

NCFE

CACHE

Guidance on reflective practice and placement

**For second year
students**

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Introduction

Welcome to our programme. As you begin your second, and potentially final year of study, for an Early Year's Educator qualification, you may find that placement opportunities have been interrupted due to Covid-19.

This document has been developed to help you to reflect on your placement experience, the knowledge and skills that you have acquired so far and the links that you have been able to make between theoretical learning and practical experience.

Use the box below to reflect on your placement experience. It may help you to try and remember a typical day in the setting, what sorts of things would you do in the morning, and later throughout the day, for example?

| Activity | Reflection |
|----------|------------|
| | |

Becoming a reflective practitioner

You may have heard the term 'reflective practitioner' before, or it may be something that is new to you. Being a reflective practitioner means being able to analyse, evaluate and learn from your experiences at work or in placement, building from your existing knowledge and make changes to the way you work, in order to improve your practice. A reflective practitioner will enhance children's experiences, improve outcomes for children and their families and motivate and inspire colleagues; and all of these rich qualities contribute to high quality early years provision.

Find out more about the importance of high quality early years here:

www.dera.ioe.ac.uk/8543/7/SSU-SF-2004-01.pdf

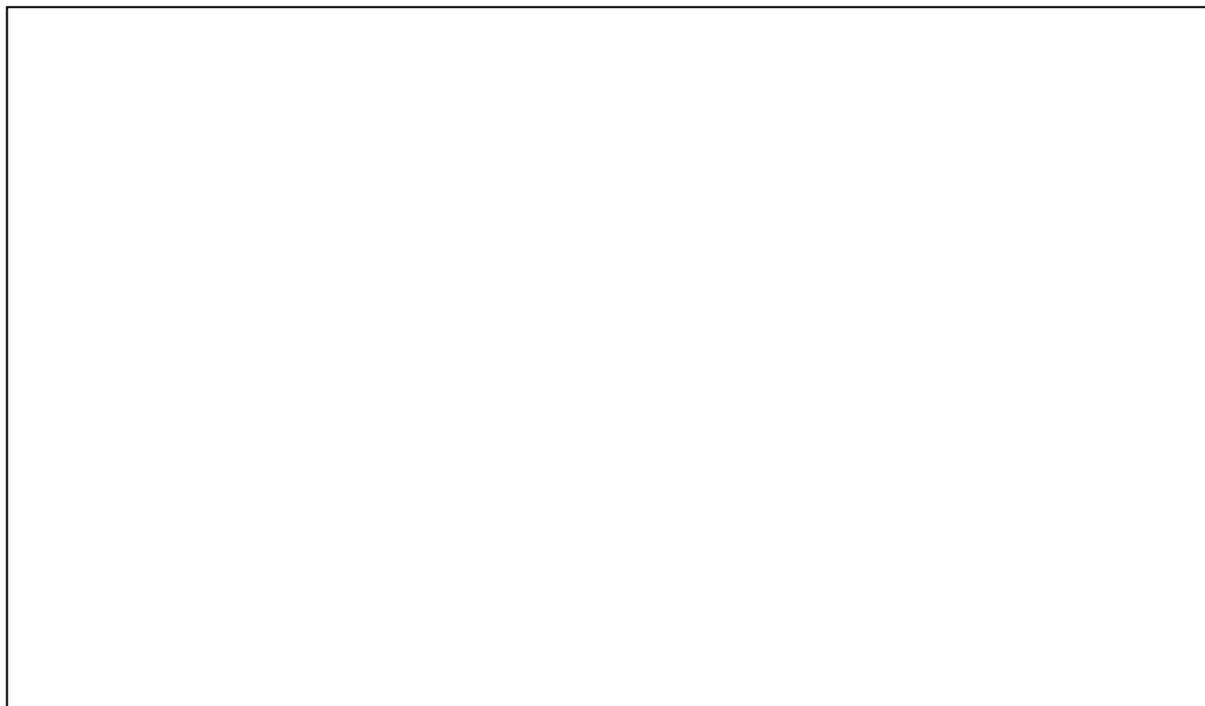
Enabling environments, embed effective characteristics of learning in the early years including the influence of theoretical and philosophical approaches to play

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn, and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

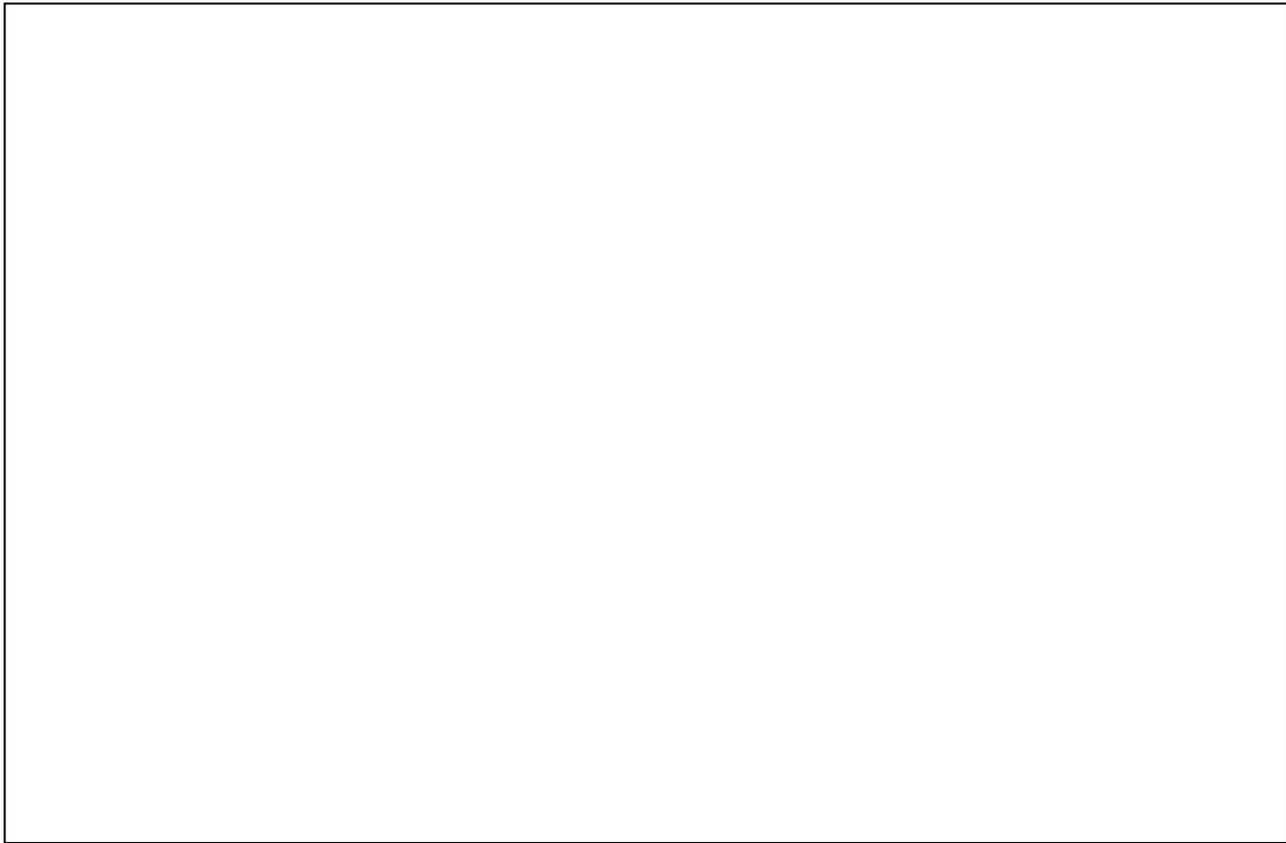
Activity

Reflect on the findings of the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project and the characteristics of effective learning from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), to list examples where you have seen high quality practice in your own placement experience.

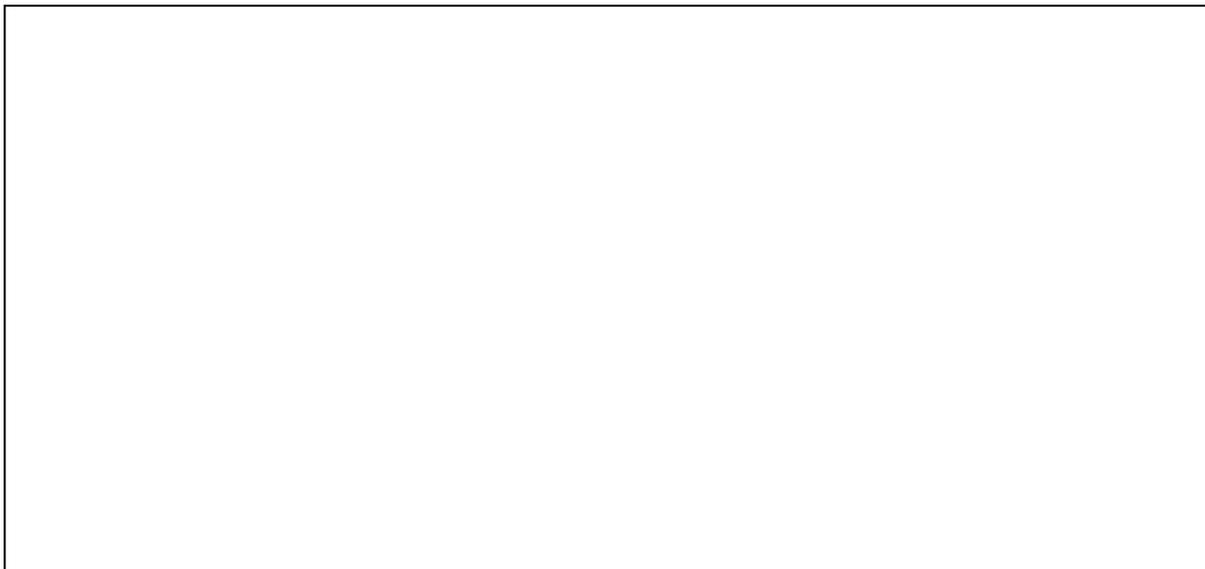


You may also be learning about different philosophical approaches to early years care and education. These different approaches have influenced the way we work with babies and young children. Below are some of the approaches that you may have heard of in class or in placement. You may find out more about these in your second year, so this will be a useful introduction if they are new approaches to you. Try to find out about the approaches and summarise your learning in a brief outline.

- Reggio Emilia
- Montessori
- Steiner
- MacMillan
- Forest School
- Te Whariki



Think about your own placement experience, can you see any characteristics of these approaches embedded and/or evident in your placement experience?



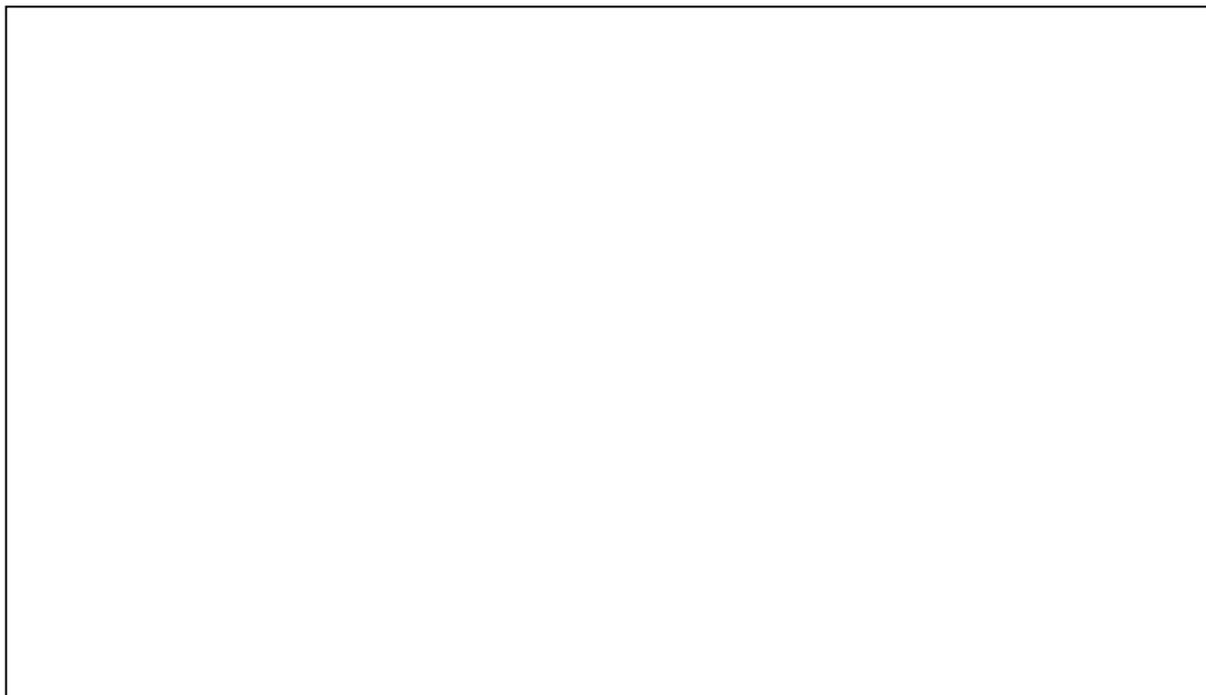
Theoretical models of reflection and how these can be used in early years

As we have already considered, a reflective practitioner will need to take time to think about the changes they need to make in order to improve practice as well as extend own professional development. There are many different theoretical models; two are identified below. Models for reflection are often used to help provide structure; in these cases, a sequential or cyclic approach to reflection, enabling a process for reflection to be established.

- Schon
- Gibbs

Find out about the models introduced by both Schon and Gibbs and summarise your new learning in the box below:

Select a model of reflection; you can use Schon or Gibbs or a different model if you prefer, and illustrate the cycle here:



Career aspirations

Now that you are in your second year, you will need to reflect on your next steps. You may have decided that you want to go straight to employment or you may be thinking about further study. It is also okay if you haven't yet decided what you would like to do next. The following activity may support you, whatever stage you are at, in planning your next steps.

Here is a link to a career map www.cache.org.uk/media/1417/dfe-career-pathway-map-v17.pdf developed by early years professionals. Use this to help you think about planning your next steps and any actions you will need to take. This will help to support you in your exciting career journey.

Introducing CACHE Alumni

No matter what stage you are at in your studies or what your career aspirations might be, being a member of CACHE Alumni will help keep you up-to-date with the early years sector.

CACHE Alumni is an online membership network which includes articles from leading professionals in the early years sector to support your learning and development in the sector. It also contains other useful features, such as a CV builder, a job finder tool, careers guidance, e-learning and podcasts.

It's free to join CACHE Alumni and is suitable for you as a learner as well as when you qualify as a practitioner.

To become a member of CACHE Alumni, follow the link below.

www.cachealumni.org.uk/Public/Join-Us/Public/Join/Membership_Join_Us.aspx?hkey=86c6893b-bca4-4871-a937-4664b8a02263

We hope that you will be able to begin attending placement again soon, please take care and stay safe. In the wider reading section you will find a range of links and one is all around the necessary steps placements are taking in order to keep everyone in early year's settings safe and well. Please make sure you stay safe.

Finally, well done on all that you achieved so far on your study programme. As a second year student you have already gained so much knowledge and skills that will support you as you enter into the next stage of your journey, there will be new topics to study, some may be challenging and we would like to encourage you in this stage of your studies.

At CACHE we are very proud of our students, and we would like to wish you every best wish for the future in this amazing career, thank you for making a positive difference to the early years workforce.

Wider reading

EYFS statutory framework:

www.assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf

Guidance for teachers, school leaders, carers, parents and students.

www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare

EPPE:

www.dera.ioe.ac.uk/8543/7/SSU-SF-2004-01.pdf

Career map: www.cache.org.uk/media/1417/dfc-career-pathway-map-v17.pdf

CACHE Alumni: [www.cachealumni.org.uk/Public/Join-](http://www.cachealumni.org.uk/Public/Join-Us/Public/Join/Membership_Join_Us.aspx?hkey=86c6893b-bca4-4871-a937-4664b8a02263)

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