



# **Group Award Specification for:**

**HNC Childhood Practice**

**Group Award Code: GK9T 15**

**Validation date: June 2015**

**Date of original publication: October 2015**

**Version: 01**

## Contents

1	Introduction .....	1
2	Qualification structure .....	2
2.1	Structure .....	2
3	Aims of the qualification .....	3
3.1	General aims of the qualification .....	3
3.2	Specific aims of the qualification .....	4
3.3	Graded Unit .....	4
4	Recommended entry to the qualification .....	5
4.1	Core Skills entry profile .....	5
5	Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs .....	6
5.1	Mapping of qualification aims to Units .....	7
5.2	Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS) Social Services Children and Young People .....	9
5.3	Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification .....	12
5.4	Assessment Strategy for the qualification(s) .....	15
6	Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment .....	16
6.1	Sequencing/integration of Units .....	16
6.2	Recognition of Prior Learning .....	16
6.3	Opportunities for e-assessment .....	18
6.4	Support materials .....	18
6.5	Resource requirements .....	18
7	General information for centres .....	19
8	Glossary of terms .....	19
9	General information for learners .....	22

# 1 Introduction

This document was previously known as the Arrangements document. The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification
- ◆ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities

This HNC Childhood Practice is a major revision of the HNC Early Education and Childcare Award validated in 2004 and this revision, has been initiated to widen access to employment opportunities in the Childhood Practice area that are a result of the changing needs of the sector. As the revision to the HNC has been substantial this has created a need for a new title and new Group Award.

The timing of the Review links to several developments in the Childhood Practice:

- ◆ The review of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Children and Young People
- ◆ The desire to bring learning for early learning and care of children closer together
- ◆ The increasing changes of job roles within the Social Services Sector
- ◆ The continued movement towards individualised services for children
- ◆ The revision of the Honours' Degrees' in Childhood Practice and Social Work
- ◆ SQA's revision of ALL HNCs, with new improved design rules

The consultations took account of all these factors. As a result, this new HNC in Childhood Practice offers learners the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills, which will enable them to work in a wider range of childhood settings. The Scottish Social Services Council published the Qualifications Criteria for Registration of Early Education and Childcare Workers in March 2004. The HNC Childhood Practice Award has been written with this in mind.

The award shares a common core of Units with the new revised HNC Social Services at SCQF level 7. One of the main features of the common core is to afford learners the opportunity to develop common knowledge and skills reflected in the revised National Occupational Standards while recognising areas of specialism, which are further developed in award specific Units.

The Evidence Requirements and Assessment Guidance allow learners a greater variety of Optional Units, selected to take account of the variety of job roles. In addition the choice of Options also provides areas of learning which would be suitable as stand-alone Units for Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

The award is suitable for those seeking to work as a practitioner in the early learning and childcare sector as well as being suitable for those currently employed in this role. The flexibility in the framework of this HNC makes the award suitable for full and part time learners wishing to develop or improve their knowledge and skills about Early Learning and Childcare, and to seek employment in this field. All learners will have the opportunity to develop their Core Skills throughout the course, the specifics of which are contained in the individual HN Unit descriptors.

Workplace practice is of primary importance in the HNC Awards in Care. Workplace practice will be assessed either in a placement setting or the learner's place of work. Practice competence will be assessed through the achievement of three mandatory SVQ Units from the new SVQ Social services: Children and Young People Award at level 3 (SCQF level 7).

## 2 Qualification structure

This Group Award is made up of 12 SQA Unit credits. It comprises of a minimum 96 SCQF credit points of which 68 are at SCQF level 7 in the mandatory section including a Graded Unit of 8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7. A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in Section 5.3.

### 2.1 Structure

The qualification is a Group Award Higher National Certificate (HNC) Childhood Practice and comprises of the following Units at SCQF level 7. In order to qualify for the full HNC Award learners must undertake 12 credits made up as detailed below:

- ◆ 4 taught mandatory core Unit credits
- ◆ 1 Graded Unit credit
- ◆ 2 mandatory optional Unit credits only one to be chosen
- ◆ 3 selected option Unit credits
- ◆ three mandatory workplace vocational Units at SCQF level 7

The following three tables will show how the award is designed. The tables list the Units indicating the SQA credit value, SCQF level and credit points.

#### Mandatory Units

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SQA credit
H8MN	34	Care in Contemporary Society	7	8	1
H8KC	34	Leadership Starts with Me	7	8	1
H8MM	34	Health Wellbeing and Safeguarding	7	8	1
H8WM	34	Lifespan Development Theoretical Approaches	7	8	1
H5LC	04	Promote Effective Communication	7	9	1
H5LD	04	Promote Health, Safety and Security in the Work setting	7	10	1
H5LE	04	Develop your Practice through Reflection and Learning	7	9	1
H9PR	34	Graded Unit 1	7	8	1

## Mandatory Optional Units — one Unit must be taken

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SQA credit
H98X	34	Support for Play Learning and Development	7	8	1
DF53	34	Facilitating Playwork Opportunities	7	8	1

## Optional Units — three Units must be taken

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SQA credit
H991	34	Promoting Language Literacy and Numeracy	7	8	1
H994	34	Collaborative Working	7	8	1
H995	34	Strategies for Child Health	7	8	1
H98Y	34	Supporting Children and Young Peoples Behaviour	7	8	1
H990	34	Supporting Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs	7	8	1
H993	34	Play	7	8	1
H992	34	Supporting Contemporary Families	7	8	1
H9PL	34	Supporting our Youngest Children 0–3	7	8	1
H9PM	34	Working with Children 3–6	7	8	1
H9PN	34	Working with Children 6–8	7	8	1
H9PP	34	Working with Children 8–12	7	8	1
F9D9	34	Administration of Medication	7	8	1

The qualification is at SCQF level 7. This reflects the level of knowledge required to develop practice and provides a foundation for further study of Childhood Practice at SCQF level 8 and 9. This award will replace the 2004 HNC Early Education and Childcare.

## 3 Aims of the qualification

The principle aim of the HNC Social Services: Childhood Practice is to prepare learners to work effectively in a wide range of Childhood Practice settings.

### 3.1 General aims of the qualification

The general broad aims of the HNC qualification include:

- 1 Developing transferable skills including Core Skills
- 2 Developing personal effectiveness
- 3 Developing critical and evaluative thinking
- 4 Developing problem solving skills
- 5 Enabling progression within SCQF including progression to HE
- 6 Providing opportunities for career planning and enhancing employment prospects

## 3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

The main aim of the HNC is to provide an integrated course of values, skills and knowledge to equip learners to work effectively in a range of care settings. It also aims to provide an award flexible enough to meet the needs of employers, hence the inclusion of National Occupational Standards (three SVQ Units).

Optional Units have been developed to meet the varying demands and needs of the sector and to provide, continuous professional development opportunities.

The specific aims are:

- 1 To enable learners to demonstrate an understanding of the values and principles which underpin work in social services: childhood practice settings.
- 2 To enable learners to understand how the National Care Standards and SSSC Codes of Practice inform their working practices.
- 3 To enable learners to integrate knowledge, theory and practice effectively in a variety of childhood practice settings.
- 4 To enable learners to develop skills appropriate for working with a range of individuals in childhood practice settings.
- 5 To enable learners to have an individual and person centred focus in their practice.
- 6 To assist learners to practice in an anti-discriminatory manner.
- 7 To prepare learners for employment in a childhood practice and to develop the skills of existing workers.
- 8 To enable learners to critically evaluate their practice and to be reflective practitioners.
- 9 To enable learners to develop a working knowledge of current legislation, policy, guidance and practice methods.
- 10 To enable learners to engage in continuous professional development.
- 11 To facilitate progression (for those who wish) to higher education.

## 3.3 Graded Unit

The Graded Unit is a project the purpose of which is to confirm learner's competence across each of the mandatory Units in the award with a focus on the option Units selected in their area of specialism.

Prior to commencing the assessment for the Graded Unit learners must have successfully achieved a pass mark for each of the Unit assessments contained in the mandatory section of the HNC.

- ◆ Develop an understanding of interdisciplinary connections between the various element of the Higher National Certificate
- ◆ Develop an open-minded, critical and evaluative approach to study
- ◆ Demonstrate the ability to relate theory to practice

Learners are required to demonstrate their ability to relate theories which underpin their practice. Completion of the mandatory Units should enable them to consider topics essential to practice which they can then relate to their investigation in their Graded Unit assessment and provide a research base.

## 4 Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team as guidance only.

Applicants should have an understanding that sound childcare values and good communication skills are essential for working and delivering good quality early learning and childcare. Communication skills may be demonstrated through the achievement of certificated courses, Core Skills *Communication* at Higher level, Higher English or other communication Units at SCQF level 5 or 6. Alternatively, applicants can be deemed to be at the appropriate level by references preferably from employers and/or through verbal and/or written evidence at interview.

It is preferable, but not essential, that applicants have some experience of working in Early Learning and Childcare settings.

New learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more qualifications SCQF at level 5 or 6 (or equivalent from other awarding bodies) in a related area.

### 4.1 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification.

The information should be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Within the HNC there are opportunities to enhance the Core Skills of:

*Communication* at SCQF level 6

*Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* at SCQF level 6

*Working with Others* at SCQF level 6

*Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	5	Research Project, Case Study, Reflective Account of Practice, Practical Assignment
Numeracy	5	Research Project, Practical Assignment
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	5	Research Project, Case Study, Reflective Account of Practice, Practical Assignment
Problem Solving	5	Research Project, Case Study, Reflective Account of Practice, Practical Assignment
Working with Others	5	Research Project, Case Study, Reflective Account of Practice, Practical Assignment

## **5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs**

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the Units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the Unit standards with those defined in National Occupational Standards and Scottish Social Services Council requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.



## 5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to Units

### General Aims

Code	Unit title	Aims										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
H8MN 34	Care in Contemporary Society	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H8KC 34	Leadership Starts with Me	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H8MM 34	Health Wellbeing and Safeguarding	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H8WM 34	Lifespan Development Theoretical Approaches	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H5LC 04	Promote effective Communication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H5LD 04	Promote Health Safety and Security in a Work Setting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H5LE 04	Develop your Practice through Reflection and Learning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H9PR 34	Graded Unit 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H98X 34	Support Play Learning and Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DF53 34	Facilitating Playwork Opportunities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H991 34	Promoting Language Literacy and Numeracy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H994 34	Collaborative Working	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H995 34	Strategies for Child Health	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H98Y 34	Supporting Children and Young people's Behaviour	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H990 34	Supporting Children and Young people with Additional Support Needs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Code	Unit title	Aims										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
H993 34	Play	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H992 34	Supporting Contemporary Families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H9PL 34	Supporting our Youngest Children 0–3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H9PM 34	Working with Children 3–6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H9PN 34	Working with Children 6–8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H9PP 34	Working with Children 8–12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## 5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS) Social Services Children and Young People

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standard				
H8MN 34	Care in contemporary Society	SCDCCLD0309 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0306 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0313 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0317 underpinning knowledge	
H8KC 34	Leadership Starts with Me	SCDCCLD0301 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDHSC0033 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0308 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0306 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0316 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence
H8MM 34	Health Wellbeing and Safeguarding	SCDHSC0032 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0034 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0307 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0308 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0319 underpinning knowledge
H8WM 34	Lifespan Development Theoretical Approaches	SCDCCLD0303 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0309 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0307 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0313 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0316 underpinning knowledge
H9PR 34	Graded Unit 1	SCDCCLD0301 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDHSC0032 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0033 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0034 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	
H98X 34	Support for Play Learning and Development	SCDCCLD0303 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0309 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0310 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence		
DF53 34	Facilitate Playwork Opportunities	SCDCCLD0316 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0321 underpinning knowledge			

<b>Code</b>	<b>Unit title</b>	<b>National Occupational Standard</b>				
H991 34	Promoting Language Literacy and Numeracy	SCDCCLD0309 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0310 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0345 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0347 underpinning knowledge	
H994 34	Collaborative Working	SCDCCLD0303 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0034 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0313 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0331 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0339 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence
H995 34	Strategies for Child Health	SCDCCLD0324 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence				
H98Y 34	Supporting Children and Young people's Behaviour	SCDCCLD0308 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0312 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0325 underpinning knowledge	SCDCCLD0336 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	
H990 34	Supporting Children and Young people with Additional Support Needs	SCDCCLD0321 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0325 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0312 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence		
H993 34	Play	SCDCCLD0303 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0306 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence			

<b>Code</b>	<b>Unit title</b>	<b>National Occupational Standard</b>				
H992 34	Supporting Contemporary Families	SCDHSC0034 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0306 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0313 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDHSC0315 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0317 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence
H9PL 34	Supporting our Youngest Children 0–3	SCDCCLD0303 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0308 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0312 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0314 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	
H9PM 34	Working with Children 3–6	SCDCCLD0303 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0306 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0309 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence		
H9PN 34	Working with Children 6–8	SCDCCLD0316 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0321 underpinning knowledge			
H9PP 34	Working with Children 8–12	SCDCCLD0316 underpinning knowledge and practice evidence	SCDCCLD0321 underpinning knowledge			

### 5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

Core Skill/Core Skill components are signposted, which means learners will be developing aspects of Core Skills through teaching and learning approaches but not enough to attract automatic certification.

Unit code	Unit title	Communication		Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Think	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
H8MN34	Care in Contemporary Society	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H8KC34	Leadership starts with Me	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H8MM34	Health Wellbeing and Safeguarding	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H8WM34	Lifespan Development Theoretical Approaches	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H5LC04	Promote Effective Communication	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H5LD04	Promote Health, Safety and Security in the Work setting	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H5LE04	Develop your Practice through Reflection and Learning	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H9PR34	Graded Unit 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Unit code	Unit title	Communication		Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written	Oral	Number	Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Think	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
H98X34	Support for Play Learning and Development	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DF5334	Facilitate Playwork opportunities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H99134	Promoting Language Literacy and Numeracy	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H99434	Collaborative Working	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H99534	Strategies for Child Health	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H98Y34	Supporting Children and Young people's Behaviour	✓	✓	N/A	N.A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H99034	Supporting Children and Young people with Additional Support Needs	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H99334	Play	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H99234	Supporting Contemporary Families	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Unit code	Unit title	Communication		Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written	Oral	Number	Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Think	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
H9PL34	Supporting our Youngest Children 0–3	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H9PM34	Working with Children 3–6	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H9PN34	Working with Children 6–8	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
H9PP34	Working with Children 8–12	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



## 5.4 Assessment Strategy for the qualification(s)

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Care in Contemporary Society	Integrated Research Project	Integrated Research Project	Integrated Research Project	
Leadership Starts with Me	Case study	Case study	Case study	Reflective Account
Lifespan Development Theoretical Approaches	Concept/mind map for each stage of human development	Case study	Case study	N/A
Health Wellbeing and Safeguarding	Research Project	Research Project	Research Project	N/A
Promote Effective Communication	Reflective Account + written work from Unit assignments	N/A	N/A	N/A
Promote Health, Safety and Security in the Work Setting	Reflective Account + written work from Unit assignments	N/A	N/A	N/A
Develop your Practice through Reflection and Learning	Reflective Account + written work from Unit assignments	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graded Unit 1	Project-based investigation	Project-based investigation	Project-based investigation	N/A
Support for Play Learning and Development	Case Study	Case Study	Observed Practice and candidate reflection.	N/A
Facilitate Playwork Opportunities	Case Study	Case Study	Case Study	N/A
Option Units Unit assessments integrated with mandatory Units				

## **6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment**

The HNC is made up of 4 mandatory credits, 1 Graded Unit credit, 1 Specialist Optional credit, 3 optional credits and 3 SVQ Unit credits. Learners undertaking the HNC should be in an Early Learning and Childcare setting for a minimum of 60 days during the course — either as a learner ‘on placement’ or if employed, their own workplace.

The HN Units will provide underpinning knowledge for Units of the SVQ 3 in Social Services (Children and Young People) — guidance on the appropriate connections are to be found in the support notes for the individual HN Units.

There is flexibility in the order in which the HN Units can be delivered, however it is suggested that centres consider opportunities for integration.

The principle of ‘integrated or holistic assessment’ is fundamental to all HNCs. The work learners undertake for a particular HN Unit may not solely link with this Unit alone and similarly, any one task undertaken in a childhood practice setting will provide evidence of skills and knowledge for more than one of the HN or SVQ Units.

While each HN Unit has very specific Evidence Requirements and assessment guidance, we strongly recommend that where overlaps between Units occurs an assessment from one Unit should be deemed to meet some or all the Evidence Requirements from other linked Units. Otherwise, learners will be over-assessed.

The purpose of the Graded Unit is to assess the learner’s ability to retain and integrate the values, skills and knowledge gained in the mandatory Units; to assess that the learner has met the principal aims of the Group Award; and to grade learner achievement.

The portfolio of evidence for the three SVQ Units should be kept by the learner in order for them to progress to the full SVQ. It is also advisable for learners to keep copies of all the HN assessments (in the portfolio) as these will contribute to knowledge and possibly some practice evidence for further SVQ Units.

### **6.1 Sequencing/integration of Units**

Delivery of the four mandatory Units should form the first part of the HNC Award, and be successfully completed prior to learners commencing assessment for the Graded Unit. The Graded Unit assessment is a project-based assignment; this takes the form of a Practical Assignment, which may then provide evidence for the vocational Units, which form an integral part of the Group Award.

### **6.2 Recognition of Prior Learning**

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full Group Award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full Group Award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of Units and assessments:

- ◆ HN Graded Units
- ◆ Course and/or external assessments
- ◆ Other integrative assessment Units (which may or not be graded)
- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the Unit
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an Assessment Strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA Unit(s) may contribute to this Group Award. Additionally, they also outline how this Group Award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

### **6.2.1 Articulation and/or progression**

The HNC Childhood Practice is subject to approval by the Social Services Council as a practitioner level qualification. The qualification may assist learners to articulate into related undergraduate degree programmes at level 8 or PDA Childhood Practice at level 8 and then 9. Learners need 120 credits at level 7 in order to progress to level 8. Extra options within the HNC qualification can be chosen to make up credits or transition arrangements may be made via the offering University or the centre offering the level 8 and 9 awards.

### **6.2.2 Professional recognition**

This award is subject to approval by the Scottish Social Services Council and is recognised as a practitioner qualification for registration.

### **6.2.3 Transitional Arrangements**

Due to the substantial changes in the new HNC which has resulted in a change of title and a new Group Award there are no transitional arrangements. Learners undertaking the current HNC Early Education and Childcare (G7CX 15) will have two years to complete from the validation date of the new qualification.

### **6.2.4 Credit transfer**

If a learner has achieved a pass for existing Units in the optional section of the new qualification credit transfer will be given. Credit transfer will also be given for the SVQ Units within the mandatory section for two years from the validation date of the new qualification for learners that have achieved the SVQ Units from the SVQ 3 Health and Social Care awards.

### **6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment**

The mandatory Units will be delivered primarily on a face-to-face basis, SVQ Units in a workplace/placement setting. The nature of the qualification does not make it suitable for distance/e-learning as much of the focus within the Units is based on team and collaborative working practices. However there is scope to use on line portfolio building tools as a means for candidate's to gather evidence for some assessments; this will be at the discretion of the centre.

### **6.4 Support materials**

Assessment Support Packs will be developed for all the mandatory Units in the new HNCs. The assessment support packs can be located on the SQA Secure site.

### **6.5 Resource requirements**

It is recommended that centres have appropriate current knowledge and understanding of Childhood Practice services in order to deliver this HNC. Centre staff should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Unit contents and have current relevant evidence of CPD they should hold also a qualification relevant to the areas of the award they will deliver.

Those delivering assessment and internal verification for the SVQ Units contained in the award are required to be qualified in line with the assessment strategy for SVQ Social Services (Children and Young People).

The Assessment Strategy requires those who are working predominantly within the social services sector to hold a registerable qualification for the area and level of practice to be assessed however, assessors are not required to register with the SSSC.

It is the responsibility of the centre, to ensure that assessors have achieved, or are working towards, a registerable qualification as defined by SSSC, in the area of practice they are assessing. In addition, the assessor must hold qualifications equivalent to, or above, the level of award they are assessing and in the relevant area of practice.

The SSSC website provides a list of registerable qualifications for each area of practice.

If an assessor does not meet the above requirement, they must plan to work towards a listed qualification within the agreed timescale of three years stated within the Assessment Strategy.

Centres should be equipped with the relevant equipment/resources to meet the in-room training delivery. In order to meet the practical element of the course centres must be able to provide appropriate placement experience for learners.

## 7 General information for centres

### Equality and inclusion

The Unit specifications making up this Group Award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will 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).

### Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* ([www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment)).

## 8 Glossary of terms

**Embedded Core Skills:** is where the assessment evidence for the Unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the Unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the Unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

**Finish date:** The end of a Group Award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the Group Award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ learners may not be entered for the Group Award
- ◆ the Group Award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

**Graded Unit:** Graded Units assess learners' ability to integrate what they have learned while working towards the Units of the Group Award. Their purpose is to add value to the Group Award, making it more than the sum of its parts, and to encourage learners to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

**Lapsing date:** When a Group Award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ the Group Award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue
- ◆ the Group Award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived
- ◆ no new centres may be approved to offer the Group Award
- ◆ centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the Group Award during the defined lapsing period

**SQA credit value:** The credit value allocated to a Unit gives an indication of the contribution the Unit makes to an SQA Group Award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA Unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

**SCQF:** The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk).

**SCQF credit points:** SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

**SCQF levels:** The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

**Subject Unit:** Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

**Signposted Core Skills:** refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

# History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA’s APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up to date qualification structure.

**NOTE:** Where a Unit is revised by another Unit:

- ◆ No new centres may be approved to offer the Unit which has been revised.
- ◆ Centres should only enter learners for the Unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the Unit before its finish date.

Version Number	Description	Date

## 9 General information for learners

This section will help you decide whether this is the qualification for you by explaining what the qualification is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the qualification and opportunities for further learning and employment.

The HNC Childhood Practice Award is suitable for those seeking to work as a practitioner in the Early Learning and Childcare sectors as well as being suitable for those currently employed in this role.

This is a major revision of the HNC Early Education and Childcare Award validated in 2004 and this revision, has been initiated as part of the desire to widen access to employment opportunities in the Childhood Practice area that are a result of the changing needs of the sector. This has resulted in a change of title and new Group Award.

This new HNC in Childhood Practice offers you the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills, which will enable you to work in a wider range of childhood settings. The Scottish Social Services Council published the Qualifications Criteria for Registration of Early Education and Childcare Workers in March 2004. The HNC Social Services Childhood practice Award has been identified as appropriate for practitioners and achievement of this qualification will allow you to register with the SSSC.

The award shares a common core of Units with the new revised HNC Social Services at SCQF level 7. One of the main features of the common core is to afford you the opportunity to develop common knowledge and skills reflected in the revised National Occupational Standards while recognising areas of specialism, which are further developed in award specific Units.

The Evidence Requirements and Assessment Guidance allow you a greater variety of Optional Units, selected to take account of the variety of job roles. In addition the choice of Options also provides areas of learning which would be suitable as stand-alone Units for Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

This Group Award is made up of 12 SQA Unit credits. It comprises of a minimum 96 SCQF credit points of which 68 are at SCQF level 7 in the mandatory section including a Graded Unit of 8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7. Within the award Core Skill components are signposted, which means you will be developing aspects of Core Skills through teaching and learning approaches but not enough to attract automatic certification.

The main aim of the HNC is to provide an integrated course of values, skills and knowledge to equip you to work effectively in a range of care settings. It also aims to provide an award flexible enough to provide continuous professional development opportunities.



Specific aims are:

- 1 To enable you to demonstrate an understanding of the values and principles which underpin work in social services: childhood practice settings.
- 2 To enable you to understand how the National Care Standards and SSSC Codes of Practice inform their working practices.
- 3 To enable you to integrate knowledge, theory and practice effectively in a variety of childhood practice settings.
- 4 To enable you to develop skills appropriate for working with a range of individuals in childhood practice settings.
- 5 To enable you to have an individual and person centred focus in their practice.
- 6 To assist you to practice in an anti-discriminatory manner.
- 7 To prepare you for employment in a childhood practice and to develop the skills of existing workers.
- 8 To enable you to critically evaluate their practice and to be reflective practitioners.
- 9 To enable you to develop a working knowledge of current legislation, policy, guidance and practice methods.
- 10 To enable you to engage in continuous professional development.
- 11 To facilitate progression (for those who wish) to higher education.

Applicants should have an understanding that sound childcare values and good communication skills are essential for working and delivering good quality early learning and childcare. Communication skills may be demonstrated through the achievement of certificated courses, Core Skills *Communication* at Higher level, Higher English or other communication Units at SCQF level 5 or 6. Alternatively, applicants can be deemed to be at the appropriate level by references preferably from employers and/or through verbal and/or written evidence at interview.

It is preferable, but not essential, that applicants have some experience of working in Early Learning and Childcare settings.

New learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more qualifications SCQF at level 5 or 6 (or equivalent from other awarding bodies) in a related area.

The HNC Childhood Practice is subject to approval by the Scottish Social Services Council and is a recognised practitioner qualification. The qualification may allow learners to articulate into BA Childhood Practice at level 8 and then 9 or PDA Childhood Practice at level 8 and then 9. Learners need 120 credits at level 7 in order to progress to level 8. Extra options within the HNC qualification can be chosen to make up credits or transition arrangements can be made via the offering University or the centre offering the level 8 and 9 award.