.1 Personal learning
- 3.2 Emotional wellbeing
- 3.3 Physical wellbeing
- 3.5 Relationships

4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship

- 4.1 Employability
- 4.2 Information and communication technology (ICT)
- 4.5 Leadership
- 4.6 Citizenship

5 Thinking Skills

- 5.2 Understanding
- 5.3 Applying
- 5.5 Creating

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

Unit title: Play in Early Learning and Childcare (National 4)

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

The content of this unit is designed to raise the learner's awareness of the nature and value of play and how it contributes to a child's learning and development.

It is important to recognise that some learners who wish to work with children may not have had the benefit of a wide variety of play experiences themselves. It may be of benefit to learners to undertake some practical play experience to enhance their understanding.

These play experiences will be supplemented by teaching/learning activities to establish appropriate types of play and play experiences for the age range and ability. Teacher-led activities will increase the learner's awareness and understanding of the impact of play on the child's learning and development.

When learners have developed an understanding of the nature of play and its importance, they will then contribute to the planning of relevant play experiences for children.

The objectives of the unit are that the learners will:

- ◆ learn about play through experiencing it.
- ◆ be able to describe play and explain how it might contribute to the child's development at a basic level.
- ◆ plan simple play experiences from within the specified age range and different types of experiences.

Employability skills

In this unit learners may have the opportunity to develop skills in:

- ◆ presentation.
- ◆ working co-operatively with others.
- ◆ planning and preparation.
- ◆ time management.
- ◆ maintaining tidy, organised and safe environment.
- ◆ gathering, collating and evaluating information.
- ◆ organisation.

Outcome 1

Teacher/lecturer led activities should cover key aspects of knowledge and understanding about types of play and appropriate play experiences in the age range. In discussions and other teaching/learning activities, learners should consider such questions as:

- ◆ What is play?
- ◆ Why do children play?
- ◆ Do all children play?
- ◆ Is play good for children?

Learners should be encouraged to consider their own childhood play experiences, and those of the group. They may also wish to consider their 'best play' experience and compare with others in the group. This should start to introduce the learners to different types of play. Learners could consider the different types of play and explore:

- ◆ What experiences do they like?
- ◆ What do they least like and why?
- ◆ What do others like and why?

Learners should, for example, through workshop sessions or visits, observe and experience a variety of play types. The statement of standards states the mandatory types of play to be covered. Other types of play may be included in addition. The following list, though not exhaustive, contains suggested play experiences.

Symbolic play

- ◆ play with toys
- ◆ junk modelling
- ◆ role play
- ◆ imaginative play
- ◆ dance and drama
- ◆ messy play

Books and play which supports language enrichment

- ◆ reading stories
- ◆ sharing stories and making up stories
- ◆ making books with children
- ◆ imaginative play
- ◆ role play
- ◆ puppets
- ◆ story boards
- ◆ drama
- ◆ songs with actions
- ◆ poetry and rhymes
- ◆ traditional stories

Creative play

- ◆ musical activities
- ◆ crafts
- ◆ construction
- ◆ drawing, painting
- ◆ clay, dough, sculpting
- ◆ movement and dance
- ◆ imaginative play and drama
- ◆ junk modelling
- ◆ sewing, weaving

Discovery play

- ◆ sensory play
- ◆ exploratory play
- ◆ water play
- ◆ sand play
- ◆ messy play
- ◆ play using natural elements
- ◆ environmental activities
- ◆ 'loose parts' (*items that can be moved from place to place, carried, rolled, lifted, piled one on top of the other or combined to create new structures or experiences*)

Vigorous play

- ◆ running, jumping, racing, chasing
- ◆ group games
- ◆ parachute games
- ◆ dance
- ◆ wheels — bikes, scooters, tricycles, go-karts, roller blades, skateboards
- ◆ play with equipment — climbing frames, swings, slides, tunnels
- ◆ outdoor activities
- ◆ adventure play
- ◆ circus skills
- ◆ earth balls, egg balls
- ◆ soft play or bouncy castles

Play with technology

- ◆ using real tools
- ◆ cooking, baking
- ◆ working with wood and tools
- ◆ scientific play
- ◆ taking things apart — clocks, radios
- ◆ using computers
- ◆ using the internet
- ◆ audio/visual activities, ie making films, taking photographs
- ◆ using CAD/games software

Games

- ◆ physical games
- ◆ group games
- ◆ ball games
- ◆ team games
- ◆ board games
- ◆ dance and singing games
- ◆ traditional games
- ◆ sports

Outcome 2

Teacher/lecturer led activities should cover knowledge and understanding of how play supports the care, learning and development of the child. Learners should be able to identify the value of play and play types for children, in terms of their well-being, learning and development. Learners should understand that children are the centre of play, and that children play for play's sake.

Learners should understand how different aspects of development inter relate and how, at times, this could be integration of **all** aspects of development. Learners should also be aware that children at different ages have different needs with regard to play. For example, a young child of 10 months will play differently to a child of 8 years. Learners should be encouraged to explore the different element of play in relation to age. The learner should be able to explain the potential benefits of identified play experiences for children's play, learning and development.

The content for this outcome involves learners planning play, drawing on experiences and work done for the previous outcome. They may then present their play plans to the class group.

They should consider what needs to be done prior to the play experience, during the experience and after the experience. In planning play experiences learners should consider:

- ◆ What is the age of the child?
- ◆ Is the play child centred?
- ◆ Does the play meet the individual needs of the child?
- ◆ How will the play contribute to the care, learning and development of the child?
- ◆ Will the child enjoy the play experience and how will you know this?
- ◆ What resources do you need, physical, human and material?
- ◆ What will your role be?
- ◆ Are there any health and safety considerations?

If possible, they should be given the opportunity to carry out their plans, in a real or simulated context. As part of the group process learners should, if possible, present their plans in an interactive way. They may choose to set up a play area and explain their plan. They may produce a pictorial plan of the area. The means of presentation should be agreed by the group.

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 courses 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.

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 out with 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 Learning 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

It would be appropriate to integrate Outcomes 1 and 2 of the unit, bringing theory and practice together. Teaching/learning approaches should include experiential learning where the learner learns through carrying out practical activities and reflects on the experiences. Teacher-led activities should also be a feature at this level, in particular to establish knowledge and understanding. Learners should be given opportunities for practical workshop sessions, covering all the types of play mentioned in the statement of standards. Centres should organise the teaching/learning programme and resources to ensure that all learners experience a real or simulated play environment appropriate to the age range.

Learners should have access to up-to-date topical periodicals and magazines and catalogues. Visits to, or visiting speakers from, Early Learning and Childcare settings would be beneficial for learners. When inviting speakers and arranging visits, learners should be encouraged, under supervision, to write letters and make phone calls to arrange hospitality. Similarly, learners should be encouraged to thank visiting speakers in appropriate ways.

A variety of teaching/learning methods could be used throughout the unit:

- ◆ small group discussion
- ◆ case studies
- ◆ individual and group research — paper-based and web-based reference material could be used
- ◆ outside speakers from early learning and childcare settings
- ◆ video/audio material
- ◆ practical workshop sessions
- ◆ teacher/lecturer-led activities

By using a combination of these methods, learners will appreciate:

- ◆ the information needed in order to plan.
- ◆ the way in which the children respond to play experiences.
- ◆ the need for adult intervention.

In this unit there are opportunities to build up an understanding of the challenges of working in an Early Learning and Childcare setting; of the need for careful planning of play experiences, the wide variety of different play activities and their importance to the child's development. Learners should also be encouraged to recognise, that whilst planning is involved in meaningful play experiences, sometimes play can be more meaningful for children if it is free flow and unstructured. Through observation, experience and reflection, the learners will become more aware of the demands of working in the sector and the skills, qualities and knowledge-base required of prospective employees.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit (standard)

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit

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
- ◆ Reflective journal
- ◆ 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.

It is important to include evidence where learners have reflected on their learning and implementation and ways that they may have gained feedback from others.

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.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Opportunities for developing aspects of Core Skills should be incorporated where they arise naturally in the teaching and learning process. In this unit, learners will work with others to carry out a practical investigation into play. They will work co-operatively with others to plan and present play experiences to the class group. Opportunities for developing aspects of written and oral communication will arise during class discussions, group interactions and presentation of play plans.

General information for learners

Unit title: Play in Early Learning and Childcare (National 4)

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 give you an understanding of the importance of play in children's care, learning and development. The unit identifies different types of play and discusses how different types of play are important to the all-round development of children.

Play is fun and this unit expects you to participate in different types of play activities, both indoor and outdoor. Be prepared to get a bit messy! As part of this, you will need to plan and carry out your play activities and review the success of the activity. You will be encouraged to be creative in your approach to your learning and realise the importance of this in contributing to a meaningful experience for children.

Your teacher/lecturer will discuss the best way to assess your understanding of the learning undertaken, this may be individual or group work, and will incorporate the building of a portfolio of evidence.

Administrative information

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History of changes to National Unit Specification

Version	Description of change	Date

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