



Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

Unit code: F56T 35

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to enable candidates to develop their ability to use psychological theories and perspectives in their specific professional role. This Unit also looks at the skills and knowledge of research and evidence based practice. To enable candidates to complete this Unit they should be employed in an appropriate job role, in a placement setting or have relevant and recent experience of an appropriate sector.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- ◆ apply appropriate research methods and evidence an ability to maintain and develop a knowledge base
- ◆ evidence an understanding of relevant and current psychological theories
- ◆ apply psychological knowledge to practice

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**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.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: It is recommended that candidates have completed another Social Science Unit based on Psychological theory at an appropriate level to ensure they have the underpinning knowledge to work at SCQF level 8. This may include psychology based Units from HNC Social Care, HNC Early Education and Childcare, HNC Health Care, SVQ in Health and Social Care or SVQ CCLD level 3 or predecessor awards. Candidates should also have good *Communication, IT, Problem Solving* and *Numeracy* Skills which could be evidenced by achievement of Core Skills at SCQF level 6 in these areas. Candidates should also have previous or current workplace experience before undertaking this Unit.

Core Skills: There may be opportunities to develop Core Skills and Core Skill components of *Communication* — Oral Communication and Written Communication at SCQF level 6, *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6, *Numeracy* — Using Number and Using Graphical Information at SCQF level 6 and *Information Technology* at SCQF level 6 in the Unit, although there is no automatic certification of these Core Skills or Core Skills components.

General information for centres (cont)

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

If undertaking this Unit as a part of the HND Childhood Practice or HND Social Services, it is recommended that this Unit is taught at the start of the course.

It is recommended that this Unit be delivered simultaneously with the *Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology* Unit (F56V 35). This Unit shares the first Outcome (research) with the *Applied Sociology* Unit. Delivery of these Outcomes can be simultaneous and should afford considerable time for the acquisition of the requisite depth and breadth of knowledge.

Assessment: It is expected that this Unit will be undertaken as part of an integrated award and that delivery and assessment will be carried out in a manner which is integrated with other relevant Units. Guidance on the integrated delivery and assessment for the Group Awards that this Unit forms can be found in the respective Arrangement documents.

If delivered on a standalone basis the Outcomes within this Unit could be assessed holistically by a single instrument of assessment that requires the candidate to produce a report that links theories to their workplace experience or a case study (if appropriate). If need be, it would also be possible to break this report down into three individual reports that assess each Outcome separately. In the rare occasion where a candidate cannot access sufficient relevant experience to undertake a report on actual practice a case study which would elicit this knowledge may be devised.

Should it be necessary to assess learning from this Unit alone, it would be necessary to do so in a manner which evidences the candidate's application of learning within a real work context in order to make an assessment of actual practice. This might be achieved by a number of different assessment methods, which should contain elements demonstrating how the candidate uses theoretical constructs to inform practice. It should also be verified by a senior practitioner or manager from the candidate's workplace who is familiar with the candidate's practice to ensure authenticity.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

Unit code: F56T 35

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Apply appropriate research methods and evidence an ability to maintain and develop a knowledge base

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Priorities for research
- ◆ Methodologies associated with research
- ◆ Ethical considerations
- ◆ Quantitative and Qualitative data
- ◆ Statistics and methods of data presentation
- ◆ Primary and secondary sources of research
- ◆ Research findings and practice wisdom

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ establish research priorities
- ◆ critically analyse and evaluate a minimum of four theories and data contributing to the research
- ◆ evaluate the impact of ethical considerations and professional values on any intervention based on research
- ◆ demonstrate how data can be processed to produce meaningful information by presenting findings from four pieces of research (qualitative and quantitative)
- ◆ demonstrate familiarity with sources of research evidence eg web, library, professional associations, journals by evidencing use of at least four sources
- ◆ demonstrate an ability to identify relevant sources of information and their potential for informing practice by the identification of at least four relevant sources
- ◆ demonstrate an ability to share knowledge and learn from others showing the use of the data from one relevant source translating to practice

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

Assessment Guidelines

It is recommended that this Outcome be assessed in an integrated fashion along with related Outcomes from this and other Units from the Group Award in which it belongs, eg HND Childhood Practice or HND Social Services. Please see guidance on integrated and holistic approaches to assessment contained within the Arrangements Documents for each respective Group Award.

If undertaking this Unit on a standalone basis this Outcome could be assessed holistically with Outcomes 2 and 3 as part of a single assessment for the Unit with a report on a piece of actual practice of around 2,500 words. The report should evidence a minimum of four theories correctly applied to the candidate's professional practice.

Alternatively, this Outcome could be assessed separately with a 1,000 word report, which should contain a literature review and a justification of the psychological theories used based on available data. This should underpin the use of a minimum of two of the theories contained in the report and conform to the Evidence Requirements. In the rare occasion where a candidate cannot access sufficient relevant experience to undertake a report on actual practice a case study which would elicit this knowledge may be devised.

Outcome 2

Evidence an understanding of relevant and current psychological theories

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Current issues, trends and paradigms in psychology
- ◆ Current and relevant psychological theories/perspectives from infancy to old age
- ◆ Nature and the effects of developmental delay, disruption and trauma on the individual
- ◆ Learning styles; multiple intelligences; building positive environments/cultures linked to anticipated development

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ evaluate the role of environment and heredity in human development
- ◆ evaluate the key elements of five of the main domains of psychological theory
- ◆ identify and explain four key theories regarding human growth, development and learning
- ◆ identify and explain the three key elements of psychological theory in relation to the development of the personality
- ◆ evaluate three contemporary perspectives on mental health
- ◆ evaluate the impact of stress on the individual

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

Assessment Guidelines

It is recommended that this Outcome be assessed in an integrated fashion along with related Outcomes from this and other Units from the Group Award in which it belongs, eg HND Childhood Practice or HND Social Services. Please see guidance on integrated and holistic approaches to assessment contained within the Arrangements Documents for each respective Group Award.

If undertaking this Unit on a standalone basis this Outcome could be assessed holistically with Outcomes 1 and 3 as part of a single assessment for the Unit with a report on a piece of actual practice of around 2,500 words. The report should evidence a minimum of four theories correctly applied to the candidate's setting.

Alternatively, this Outcome could be assessed separately with a 1,000 word report evidencing the above requirements. In the rare occasion where a candidate cannot access sufficient relevant experience to undertake a report on actual practice a case study which would elicit this knowledge may be devised.

Outcome 3

Apply psychological knowledge to practice

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Evidence-based practice
- ◆ Psychological theories/perspectives within professional context
- ◆ Strategies/approaches/programmes based on appropriate theoretical approaches
- ◆ Professional practice strategies and their effectiveness
- ◆ Commonly used models of practice

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the concept of evidenced based practice within professional practice
- ◆ apply and evaluate a minimum of two relevant psychological theories/perspectives to practice within professional context
- ◆ critically evaluate the use of psychological theory to practice

Assessment Guidelines

It is recommended that this Outcome be assessed in an integrated fashion along with related Outcomes from this and other Units from the Group Award in which it belongs, eg HND Childhood Practice or HND Social Services. Please see guidance on integrated and holistic approaches to assessment contained within the Arrangements Documents for each respective Group Award.

If undertaking this Unit on a standalone basis this Outcome could be assessed holistically with Outcomes 1 and 2 as part of a single assessment for the Unit with a report on a piece of actual practice of around 2,500 words. The report should evidence a minimum of four theories correctly applied to the candidate's setting.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

Alternatively, this Outcome could be assessed separately with a 1,000 word report, which evaluates the effectiveness of two of the theories applied to the candidate's setting. In the rare occasion where a candidate cannot access sufficient relevant experience to undertake a report on actual practice a case study which would elicit this knowledge may be devised.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F56T 35

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

Superclass category: PK

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History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

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

This Unit is designed to enable students to explore how psychological theory influences Childhood Practice and Social Services. It will examine essential knowledge for application across a number of contexts. The Unit also seeks to give the candidate the knowledge and skills to be evidence based in their practice and have the ability to carry out research to evaluate existing or design future work. The Outcomes may be presented in sequence or integrated.

Many candidates will have completed a psychology Unit at SCQF level 7. However, it should not be presumed that this is the case for all candidates as there will be entrants via Health, Social Care and Early Education and Childcare routes, and as such will have varying degrees of knowledge.

Outcome 1

This Outcome is shared with Outcome 1 in the *Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology* Unit therefore delivery can be simultaneous and should allow considerable time for the acquisition of the requisite depth and breadth of knowledge.

Candidates should be provided with opportunities to use a variety of research methods, and evaluate such data both primary and secondary, they should also be required to evaluate the research of others.

Candidates should explore descriptive and analytical statistics, graphical representation of data, qualitative and quantitative data, methods of gathering evidence (experiments, surveys, field, laboratory etc). Discussion of theories where some form of underlying belief might have unduly influenced them is useful (eg Bowlby and western gender roles, Intelligence/Criminality, Mental Health and Illness, and Eugenics/Nature vs Nurture).

Candidates should also identify and evaluate issues arising from ethical considerations and professional values with particular attention to issues of equality and power.

Outcome 2

Candidates should have the opportunity to explore, analyse and evaluate a range of psychological theories, issues and perspectives which influence modern care and early years practice across a number of contexts.

It is recommended that a coherent and relevant (to the context) programme is compiled. The following are offered for consideration; however this list is not exhaustive:

- ◆ contrasting views of the development of the personality including the dynamics, sequence and structure
- ◆ human development including: the role of environment and heredity, stage or maturational theories, human motivation

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

- ◆ contrasting views on learning including behavioural, cognitive and biological theories
- ◆ attachment and its impact on the person throughout their lifespan
- ◆ stress; its sources, impact on the individual/child and young person and ways of managing
- ◆ issues of power and equality including sex and gender and prejudice
- ◆ atypical behaviour and contrasting views on its aetiology, treatment and management

It is expected that the focus of the study for candidates will be relevant to the context of their professional practice. ie early years and childcare workers will focus on theories impacting on early years practice whilst social carers will concentrate on theories that impact on their particular context.

However, as this Unit forms awards that are aimed at advanced practitioners the candidate should look at theories in a more holistic way eg stress and how it would impact on families, carers and workers rather than only on the consumers of the service.

Outcome 3

Within this Outcome candidates will focus on the application by the candidate, of psychological theory to the processes of childhood practice/social services. The assessment of this Outcome and that of Outcome two should include some degree of research. This indicates that those delivering the Unit should be able to impart to the candidate how to carry out research ethically and effectively, for example how to select a topic, how to identify hypotheses, plan and design an appropriate methodology, how to collect, analyse and present information, the ethical considerations of research (eg honesty, age considerations, prior informed agreement) and awareness of the power imbalances in the research relationship.

This may include:

- ◆ the application of theories to specific models of intervention for example, Behaviourism, Piaget, Vygotsky
- ◆ the analysis and understanding of the user of the service's situation
- ◆ the use of theory to provide specific forms of intervention

It is expected at this level that the candidate evidences that the theory of choice is chosen from awareness of a number of alternatives and should show that he or she is aware of the ethical nature, implicit in research and the additional load of the value base of their profession.

The British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and conduct can be accessed at.

http://www.bps.org.uk/downloadfile.cfm?file_uuid=5084A882-1143-DFD0-7E6C-F1938A65C242&EXT=PDF

Resources and Publications

The following are recommended but not compulsory for this Unit.

Aveyard A, *Doing a Literature Review in Health and Social Care*, Open University Press; 1st edition 2007

Berne E, *The Games People Play, The psychology of human relationships*, Penguin, 1973

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

Bernstein A (et al), *Psychology*, 8th edition, Houghton Mifflin, 2007

Bowlby J, *Attachment and Loss: Attachment Vol 1 (Attachment & Loss)*, Pimlico, 1997

Bowlby J, *Attachment and Loss: Separation — Anxiety and Anger Vol 2 (Attachment & Loss)*, Pimlico, 1998

Bowlby J, *Loss*, Pimlico, 1998

Coolican H, *Research Methods and Statistics in Psychology*, Hodder & Stoughton; 4th edition, 2004

Flanagan C, *Applying Psychology to Early Child Development*, Hodder & Stoughton 1996

Goswami U (ed), *Blackwell Handbook of Childhood Cognitive Development*, Wiley Blackwell, 2004

Gross R, *Psychology, the science of mind and behaviour*, 5th edition, Hodder and Arnold, 2005

Lindsay B, *Understanding Research and Evidence-based Practice*, Reflect Press Ltd; 1st edition 2007

Newman T (et al), *Evidence-based Social Work: A Guide for the Perplexed*, Russell House Publishing Ltd 2005

Sutherland PAA, *Cognitive Development Today: Piaget and his Critics: Piaget and His Critics*, Paul Chapman Publishing, 1992

Internet Sources

About.com: an interesting collection of informative websites.

<http://psychology.about.com/>

Psych Central: a web portal to wide network of psychology information

<http://psychcentral.com/resources/>

Ed Psych Central: a web portal to a wide network of Psychology Sites

<http://orion.it.luc.edu/~hweiman/page4psyc.html>

Possible Links to Other Unit in the HND Childhood Practice and HND Social Services

This Unit is linked to the following Units in the Group Awards HND Childhood Practice and HND Social Services:

- ◆ Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology
- ◆ Childhood Practice and Social Services: Professional Development and Practice
- ◆ Childhood Practice and Social Services: Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of Professional Practice

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

Possible Links to Other Units in other Group Awards:

This Unit may supply some underpinning knowledge in relation to human growth and development for the SVQs Health and Social Care and Children's Care Learning and Development.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit forms part of the mandatory section of the HND Childhood Practice and the HND Social Services. However, it can also be delivered as a stand alone Unit.

It is recommended that this Unit be delivered simultaneously with *Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology* Unit (F56V 35).

To lessen assessment burden for candidates it is recommended that a holistic approach to assessment and delivery should be undertaken.

Alternatively each individual learning Outcome for this Unit can be assessed separately by means of a report or a case study (if appropriate). A case study would only be considered on the rare occasion where the candidate could not generate sufficient relevant examples from their own practice.

In order to achieve this Unit, candidates are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the knowledge and skills requirements for each Outcome.

At the risk of over egging the point any research should be carried out within the ethical guidelines for research and should not conflict with the values of the candidate's professional field.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There may be opportunities to develop Core Skills and Core Skill components of *Communication* — Oral Communication and Written Communication at SCQF level 6, *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6, *Numeracy* — Using Number and Using Graphical Information at SCQF level 6 and *Information Technology* at SCQF level 6 in the Unit, although there is no automatic certification of these Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Communication: This will be developed by the completion of the assessment requirements for this Unit.

Problem Solving: This will be developed by evaluating different approaches and making informed choices as to the appropriate application.

Numeracy: This could be developed by working with raw data to produce statistical information which can inform practice decisions.

Information Technology: This could be developed by the use of ICT sources to access research data.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

Open learning

This Unit is suitable for Open Learning, provided there is authentication of the candidate's evidence. However it would require planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence. Arrangements would have to be made to ensure that assessment of Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 is assessed by an appropriate supervisor.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

General information for candidates

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology

This Unit looks in some depth at how accepted knowledge (paradigms) in the subject area of psychology impacts on professional practice.

Outcome one examines the practices and techniques which led to theories and supports you in developing the analysis skills necessary to make sense of and evaluate data. It also encourages the use of similar methodology to inform your own practice.

Outcome two is about accumulating knowledge and developing awareness of what accepted psychological theory offers in your particular area of practice.

Outcome three is about applying psychological theory to your own practice.

You may have opportunities to develop Core Skills and Core Skill components of *Communication* — Oral Communication and Written Communication at SCQF level 6, *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6, *Numeracy* — Using Number and Using Graphical Information at SCQF level 6 and *Information Technology* at SCQF level 6 in the Unit, although there is no automatic certification of these Core Skills or Core Skills components.

You will draw upon your current workplace or past work experience within either a childhood practice or social services setting while undertaking this Unit, which will allow you to reflect upon your practice.

You may find that the assessment of this Unit may be integrated with other related Units from the HND Childhood Practice or HND Social Services Group Awards. Alternatively, the Unit may be assessed on a stand alone basis. Assessments methods will be decided by your lecturer, following SQA guidance.