NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education

QN: TBC

This qualification is currently under regulatory review.
The draft specification is provided for reference only and must not be used for teaching purposes.



Qualification Specification

Qualification summary

Qualification title	**NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education**
Ofqual qualification number (QN)	XXX/XXXX/X
Guided learning hours (GLH)	240
Total qualification time (TQT)	260
Duration	1 year
Minimum age	16
Qualification aim	This qualification is designed for learners aged 16 to 19 years who want to build confidence and foundational knowledge in education and learning environments before progressing to level 3 study. It develops learners' knowledge, understanding and skills to support learning in a range of work-related contexts, while helping them build confidence in applying these skills to simulated practical work-related activities, preparing them for progression to level 3 study in a related subject area, such as V Levels, T Levels or A levels.
Grading	Pass/merit/distinction/unclassified (P/M/D/U)
Assessment method	40% Assessment by examination (AbE) 60% Non-exam assessment (NEA)
Synoptic assessment	This qualification includes synoptic assessment across the AbE and NEA, requiring learners to draw together knowledge, understanding and skills from across the full course of study.
Work/industry placement experience	Work/industry placement experience is not required for this qualification.
Performance points	Please check the performance points data produced by the Department for Education (DfE).
Funding	Foundation Certificates are funded qualifications. For further guidance on funding, please contact your local funding provider.
Subject content	This qualification has been developed to align with the DfE Education Level 2 Foundation Certificate subject content, July 2026.

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Section 1: introduction

Please note this is a draft version of the Qualification Specification and is likely to be subject to change before the final version is produced for the launch of the qualification.

A Foundation Certificate is a level 2 vocational qualification, aimed at preparing learners for progression to level 3 study through applied, work-related learning. This qualification's specific size reflects the teaching and learning required for the subject. It forms part of a wider study programme, which may also include English and maths where required.

Centres must ensure they are using the most recent version of the Qualification Specification on the NCFE website.

Aims and objectives

This qualification aims to:

- provide learners with nationally agreed knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to education and learning environments
- develop learners' ability to apply knowledge, understanding and skills to practical work-related activities
- build learners' confidence and readiness to progress to level 3 study, such as V Levels, T Levels or A levels.

The objectives of this qualification are:

- investigate the role of a professional in education
- plan learning activities, including learning goals and assessment opportunities, for learners at different stages
- communicate effectively and promote inclusive practice within learning environments
- interpret assessment information and complete risk assessments to inform decisions and support safe, effective learning environments.

Literacy, numeracy and digital skills

Learners must continue to develop literacy, numeracy and digital skills through applying them in the context of the themes in Section 2. These skills are developed through delivery of the mandatory teaching content and are not assessed separately.

Literacy

Learners will develop literacy skills, including:

- planning, recording, interpreting and evaluating information
- writing professional documents (plans, proposals, reports, risk assessments)
- communicating clearly using written, oral and visual methods
- using subject-specific vocabulary appropriately.

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Numeracy

Learners will develop numeracy skills, including:

- calculating resource requirements and time allocations
- interpreting quantitative data related to assessment and progress
- comparing risks, results and trends
- using numerical evidence to support planning and recommendations.

Digital

Learners will develop digital skills, including:

- producing, organising, storing and retrieving digital content
- using digital tools for planning, communication and reporting
- researching information digitally
- communicating using digital technologies.

Key theories and principles

Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of the key theories and principles which support effective practice in the subject, including:

- developmentally appropriate practice, planning and delivering learning that is suited to learners' age, stage and individual development
- outcome-based learning and SMARTER (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Evaluated and Reviewed) goal-setting, using clear, specific learning goals to guide teaching, learning and assessment
- learning principles, enabling learners to actively engage, explore, collaborate and reflect
- assessment for learning (AfL), using formative, summative, diagnostic and comparative assessment to inform progress and next steps
- education inclusivity and equality of opportunity, designing learning that removes barriers and supports participation for all learners
- purposeful and professional communication, sharing information clearly, ethically and appropriately with different audiences
- reflective and evidence-based practice, using data, records and feedback to evaluate practice and improve outcomes
- health, safety and risk management, identifying hazards and managing risk to ensure safe learning environments
- sustainable and responsible resource use, minimising waste through thoughtful planning and resource management
- digital literacy and technology-enhanced practice, using digital tools to plan, communicate, assess and support learning effectively.

The aspects listed above are indicative of the scope and intent of the qualification and are not intended to be exhaustive.

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Guidance for entry and registration

This qualification is designed for learners aged 16 to 19 who wish to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in education and learning environments.

It may also be useful to learners studying qualifications in the following sectors/areas:

- early years, childcare and child development
- teaching and learning
- health and social care
- playwork
- youth work.

Registration is at the discretion of the centre in accordance with equality legislation and should be made on the NCFE Portal.

There are no specific prior skills/knowledge a learner must have for this qualification. However, learners may find it helpful if they have already achieved a level 1 qualification in a similar subject area.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that all learners are capable of achieving the knowledge, understanding and skills within all themes of this qualification and complying with the relevant literacy, numeracy, and health and safety requirements.

Learners registered on this qualification should not undertake another qualification at the same level, or with the same/a similar title, as duplication of learning may affect funding eligibility.

Achieving this qualification

To be awarded this qualification, learners must complete the required teaching content within the mandatory themes, undertake all required assessments and meet the qualification's grading requirements.

Please refer to the list of themes in Appendix A or the themes and assessment guidance in Section 2 for further information.

Age range covered by the qualification

The age range covered by this qualification is from birth through to adult learning.

Progression

Learners who achieve this qualification could progress to the following:

- further education:
  - V Levels (Level 3 V Level in Education)
  - T Levels (Level 3 T Level in Education and Early Years)
  - A levels to support with the progression to higher level studies in Education or Early Years
  - appropriate apprenticeship progression at level 2 or level 3.

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Staffing requirements

Centres delivering any of NCFE's qualifications must:

- have a sufficient number of appropriately qualified/experienced assessors to assess the volume of learners they intend to register
- have a sufficient number of appropriately qualified/experienced internal quality assurers (IQAs) to internally quality assure the anticipated number of assessors and learners
- ensure that all staff involved in assessment and internal quality assurance are provided with appropriate training and undertake meaningful and relevant continuing professional development (CPD)
- implement effective internal quality assurance systems and processes to ensure all assessment decisions are reliable, valid, authentic, sufficient and current – this should include standardisation to ensure consistency of assessment
- provide all staff involved in the assessment process with sufficient time and resources to carry out their roles effectively.

The centre must ensure that individuals undertaking assessor or quality assurer roles within the centre conform to the specified assessment requirements.

Knowledge-based content:

- assessors will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make assessment decisions
- IQAs will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make quality assurance decisions.

Competence/skills-based content:

- assessors will need to be both occupationally competent and qualified to make assessment decisions
- IQAs will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make quality assurance decisions.

Resource requirements

There are no mandatory resource requirements for this qualification, but centres must ensure learners have access to suitable resources to enable them to cover all the appropriate subject topics.

Work/industry placement experience

Work/industry placement experience is not required for this qualification.

How the qualification is assessed

Assessment is the process of measuring a learner's knowledge, understanding and skills against the standards set in a qualification.

This qualification uses a combination of centre-marked assessment with controlled external quality assurance and external assessment.

The assessments for this qualification are synoptic, which allows learners to:

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- demonstrate the ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, understanding and skills from across the full course of study
- develop responses which allow them to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning – or an equivalent logical sequence, depending on the nature of the task – which is coherent, relevant and effectively structured
- demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in response to authentic, vocationally related contexts and scenarios.

All learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for controlled external quality assurance must be in English.

Non-exam assessment (NEA)

The NEA within this qualification is externally set and centre marked, with NCFE completing controlled external quality assurance. Centres are not permitted to adapt NEA tasks.

The NEA will assess the learner's ability to respond to complex and novel situations, drawing on knowledge from all themes. Learners should not undertake an NEA until the relevant themes have been delivered.

The NEA encourages learners to combine elements of their learning and demonstrate accumulated knowledge, understanding and skills. This enables learners to show their ability to integrate and apply knowledge, understanding and skills with both breadth and depth.

The NEA must be supervised and assessed by the tutor. The NEA will be completed in normal class time within scheduled assessment hours and kept separate from any teaching and learning hours. Information on specific assessment conditions and assessment hours will be available in the NEA brief.

To support delivery, specimen assessment materials for the NEA are available on the NCFE website.

Assessment by examination (AbE)

The AbE within this qualification is a set date and time (invigilated) examination. NCFE specifies the exact date and time that the external assessment must be administered in the centre. It is administered under specified assessment conditions.

The AbE draws upon the following:

- Theme 1 Learning, curriculum and education
- Theme 2 Assessment in education
- Theme 3 Communication in practice
- Theme 4 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)
- Theme 5 Health, safety and safeguarding.

The AbE material will be sent out by NCFE in time for the start of the assessment. Assessment materials must be kept secure at all times. NCFE marks the AbE. The AbE result contributes to the learner's overall qualification grade.

For further information, centres should refer to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment and Qualification Specific Instructions for Delivery (QSID) documents, available on the NCFE website.

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Controlled external quality assurance

This qualification is subject to a controlled external quality assurance (EQA) model, providing enhanced oversight and scrutiny. All centres will be subject to a structured external review of assessment and internal quality assurance decisions using standardised sampling, ensuring that all results are reviewed and confirmed prior to their release.

Centres must submit final grades for the NEA by the published deadline and upload the requested learner evidence and assessment records for the selected sample through NCFE systems. Any actions identified through the EQA process must be addressed before results are confirmed where required. Ongoing monitoring will also be undertaken to identify and address any emerging risks to assessment validity and consistency.

Enquiries about results

All enquiries relating to learners' results must be submitted in line with our Enquiries about Results and Assessment Decisions Policy, which is available on the NCFE website.

Unclassified grade

Learners who do not achieve a pass will receive an unclassified (U) result.

External assessment conditions

To access the external assessment, centres must ensure that learners are booked for the external assessment through the NCFE Portal.

Please refer to the Assessment Timetable on the NCFE website for specific dates.

For instructions on conducting external assessments, please refer to our Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment and QSID documents, available on the NCFE website.

Resubmission of non-exam assessments (NEAs)

Learners will have one resubmission opportunity for the NEA. The resubmission could be used to:

- achieve a pass grade
- improve an existing grade.

Feedback to learners can only be given to clarify areas where they have not achieved a minimum or expected level of performance. Learners cannot receive any guidance on how to improve work to meet the requirements of the assessment. It is the centre's responsibility to keep the evidence of the learner's original and revised work submitted, and records of the initial grade, assessor feedback, and final grade, for controlled external quality assurance purposes.

If a learner fails to meet the pass criteria following the resubmission with revised evidence, the learner has no retake opportunity for the NEA.

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Retakes of assessment by examination (AbE)

AbE is available in Series 1. There are no retake opportunities for the AbE.

Refresh of assessments

To reduce predictability and maintain assessment integrity, assessment scenarios will vary between series and will be set within a range of realistic educational contexts. Learners will encounter different key learning stages, educational settings and inclusion requirements, ensuring that assessments cannot be anticipated.

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Scheme of assessment

The following table summarises this qualification's scheme of assessment including raw marks and uniform mark scale (UMS) points.

Assessment	Assessment time	Mandatory/ Optional	Delivery mode	Assessment weightings	Raw marks	UMS	Assessment conditions	Marking
AbE	1 hour 30 minutes	Mandatory	Paper-based or on screen	40%	60	80	Invigilated	Externally marked
NEA	10 hours 30 minutes	Mandatory	Digital delivery	60%	N/A	120	Supervised	Centre marked and controlled external quality assurance
Assessment total	12 hours			100%	60	200		

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Assessment objectives (AOs)

The following table outlines the AOs for this qualification and defines each one.

AOs	Definition
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts, principles, statutory requirements and approaches to teaching and learning in education.
AO2	Apply contextualised knowledge and understanding of concepts, principles, statutory requirements and approaches in education.

Assessment objective (AO) weightings

The following table shows the weighting allocated to each AO within the assessment.

AOs	Weighting (%)
AO1	20%
AO2	80%

Grading information

Assessment of this qualification is graded as pass, merit and distinction. Learners who do not achieve a pass will receive an unclassified (U) result.

Uniform mark scale (UMS) scores are used to standardise performance across assessments. For each assessment, only the highest UMS score from any repeated attempts is used, and high performance in one area can compensate for lower performance in another.

This compensatory approach, combined with the use of a UMS, means that the boundaries for individual assessments do not directly add up to the overall qualification boundaries. This allows learners to balance weaker performance in one area with stronger performance in another. For instance, a high score in the AbE can offset lower scores in the NEA.

The overall grade issued to a learner for the Foundation Certificate will be based on the aggregation of UMS points for each of the two assessment components and the overall UMS grade boundaries, which are set at fixed percentages of the maximum UMS.

The maximum UMS points available for each assessment and the qualification, as well as the UMS points relating to each grade boundary, will be fixed according to the table below:

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The table below shows the grade boundaries for each assessment.

Grade boundary	AbE		NEA		Overall	
	%	UMS	%	UMS	%	UMS
Max	100	80			100	200
Distinction	80	64	90	108	80	160
Merit	60	48	70	84	60	120
Pass	40	32	50	60	40	80

The table below shows the overall qualification grade boundaries.

Grade boundary	UMS points
Pass	80
Merit	120
Distinction	160

To accompany results release, NCFE will publish information to support centre understanding of results.

NCFE does not anticipate any changes to our aggregation methods or any overall grade thresholds; however, there may be exceptional circumstances in which it is necessary to do so to secure the maintenance of standards over time. Therefore, overall grade thresholds published within this Qualification Specification may be subject to change.

Requirements for referencing

Carefully selected quotations must be included to support learners' own responses within each of the NEAs. Quotations must be made identifiable through the use of quotation marks, bold or italic text and made traceable through referencing at the point of use.

Group and collaborative working

Group and collaborative activities may be used to support the delivery of the qualification content and provide opportunities for learners to develop and apply knowledge, skills and behaviours in a collaborative environment.

For live assessments, centres must follow the instructions provided in the centre guidance and assessment materials, specific to the version of the assessment being delivered. These instructions will define any permitted collaboration, supervision requirements and the nature of evidence that learners are expected to produce.

Plagiarism and use of artificial intelligence (AI)

Work submitted for assessment must be the learner's own work. Using AI to produce work that is then submitted as the learner's own work is malpractice and will have clear consequences under NCFE's malpractice/plagiarism policy.

Centres must have clear AI and malpractice policies in place and communicate these to learners before assessment begins. These policies must outline acceptable and unacceptable uses of AI, define what constitutes malpractice, and explain the consequences of misuse.

Centres must implement appropriate supervision, monitoring and controls over access to digital devices, AI tools and internet connectivity to ensure assessment integrity, maintain the authenticity of learner evidence and help prevent malpractice.

Centres should be alert to indicators of AI use and are required to use suitable plagiarism detection tools as part of their internal quality assurance processes to identify potential misuse of AI and ensure the authenticity of learner evidence.

Detection tools may provide indicators of potential malpractice, but their results should not be relied upon in isolation. Any decision regarding malpractice should be based on a review of all relevant evidence, taking account of the potential for false positive and false negative outcomes.

Any suspected malpractice must be investigated in accordance with the centre's malpractice policy. Centres must report suspected or actual malpractice to NCFE in accordance with NCFE's malpractice and maladministration policy and associated procedures.

Further information can be found on the NCFE website and in Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) published guidance.

Guidance on delivering sensitive content

When learners engage with sensitive topics, for example safeguarding, centres should:

- recognise the sensitivity of subject content:
  - acknowledge that some topics may evoke strong emotional responses and require careful handling
- equip staff with appropriate training and support:
  - ensure educators are prepared to deliver sensitive content with empathy, awareness, and access to clear support protocols
- foster a safe and supportive learning environment:
  - create spaces where learners feel comfortable discussing sensitive issues, and ensure clear signposting to pastoral care, counselling, or mental health services
- monitor and respond to learner's wellbeing:
  - actively observe learners during and after sessions that cover sensitive content and be ready to offer or refer learners to appropriate support services where needed.

Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and paper modifications

These policies are aimed at anyone who uses our products and services and who submits requests for access arrangements, reasonable adjustments or paper modifications. Learners who require access arrangements, reasonable adjustments or paper modifications should discuss their requirements with their tutor.

For more information, please visit the Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and paper modifications page on the NCFE website.

Section 2: themes and assessment guidance

This section provides details of the structure and content of this qualification, including the grading scale, and guided learning hours (GLH), mandatory teaching content and teaching guidance.

Information in the teaching content section must be covered by the tutor during the delivery of the themes.

Anything within the teaching guidance is advisory and optional and is intended to provide useful advice and guidance to support delivery of the teaching content.

To make cross-referencing assessment and quality assurance easier, we have used a sequential numbering system in this document for each theme. The numbering system used refers to a theme, subject topic, and teaching content: (for example, 1.1.1 refers to the theme (first number 1), the subject topic within that theme (second number 1.1) and the teaching content within the subject topic (third number 1.1.1)). This will support signposting feedback and tracking.

While studying the qualification, learners should identify and develop a range of individual study skills they can use in order to study effectively.

The glossary in Section 3 must be used in conjunction with the teaching content throughout this Qualification Specification. It provides definitions and clarification of key terms used within the qualification and is intended to support a consistent understanding and interpretation of the content. Centres must refer to the glossary when planning, delivering and assessing the qualification.

Delivery guidance

For further information or guidance about this qualification, please contact our Customer Support team.

Centres delivering both the **NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN)** and the **NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN)** may wish to consider co-teaching approaches where content area is similar across both qualifications. The content mapping in this Qualification Specification identifies areas where there is alignment between the Foundation Certificate and Occupational Certificate content.

The mapping is intended to support centres in identifying potential opportunities for co-teaching and learning. However, co-teaching is not a requirement, and centres must ensure that all qualification content and assessment requirements for each qualification are fully delivered and met. Details of the potential areas of alignment and content crossover can be found in the content mapping document in **Appendix B.**

The mapping identifies the learning references within the Foundation Certificate that align to the themes in the Occupational Certificate. This will support centres in identifying co-delivery opportunities where Foundation and Occupational Certificate learners are taught within the same classroom environment. It is important, however, to recognise the broader scope of the Foundation Certificate and ensure that learners continue to develop knowledge and understanding of educational provision across the full age range covered by the qualification.

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Theme 1 Learning, curriculum and education

Theme summary		
Exploring how individuals learn through relevant educational curriculum from birth through to adult learning. This theme highlights key considerations for practice, including planning for educational outcomes.		
Assessment		
Assessment by examination (AbE) and non-exam assessment (NEA).		
Mandatory Teaching content must be covered by the tutor during the delivery of this qualification.	**Level 2**	**60 GLH**

Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must know and understand:
1.1 The UK education system and key learning stages	1.1.1 The key learning stages in the UK education system: • early years foundation stage (EYFS) • primary school (key stage 1 and 2) • secondary school (key stage 3 and 4) • post-16 provision
	1.1.2 The importance of using specific learning goals in designing learning activities for all students: • expected early learning goals within the statutory framework and areas of learning and development from birth to 5 years • goals related to areas of learning and development within the national curriculum • goals in post-16 and adult education
1.2 Learning activities and approaches	1.2.1 The different types of learning activities: • acquisition • inquiry-based • collaborative • practical • production • technology-based, for example digital learning tools
	1.2.2 The purpose and suitability of different types of learning activities for different learning stages; the use of: • teacher-centred activities • student-initiated activities • collaborative activities • interactive activities • technology-based activities
	1.2.3 Sources of information needed to design a learning activity: • student profile • group/class profile • learning goal requirements • any resource requirements and constraints

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Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must know and understand:
1.3 Resources and sustainable resource planning	1.3.1 Resources needed for learning activities: • equipment • technology • materials • staffing • required space • time available for the activity
	1.3.2 The importance of designing learning activities to minimise waste including ways to: • refuse • reduce • reuse • repurpose • recycle

Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must be able to:
1.4 Learning activities and approaches	1.4.1 Identify and interrogate relevant sources of information to plan learning activities
1.5 Communication and planning	1.5.1 Apply written communication skills to plan learning activities
	1.5.2 Apply numeracy skills to calculate resource requirements for learning activities
	1.5.3 Apply digital skills to create a plan for learning activities by producing, organising, storing and retrieving digital content
1.6 Planning learning activities	1.6.1 Plan learning activities which: • are suitable for the learning stage • use appropriate resources • align with the learning goal(s) • use assessment method(s) to evidence learning has taken place
1.7 Resources and sustainable resource planning	1.7.1 Identify ways to minimise waste in the use of resources when planning learning activities

Teaching guidance
This teaching guidance supports delivery of the mandatory teaching content. While it provides examples, these are not exhaustive.
1.1 The UK education system and key learning stages
1.1.1 Key learning stages refers to the stages of education in England's education system.
1.1.1 to 1.1.2 Before learners can be introduced to educational curriculum they will benefit from an awareness of key milestones and changes in holistic development from birth to 16 years of age. Areas of development to include: • physical development • cognitive development

Teaching guidance

- language development
- social development
- emotional development.

Learners should appreciate the holistic nature of development and how one area links to others.

Early years foundation stage (EYFS)

Learners should:

- know about the aims and function of the statutory framework for the EYFS
- explore types of settings across the early years workforce and how these are staffed, recognising the different roles and responsibilities held by early years professionals
- be familiar with the seven areas of learning in the early years statutory framework, the EYFS:
  - recognising that these areas are arranged as prime and specific areas of learning with an understanding of holistic opportunities when planning for children from birth to 5 years
- know about the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and be able to identify opportunities for these to be planned for within activities and experiences for babies and children at different stages in their development
- identify statutory assessment requirements including the two-year check and the EYFS profile completed at the end of the reception year, being familiar with the Early Learning Goals
- appreciate how children are prepared for transition to key stage 1 and being mindful of children's holistic needs.

National curriculum

Learners should:

- know about the aims and function of the national curriculum
- identify staff employed in primary and secondary school provision, recognising their role and responsibilities
- identify key stages and year groups from key stage 1 to key stage 4 and have an awareness of learning requirements at each key stage
- be able to use the national curriculum for focused planning at each key stage and in each subject area.

Post-16 and adult education study

Learners should:

- know about choices for continued learning post-16, where learners can seek advice, and the types of provision; for example:
  - further education and apprenticeships with an understanding of the different types of qualifications such as technical vocational, V Levels and A levels
- understand the importance of child-/student-centred, inclusive learning across all areas.

1.2 Learning activities and approaches

1.2.1 and 1.2.2 Learners should be familiar with a range of different types of learning which will raise their confidence concerning how children learn and how they acquire learning with examples of each of the different types.

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Teaching guidance

The purpose and suitability of different types of learning activities for different learning stages can be explored including the use of:

- teacher-centred activities
- student-initiated activities
- collaborative activities
- interactive activities
- technology-based activities.

Learners should feel able to apply the different types of learning to activities/experiences with children and young people as appropriate.

Types of learning to include:

- acquisition, for example:
  - cognitive reasoning
  - schematic development (building from what we already know, attaching new learning to existing learning)
  - comprehension and analysis
- inquiry-based, for example:
  - discovery
  - exploration and problem-solving through a student-/child-centred approach promoting critical thinking and executive functioning
- collaborative, for example:
  - social experiences such as structured group work to share thoughts, views and opinions towards a shared goal/outcome with discussion and evidence of collaborative problem-solving
- practical, for example:
  - learning by discovery
  - application of knowledge through direct experience and confidence gained through competence of knowledge application in real-life situations using appropriate tools
- production, for example:
  - demonstrating an appreciation of applied knowledge and understanding through presentations
  - reports
  - project-based learning
- technology-based, for example:
  - using and applying digital learning tools.

Learners should be able to consider the types of learning experiences that are relevant to students at different stages in their educational journey. The different types of learning activities include:

- teacher-centred:
  - structured activities to meet a specific outcome or learning/developmental need
- child-/student-initiated:
  - allowing for decision-making, choice of activity and direction to be made by the child/student
  - this allows for formative assessment such as observation, giving time for children to practice and refine new skills, for example, children in a nursery setting may be observed during child-initiated play evidencing learning and developmental skills which will guide the early years professional in next steps planning
- collaborative:
  - allowing children/students the opportunity to work together, to share ideas and problem solve through shared experiences

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Teaching guidance

- interactive:
  - providing opportunities for group discussion, games, role-play and practical experiential activities rather than relying on more passive techniques where children/students listen to structured teacher-led activity
- technology-based activities:
  - allowing the use of appropriate, accessible and suitable technology within activities to support different learning stages.

1.2.3 Learners can begin to explore activity/experience planning applying their knowledge of the EYFS and the national curriculum. When planning learners should be aware of factors relevant to the planning process:

- student profile:
  - what we know about the child/student
- group/class profile:
  - what we know about the group, including ages, abilities and need:
    - areas of the curriculum to be planned for
    - stage and content coverage
- learning goals required:
  - purposeful aims and objectives
- any resource requirements including constraints:
  - equipment and materials to be used
  - safety features.

1.3 Resources and sustainable resource planning

1.3.1 and 1.3.2 Planning for all educational activities and experiences should take into account sustainable ways of working. The way in which activities and experiences are designed should reflect sustainable practice. Consideration should consistently be given to minimising waste, reduce materials where possible, the opportunity to reuse, repurpose and recycle. When learners are planning their activities, they should demonstrate that sustainable practice has been taken into account and clearly identify this within their plans to:

- refuse safe and sustainable waste disposal
- reduce the amount of resources used
- reuse resources wherever possible
- repurpose resources for new use
- recycle materials as appropriate.

Planning should clearly show that the resources have been developed to support full participation and that there are sufficient resources for the number of children the activity has been designed for.

Learners should consider the different ways to reduce waste when planning educational activities such as only cutting out the question to glue into an exercise book rather than glueing in a whole sheet of paper or providing digital copies of support material that learners can access rather than printouts.

Learners to consider natural or biodegradable resources they could use such as pinecones, wood or recycled paper.

1.4 Learning activities and approaches

1.4.1 Learners should be able to use research skills to identify relevant information from a range of sources, specifically linked to the educational curriculum in order to help them interpret and inform approaches to planning learning activities.

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Teaching guidance
1.5 Communication and planning

1.5.2 Apply numeracy skills to calculate resource requirements for learning activities, for example:
 	
• interpretation of data:
  ○ interpreting information from child observations or pupil attainment to inform accurate planning
  ○ calculate the amount of resources needed based on child participation, ratio of group or pupil attainment to inform accurate planning
  ○ learners could interpret a child's performance within a group based on their level of attainment using a table to generate evidence for the child based on observation.

1.6 Planning learning activities
1.6.1 Learners could plan a specific activity that includes the learning stage suitable for the ages and stage of the child, the resources that support the activity, the purpose of the activity and what assessments will take place to evidence learning.
1.7 Resources and sustainable resource planning
1.7.1 Document resources needed for learning activities: • equipment • technology • materials • staffing • required space • time available for the activity.

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Transferable skills

The following transferable skills have been integrated into the content for work-related purposes:

- planning:
  - researching learning stages, setting learning goals, sequencing activities, selecting assessment methods, allocating resources and completing risk assessments to ensure learning is purposeful, safe and appropriate
- data interpretation:
  - learner profile information, learning contexts, assessment data and risks by identifying key features, recognising patterns and prioritising information to inform planning, inclusion strategies and recommendations
- investigating:
  - identifying and interrogating relevant sources, including statutory frameworks, learner information, assessment records and health and safety guidance, to inform planning and decision-making
- evidence-based decision-making:
  - selecting learning activities, assessment approaches, communication techniques, inclusion strategies, control measures and recommendations to support student progress
- communicating:
  - effectively sharing information accurately and professionally using written, oral, visual and digital methods, adapting language, tone and format to suit different audiences and purposes
- learners should continue to develop literacy, numeracy and digital skills through their application within the context of achieving the theme.

Work-related behaviours

Work-related behaviours that may be demonstrated through engagement with this theme, but not expected to be assessed, include:

- perceptive
- reflective
- focused.

DRAFT

Theme 2 Assessment in education

Theme summary		
Considering how different approaches to assessment support educational progress at different stages across education.		
Assessment		
Assessment by examination (AbE) and non-exam assessment (NEA).		
Mandatory Teaching content must be covered by the tutor during the delivery of this qualification.	**Level 2**	**60 GLH**

Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must know and understand:
2.1 Assessment in methods in education	2.1.1 The main types of assessment used in the education sector: • formative • summative • diagnostic • comparative
	2.1.2 Assessment methods used to confirm learning goals have been met: • observation • questioning • student-led reflection • starter assessment compared to plenary assessment • reviewing outputs, for example reports, answers or artefacts
2.2 Assessment information, records and data	2.2.1 The difference between quantitative and qualitative information, records and data
	2.2.2 Types of information, records and data used in the assessment of learning: • observation notes • written results • marks/scores • audio/video recordings • digital records • reports
	2.2.3 The role of different types of assessment information, records and data to provide: • quantitative or qualitative results • stand-alone results or results over a period • comparative results with others • comparative results against students' previous work • baseline information
2.3 Interpreting assessment information	2.3.1 How to interpret information, data and records, including: • the identification of patterns and trends • summarising results • determining the most relevant aspects to focus on when making recommendations to maximise student progress

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Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must know and understand:
	2.3.2 How to make recommendations to maximise student progress by providing focused actionable feedback which highlights both strengths and areas for improvement and is linked to expected goals

Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must be able to:
2.4 Interpreting assessment information	2.4.1 Interpret given information, records and data related to students' performance
	2.4.2 Apply numeracy skills when interpreting quantitative data
	2.4.3 Propose next steps in learning based on the interpretation of given information, records and data
	2.4.4 Apply communication skills to make recommendations which will support students to maximise their progress
	2.4.5 Apply digital skills to make recommendations by producing, organising, storing and retrieving relevant digital content

Teaching guidance

This teaching guidance supports delivery of the mandatory teaching content. While it provides examples, these are not exhaustive.

2.1 Assessment methods in education

2.1.1 Learners should be able to describe how the following are used:

- formative:
  - ongoing
  - consolidation of learning
  - where are the children/young people up to in their learning
- summative:
  - a final or evaluative conclusion following a period of learning
- diagnostic:
  - finding a level
  - often establishing the needs of an individual in a specific area of learning to be able to plan appropriately
- comparative:
  - comparing data, for example previous results in order to identify patterns and trends.

2.1.2 Assessment methods including how the following methods support teachers and professionals to draw conclusions about child/student level or stage of development. The methods should include:

- observation:
  - how observation of children can inform professionals of what a child knows, their needs and interests, strengths and areas to build from
- questioning:
  - the use of open and closed questioning to support knowledge acquisition, for check and challenge, retrieval and recall
- child-/student-led reflection:
  - reviewing learning, revising and recapping to support consolidation of learning
- starters and plenaries:

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Teaching guidance
○ summaries of learning to recap as introductions or plenaries offered through innovative well organised reflections to aid recall and support consolidation • reviewing outputs: ○ time to reflect on the quality of learning, the effectiveness of learning best gauged from reports, answers or artefacts (presentations/project-based work).
2.2 Assessment information, records and data
2.2.1 Learners should understand the difference between quantitative and qualitative information, records and data, including: • quantitative: ○ numerical data • qualitative: ○ considering the experience, views and perceptions of individuals.
2.2.2 Learners should be able to outline different types of information, records and data used in the assessment of learning, including: • observation notes: ○ making notes on child/young person's engagement during free play or structured lesson planning in order to draw conclusion and stage and interest to inform next steps • written results/marks/scores: ○ tests and achievements in submitted work – typically recorded as digital records • audio/video recordings: ○ to show competence especially useful for presentations and/or capturing discussions • reports: ○ summaries of individual attainment, offering feedback and support to promote next steps/renewed focus.
2.2.3 Applying the learning undertaken learners should be able to discuss the role of different types of assessment information, records and data, including to provide: • quantitative or qualitative results • stand-alone results or results over a period • comparative results with others • comparative results against students' previous work • baseline information.
2.3 Interpreting assessment information
2.3.1 Learners to consider/interpret and draw conclusions based on student data, for example: • the identification of patterns and trends • summarising results Determining the most relevant aspects to focus on when making recommendations to maximise student progress.
2.4 Interpreting assessment information
2.4.1 to 2.4.3 Learner should be able to apply numeracy skills when interpreting quantitative data that help draw conclusions from research. Learners will be able to use this information to help them make decisions and consider planning based on this information and include recommendations to maximise student progress and areas for improvement linked to expected goals.

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Teaching guidance
Learner should be able to propose next steps in learning based on the interpretation of given information, records and data that meets the curriculum for the relevant age and stage of development.
2.4.4 Learner to communicate the recommendations which will support student progress.
2.4.5 Learners should be able to apply digital skills to make recommendations by producing, organising, storing and retrieving relevant digital content.

Transferable skills

The following transferable skills have been integrated into the content for work-related purposes:

- communicating:
  - effectively sharing information accurately and professionally using written, oral, visual and digital methods, adapting language, tone and format to suit different audiences and purposes
- evidence-based decision-making:
  - selecting learning activities, assessment approaches, communication techniques, inclusion strategies, control measures and recommendations to support student progress
- recording:
  - accurately documenting learning plans, communication records, inclusion proposals, risk assessments and assessment interpretations using structured written and digital formats.
- observing:
  - monitoring learning contexts, identifying hazards, recognising student needs and interpreting evidence of student progress
- learners should continue to develop literacy, numeracy and digital skills through their application within the context of achieving the themes.

Work-related behaviours

Work-related behaviours that may be demonstrated through engagement with this theme, but not expected to be assessed, include:

- perceptive
- reflective
- focused.

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Theme 3 Communication in practice

Theme summary		
Investigating a range of communication methods for effective partnership working and information sharing in education		
Assessment		
Assessment by examination (AbE) and non-exam assessment (NEA).		
Mandatory Teaching content must be covered by the tutor during the delivery of this qualification.	**Level 2**	**30 GLH**

Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must know and understand:
3.1 Communication in partnership working	3.1.1 The different individuals that educators interact with: • parents • carers • wider family • agencies and services that support parents and carers • colleagues within the same education setting • industry professionals outside of the education setting
3.2 Communication methods	3.2.1 Communication techniques used to communicate purposefully: • verbal • visual • written methods • use of technology
	3.2.2 The ways to ensure communication is purposeful: • being clear • being concise • being courteous • using active listening techniques • being aware of the audience • being aware of the effect of non-verbal communication
	3.2.3 The ways to demonstrate active listening to communicate purposefully: • paying attention • allowing others to speak • responding rather than just delivering information
	3.2.4 The different non-verbal communication techniques: • body language • facial expression • eye contact • personal space • professional appearance

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Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must know and understand:
3.3 Applying communication skills	3.3.1 Why it is important to identify the context of any communication: • who the communication is with • where the communication is taking place • how the communication takes place • any relevant prior communication or background
3.4 Barriers to communication	3.4.1 Potential barriers to purposeful communication, the impact of these barriers and ways to overcome them: • language differences • using jargon • using technical language • cultural differences • physical conditions (for example, hearing impairment) • providing too much information
3.5 Action planning	3.5.1 How to set specific learning goals: • use of SMARTER (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Evaluated and Reviewed) criteria • student-centred goals • use of action verbs • limiting the number of goals

Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must be able to:
3.6 Applying communication skills	3.6.1 Identify the context of a given communication scenario: • who the communication is with • what information is required and why
	3.6.2 Identify appropriate communication techniques to share required information
	3.6.3 Communicate purposefully with different individuals through the use of visual, oral and written communication methods to share required information
	3.6.4 Apply digital skills to support purposeful communication by producing, organising, storing and retrieving digital content

Teaching guidance
This teaching guidance supports delivery of the mandatory teaching content. While it provides examples, these are not exhaustive.
3.1 Communication in partnership working
3.1.1 Learners should know about the professional relationships they will build and maintain when working in the education sector. It will be useful for learners to consider the difference between a personal and a professional relationship as well as the characteristics of effective, professional teamwork. Learners should be able to identify the range of individuals, professionals, agencies and services that educational professionals work alongside, for example: • parents and carers: ○ this may relate to children who are looked after, childminders, foster families

Teaching guidance

• wider family members:
  ○ others who are related to the child/ student
• agencies and services outside of the setting as appropriate to the age and individual needs of the student/child, for example:
  ○ health professionals
  ○ speech and language therapists
  ○ youth workers
  ○ health visitors
  ○ general practitioners (GPs)
  ○ social workers
  ○ colleagues usually work alongside each day including those that hold specialist roles such as designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO).
 	
Learners should be confident identifying professionals and be able to outline their role and the importance of professional relationships with others for the best outcomes for the student/child.

3.2 Communication methods
3.2.1 Learners should be able to identify and use a range of communication techniques, including: • verbal • visual • written methods • use of technology.
3.2.2 Learners should appreciate the importance of clear, concise effective communication that demonstrates courtesy when working in educational settings, both written and verbal, including when to use different types of communication for different purposes. Learners should be able to describe the importance of and apply techniques of active listening. Learners should be aware of the potential effects of non-verbal communication. Learners to consider confidentiality when sharing information or communicating.
3.2.3 Learners could practice active listening techniques. They could work in pairs with a given scenario to relay information that their 'partner' must recall and then change places. This will lead to a discussion to consider how effective listening can be seen in communication interactions such as paying attention, allowing others to speak, responding rather than just delivering information.

3.2.4 Learners should understand the power of non-verbal communication techniques, including:
 	
• body language:
  ○ the impression given of positive and negative body language and the impact this can have
• facial expression:
  ○ how messages can be conveyed through facial expression – both positive and negative
• eye contact:
  ○ how using eye contact can help to hold attention and convey meaning during communication and interactions
• personal space:
  ○ the importance of not being too close to the other individual which may leave them feeling overwhelmed, anxious or intimidated
• professional appearance:
  ○ the impression we give from our professional appearance including personal hygiene
  ○ clothing is also a consideration and should be appropriate for the work that we are involved in.

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3.3 Applying communication skills

3.3.1 Building on the learning in this content area and increasing study skills learners will be able to consider:

Why it is important to identify the context of any communication, including:

- who the communication is with
- where the communication is taking place
- how the communication takes place
- any relevant prior communication or background
- confidentiality in sharing information.

3.4 Barriers to communication

3.4.1 Case studies and scenarios can help learners to gain knowledge and understanding as well as practice skills development of communication and these can be extended to help learners discuss potential barriers in communication, the impact from any barriers and ways that these may be overcome. Potential barriers to include:

- language differences
- jargon
- technical language
- cultural difference
- physical conditions such as hearing or sight impairment
- overwhelming by giving too much information at once
- learners could be given extracts to read that use different aspects of communication to help them understand the barriers, for example an extract that uses jargon and acronyms that the learner has to explain.

3.5 Action planning

3.5.1 Learners can build on their knowledge of development, curricula and learning types to consider the impact of learning. This could start with a revision of educational expectations/goals and assessment in both early years, primary and secondary from previous learning.

A straightforward way to approach goal setting is for learners to consider action planning using the SMARTER model. Learners may use case study examples to consider the effectiveness of creating child-/student-centred goals that follow the SMARTER format and do not overload the child/student. It is often advisable to prioritise one or two goals to maintain motivation and engagement. Competence-based goals using action verbs, such as ‘be able to’, are also useful.

3.6 Applying communication skills

3.6.1 Learners should consider who the information can be shared with and why.

Learners could link who they can communicate information with about the student to those listed in 3.1.1.

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Transferable skills

The following transferable skills have been integrated into the content for work-related purposes:
 	
• communicating:
  ○ effectively sharing information accurately and professionally using written, oral, visual and digital methods, adapting language, tone and format to suit different audiences and purposes
• self-managing:
  ○ organising own work, managing time across tasks, reviewing own plans and proposals, and refining outcomes through evaluation and reflection
• learners should continue to develop literacy, numeracy and digital skills through their application within the context of achieving the themes.

Work-related behaviours
Work-related behaviours that may be demonstrated through engagement with this theme, but not expected to be assessed, include: • perceptive • reflective • focused • self-confident • professional.

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Theme 4 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

Theme summary		
Implications of equality, diversity and inclusion for purposeful learning, motivation and engagement.		
Assessment		
Assessment by examination (AbE) and non-exam assessment (NEA).		
Mandatory Teaching content must be covered by the tutor during the delivery of this qualification.	**Level 2**	**30 GLH**

Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must know and understand:
4.1 Frameworks, guidance and professional practice	4.1.1 Why statutory frameworks related to inclusion are important: • the early years foundation stage (EYFS) • the special education needs and disabilities (SEND) code of practice • the Equality Act 2010
	4.1.2 How guidance and approaches support inclusive practice, including: • the role of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) • Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
4.2 Principles of inclusive learning	4.2.1 Why inclusion is important when designing learning activities
	4.2.2 How inclusion is applied when delivering learning activities to meet the needs of diverse learners
4.3 Strategies for supporting inclusion	4.3.1 Ways to support inclusion when delivering learning activities: • presenting content in different formats • allowing students to demonstrate understanding in different ways • varying activities • using accessible language and scaffolding learning • making use of different media • making use of digital tools and assistive technology • identifying and removing physical barriers • providing necessary resources and support

Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must be able to:
4.4 Frameworks, guidance and professional practice	4.4.1 Investigate information in guidance and frameworks in relation to supporting inclusion in learning
4.5 Principles of inclusive learning	4.5.1 Investigate given information about learning activities and students in relation to supporting inclusion in learning
4.6 Strategies for supporting inclusion	4.6.1 Propose ways to support inclusion for specific learning activities for specific students or groups of students
	4.6.2 Apply communication skills to propose ways to support inclusion for specific learning activities for specific students or groups of students

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Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must be able to:
	4.6.3 Apply digital skills to propose ways to support inclusion by producing, organising, storing and retrieving digital content

Teaching guidance
This teaching guidance supports delivery of the mandatory teaching content. While it provides examples, these are not exhaustive.
4.1 and 4.4 Frameworks, guidance and professional practice
4.1.1, and 4.4.1 Learners should be able to identify legislation underpinning the role of professionals working in education: • Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015) • The Equality Act 2010 • the EYFS and the requirements surrounding inclusive practice • the Children's Wellbeing and School Act 2026. Learners should be confident using the legislation and guidance to explain how policies in education influence the role of the professional in education, using examples to support their understanding inclusion. The Children's Wellbeing and School Act 2026 will put children and their wellbeing at the centre of the education and children's social care systems and make changes so that every child has a fulfilling childhood enabling them to achieve and thrive. The act will remove barriers to opportunity and raise school standards to ensure the school system is fair for every child, no matter their background and will deliver manifesto commitments on children's social care to ensure that all children can thrive in safe, loving homes.
1.1.2 Learners should explore how the following organisations promote guidance and approaches to support inclusive practice, including: • the role of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) • Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
4.3 and 4.6 Strategies for supporting inclusion
4.3.1 and 4.6.1 Learners should understand the meaning of inclusion and how it can be applied in activities/lesson planning to meet the needs of diverse learners. Learners should be introduced to and explore with examples of ways to support inclusion of children and young people: • presenting content in different formats • allowing students to demonstrate understanding in different ways • varying activities • using accessible language and scaffolding learning • making use of different media • making use of digital tools and assistive technology.
4.6.2 Learners should consider how communication skills can be applied to propose ways to support inclusion for specific learning activities and in order to meet the needs of individuals. Learners should

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Teaching guidance
be able to explain the importance of communication to relay information, to ensure the child/young person understands what is being required and how to recognise when a child/young person is struggling with the task and adapt communication strategies appropriately.
4.6.3 Learners should be aware that digital skills have a role to play to support inclusion in education. Learners should know about how digital skills can be applied to propose ways to support inclusion by producing, organising, storing and retrieval of digital content.

Transferable skills

The following transferable skills have been integrated into the content for work-related purposes:

- planning:
  - researching learning stages, setting learning goals, sequencing activities, selecting assessment methods, allocating resources and completing risk assessments to ensure learning is purposeful, safe and appropriate
- data interpretation:
  - learner profile information, learning contexts, assessment data and risks by identifying key features, recognising patterns and prioritising information to inform planning, inclusion strategies and recommendations
- investigating:
  - identifying and interrogating relevant sources, including statutory frameworks, learner information, assessment records and health and safety guidance, to inform planning and decision-making
- observing:
  - monitoring learning contexts, identifying hazards, recognising student needs and interpreting evidence of student progress
- communicating:
  - effectively sharing information accurately and professionally using written, oral, visual and digital methods, adapting language, tone and format to suit different audiences and purposes

- learners should continue to develop literacy, numeracy and digital skills through their application within the context of achieving the themes.

Work-related behaviours

Work-related behaviours that may be demonstrated through engagement with this theme, but not expected to be assessed, include:

- perceptive
- inclusive
- responsive.

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Theme 5 Health, safety and safeguarding

Theme summary		
Principles of safeguarding for children and young people. This content area considers features of health and safety relevant to an educational context.		
Assessment		
Assessment by examination (AbE) and non-exam assessment (NEA).		
Mandatory Teaching content must be covered by the tutor during the delivery of this qualification.	**Level 2**	**60 GLH**

Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must know and understand:
5.1 Safeguarding, confidentiality and information sharing	5.1.1 Why safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection are important when sharing student information
	5.1.2 When confidentiality may need to be breached
	5.1.3 How consent is obtained and used
5.2 Understanding components of health and safety	5.2.1 The importance of the legal requirement of employers to protect employees, and others, from harm including the existence of the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
	5.2.2 The definition of a risk
	5.2.3 The definition of a hazard
	5.2.4 The purpose of risk assessment in education: • to identify hazards to health and safety • evaluate the risk of harm resulting from those hazards • take appropriate action to protect employees, students, and visitors
	5.2.5 The components of a risk assessment document: • what the hazards are • who might be harmed • what controls are in place • what further controls are needed • who is responsible for this
	5.2.6 Controls used to minimise risks: • removing the hazard • reducing exposure • use of personal protective equipment (PPE) • training in relation to use of equipment and other materials and equipment maintenance

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Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must know and understand:
	5.2.7 Main hazards to consider when setting up indoor learning activities: • equipment • materials • sharp objects • small objects that can be a choking hazard for children • furniture and fixtures • electrical services

Subject topic	Teaching content The learner must be able to:
5.3 Safeguarding, confidentiality and information sharing	5.3.1 Identify what information can or cannot be shared
5.4 Applying risk assessments	5.4.1 Complete risk assessment documentation
	5.4.2 Observe learning activities to apply the process of risk assessment, identifying hazards and assessing risk
	5.4.3 Apply communication skills to convey results of risk assessment
	5.4.4 Apply digital skills to convey the results of risk assessment by producing, organising, storing and retrieving digital content

Teaching guidance
This teaching guidance supports delivery of the mandatory teaching content. While it provides examples, these are not exhaustive.
5.1 and 5.3 Safeguarding, confidentiality and information sharing
5.1.1, 5.1.2 and 5.3.1 Learners should be able to recognise situations requiring sensitive interactions, it is important that records are maintained and confidentiality is upheld as appropriate and that learners are aware of when confidentiality must be breached. This is a legal requirement of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Learners should be able to identify situations when confidentiality needs to be breached in the best interests of the child/young person. It may be useful to include examples of when information can be shared and when it must not. When and how to share information with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the referral process to follow. Knowledge of policies and procedures for child protection will support learners to understand the critical role of intervention following disclosure or when a child or young person is at risk or in actual harm. Challenging situations require sensitive intervention and often demand courageous and curious conversations. Safeguarding, specifically child protection is one such example. The professional working in education must always put the child/young person's safety at the centre of everything that they do. Learners should be aware of their role to safeguard children and young people in education.
5.1.3 It will be useful for learners to know how consent is defined in the Department for Education (DfE) non-statutory guidance for information sharing – the UK GDPR sets a high standard for consent to be used as a lawful basis; it must be specific, freely given, unambiguous, time limited and capable of being withdrawn by the individual at any time. Learners must be aware that such conditions of choice are unlikely to be present in situations where practitioners have a professional duty to record information irrespective of the wishes of the child or their family, safeguarding the child or young

Teaching guidance
person is paramount and when in doubt practitioners must follow safeguarding policies and procedures.
5.2 Understanding components of health and safety
5.2.1 Learners must be able to identify relevant legislation relevant to health and safety in education: the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. Learners should know that there is legislation that exists for employers to protect employees and others from harm – The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Learners to be made aware of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website including Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) and Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).
5.2.2 to 5.2.7 Learners should explore health and safety policies across education, being able to define the terms hazard and risk with examples, such as a fallen chair is a hazard leading to a risk of someone tripping or falling. Learners must be confident with the process of risk assessment, its purpose and function for keeping children and young people safe. Learners should be able to confidently explain: • how risk assessments are used • how they can minimise risk • how they can evaluate harm. Learners will do this by explaining how a risk assessment: • identifies hazards to health and safety • evaluates the risk of harm from such hazards • identifies appropriate action to take to protect children/young people, employees and visitors. Learners should practice completing a risk assessment to aid with planning activities. It may be useful for learners to use a risk assessment template to support them. All learners should be mindful of what constitutes a hazard and potential risk in relation to age/stage/individual need for example avoiding small items that may be a hazard for young children as a choking risk. Other considerations include indoor equipment, the state of repair of furniture and fixtures, different materials, sharp objects an electrical requirement. Learners should be aware that training may be required in relation to how certain equipment and materials should be used as well as the importance of maintenance for safety. Applying the risk assessment to activities/lesson planning using a template to take into account the following steps: • what the hazards are • who might be harmed • what controls are in place • what further controls are needed • who is responsible for this. Learners will be able to identify the necessary controls that need to be actioned to minimise risks, including: • removing the hazard • reducing exposure • use of PPE

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Teaching guidance

- training in relation to use of equipment and other materials and equipment maintenance.

This will prepare learners for a practical activity where they can explore risk assessment documentation specifically considering their role during activity planning. Main hazards to consider when setting up indoor learning activities:

- equipment
- materials
- sharp objects
- small objects that can be a choking hazard for children
- furniture and fixtures
- electrical services.

5.4 Applying risk assessments

5.4.1 to 5.4.4 Learners engage in a practical activity using risk assessment documentation, applying the relevant teaching content on risk assessment to identify potential hazards and safeguarding concerns. Learners are to observe activity, apply in practice, communicate the results of the risk assessment and apply digital skills in recording the information including producing, organising, storing and retrieving digital content.

Transferable skills

The following transferable skills have been integrated into the content for work-related purposes:

- investigating:
  - identifying and interrogating relevant sources, including statutory frameworks, learner information, assessment records and health and safety guidance, to inform planning and decision-making
- recording:
  - accurately documenting learning plans, communication records, inclusion proposals, risk assessments and assessment interpretations using structured written and digital formats
- observing:
  - monitoring learning contexts, identifying hazards, recognising student needs and interpreting evidence of student progress
- communicating:
  - effectively sharing information accurately and professionally using written, oral, visual and digital methods, adapting language, tone and format to suit different audiences and purposes
- learners should continue to develop literacy, numeracy and digital skills through their application within the context of achieving the themes.

Work-related behaviours

Work-related behaviours that may be demonstrated through engagement with this theme, but not expected to be assessed, include:

- self-confident
- professional
- focused
- responsible
- attention to detail.

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Section 3: key terms and definitions

Glossary of terms

This glossary provides the DfE definitions of subject terms relevant to this qualification.

Hazard	Anything that has the potential to cause harm.
Key learning stages	The stages of education in England's education system.
Learning activity	A specific task that students complete. For example, preparing for and taking part in a debate, a creative painting activity or a role play.
Learning goals	Specific measurable objective(s) that indicate the knowledge, skills and/or behaviour(s) that a student should demonstrate after having completed a learning activity or a learning session.
Learning session	A structured period of learning, such as a lesson or a workshop. A learning session includes a number of different learning activities.
Risk	The likelihood, great or small, that someone will be harmed by the hazard.

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Section 4: support

Support materials

Support materials to assist with the delivery of this qualification are available on the qualification page on the NCFE website.

Other support materials

The resources and materials used in the delivery of this qualification must be age-appropriate and due consideration should be given to the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners in line with your institute's safeguarding policy when developing or selecting delivery materials.

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To continue to improve our levels of customer service, telephone calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.

Appendix A: themes

To simplify cross-referencing assessments and quality assurance, we have used a sequential numbering system in this document for each theme.

Mandatory themes

Theme number	Theme title	Level	GLH
1	Learning, curriculum and education	2	60
2	Assessment in education	2	60
3	Communication in practice	2	30
4	Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)	2	30
5	Health, safety and safeguarding	2	60

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Appendix B: thematic crossover between the Foundation Certificate and the Occupational Certificate

The table below provides a mapping of content across the Foundation Certificate and the Occupational Certificate, highlighting areas of alignment that may provide opportunities for co-teaching and learning.

NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
Theme 1: Learning, curriculum and education	**Theme 3: Play, curriculum and learning**	
1.1.1 The key learning stages in the UK education system: • early years foundation stage (EYFS) • primary school (key stage 1 and 2) • secondary school (key stage 3 and 4) • post-16 provision	All teaching content – Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) only 3.1.1 The inclusion of expected early learning goals within the statutory framework 3.1.3 The stages of learning and development requirements from birth to 5 years	When delivering the Occupational Certificate there will be several references to the EYFS within Theme 3, which is relevant topic area within the Foundation Certificate. Theme 1 looks beyond the early years and includes the national curriculum, post -16 and adult provision. This must be considered during delivery to ensure full coverage for the learners completing the Foundation Certificate
1.1.2 The importance of using specific learning goals in designing learning activities for all students: • expected early learning goals within the statutory framework and areas of learning and development from birth to 5 years • goals related to areas of learning and development within the national curriculum	3.2.2 Why setting specific learning goals for learning and development is important in the early years sector 3.3.1 The different enabling environments in which learning activities are delivered in early years settings: • indoor • outdoor	In the Foundation Certificate, the topic area within Theme 1 considers guidance such as Birth to 5 Matters (2026) and Development Matters (2023). This theme looks beyond the early years including the national curriculum, post-16 and adult provision. This must be considered during delivery to ensure full coverage for learners completing the Foundation Certificate. The Occupational Certificate involves a comprehensive exploration of the EYFS,

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NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
• goals in post-16 and adult education.	3.3.2 The principles of: • adult-led activities • child-initiated activities • spontaneous experiences	considering specific components of the statutory framework
1.2.1 The different types of learning activities: • acquisition • inquiry-based • collaborative • practical • production • technology-based, for example digital learning tools		Teaching Guidance within the Foundation Certificate and Occupational Certificate includes information on child-initiated play and planning for an individual's next steps. This provides opportunities for aspects of co-teaching across the delivery of both the Foundation Certificate and the Occupational Certificate
1.2.2 The purpose and suitability of different types of learning activities for different learning stages; the use of: • teacher-centred activities • student-initiated activities • collaborative activities • interactive activities • technology-based activities	3.3.2 The principles of: • adult-led activities • child-initiated activities • spontaneous experiences	Teaching Guidance within the Foundation Certificate and Occupational Certificate includes information on child-initiated play and planning for an individual's next steps. This provides opportunities for aspects of co-teaching across the delivery of both the Foundation Certificate and the Occupational Certificate
Theme 1: Learning, curriculum and education	**Theme 7: Sustainability in the early years sector**	
1.3.2 The importance of designing learning activities to minimise waste including ways to: • refuse • reduce • reuse • repurpose • recycle.	All teaching content – in the context of early years only 7.1.1 Why improving environmental sustainability in early years settings will help to ensure the long-term future of the environment	Sustainable practice will be explored through activity planning as learners consider core principles of sustainability opportunities in education. This content is covered within both the Foundation Certificate and Occupational Certificate. Learners studying for the Foundation Certificate will have the opportunity to consider activities across a wider age range; however, the

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NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
	7.1.2 How resources used in early years settings may impact on sustainability including the use of: • equipment • materials • products • consumables 7.1.3 The different approaches to improving environmental sustainability: • reducing energy consumption • reducing water consumption • reducing packaging used by the setting • reducing waste produced by the setting 7.1.4 How the use of sustainable materials and products supports environmental sustainability, including: • changing to biodegradable products or greener products • reducing single item use 7.1.5 Ways to minimise waste in the early years sector: • reduce • reuse • repurpose • recycle	underlying principles applied are shared across both qualifications
1.7.1 Identify ways to minimise waste in the use of resources when planning learning activities		Ways to minimise waste when planning activities can be considered as part of sustainable practice. This is explored within both the Foundation Certificate and the Occupational Certificate through activity planning, as learners consider the core principles of sustainability and opportunities to promote sustainable practice within educational settings. Learners completing the Foundation Certificate will be able to consider activities across a wider age range; however, the principles applied are shared across both qualifications

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NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
	7.1.6 How to dispose of waste sustainably including: • composting • waste sorting 7.2.1 How to model good practice for children to foster responsibility for sustainability 7.2.2 Ways to increase children's awareness of environmental sustainability: • focused learning activities • involvement in reducing waste and recycling • involvement in sustainability projects and challenges • links to Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework	
Theme 2: Assessment in education	**Theme 4: Observation, assessment and communication with others**	
2.1.2 Assessment methods used to confirm learning goals have been met: • observation • questioning • student-led reflection • starter assessment compared to plenary assessment • reviewing outputs, for example reports, answers or artefact	All teaching content relevant to the context of early years 4.1.2 The value of observation for the child, the parents/carers and the early years provision in planning the next steps 4.1.3 Advantage of working in partnership to plan for the child's next steps	The Foundation Certificate provides opportunities for learners to consider a range of records, including digital records, which aligns with the records kept in early years practice and included within the Occupational Certificate. Wider examples of record-keeping across the education sector should also be covered for learners undertaking the Foundation Certificate

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NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
	4.1.4 How to record observations in line with statutory requirements and organisational procedures 4.2.6 Apply digital skills by producing, organising, storing and retrieving created digital content to convey information to an audience	
2.2.2 Types of information, records and data used in the assessment of learning: • observation notes • written results • marks/scores • audio/video recordings • digital records • reports		The Foundation Certificate provides opportunities for learners to consider a range of records, including digital records, which aligns with the records kept in early years practice and included within the Occupational Certificate. Wider examples of record-keeping across the education sector should also be covered for learners undertaking the Foundation Certificate
2.3.2 How to make recommendations to maximise student progress by providing focused actionable feedback which highlights both strengths and areas for improvement and is linked to expected goals		Observation could be used as an example of how recommendations are derived and implemented in education

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NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
2.4.2 Apply numeracy skills when interpreting quantitative data		Data gained from assessment could be used to demonstrate how numeracy skills are applied, for example drawing upon numerical data to interpret quantitative data allowing for co-teaching opportunities in the Foundation Certificate and the Occupational Certificate
2.4.5 Apply digital skills to make recommendations by producing, organising, storing and retrieving relevant digital content		The learners will be able to apply digital skills to make recommendations and refine their skills of producing, organising, storing and retrieving relevant digital content, allowing for co-teaching opportunities in the Foundation Certificate and the Occupational Certificate
Theme 3: Communication in practice	**Theme 1: Introduction to early years**	
3.1.1 The different individuals that educators interact with: • parents • carers • wider family • agencies and services that support parents and carers • colleagues within the same education setting • industry professionals outside of the education setting	1.2.6 The range of different individuals and professionals that Early Years Practitioners and educators work with: • parents/carers • wider family • agencies and services that support parents/carers • colleagues within the same setting and other professionals outside of the education setting	The content topic overlaps significantly here for both the Foundation and Occupational Certificate. Learners undertaking the Foundation Certificate may be able to use a wider range of examples of partnership interaction, however, the principles required for delivery of knowledge and understanding remain aligned across both qualifications

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NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
3.2.1 Communication techniques used to communicate purposefully: • verbal • visual • written methods • use of technology	1.3.1 The range of communication techniques used to convey information to an audience: • oral • visual • written • using technology to support conveying information	The content areas identified here align and can be taught without amendment, although specific contextualisation will be useful for both the Foundation and Occupational Certificates
3.2.2 The ways to ensure communication is purposeful: • being clear • being concise • being courteous • using active listening techniques • being aware of the audience • being aware of the effect of non-verbal communication	1.3.2 The impact of using active listening techniques	The content areas identified here are similar and can be taught without much amendment, although specific contextualisation will be useful, for both the Foundation and Occupational Certificates
3.6.3 Communicate purposefully with different individuals through the use of visual, oral and written communication methods to share required information	1.3.3 The importance of being aware of needs of others	The content areas identified here are similar and can be taught without much amendment, although specific contextualisation will be useful, for both the Foundation and Occupational Certificates
	1.3.4 The importance of being aware of the effect of non-verbal communication	The content areas identified here are similar and can be taught without much amendment, although specific contextualisation will be useful, for both the Foundation and Occupational Certificates

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NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
	1.3.5 The impact of being courteous and inclusive when engaging with others	The content areas identified here are similar and can be taught without much amendment, although specific contextualisation will be useful, for both the Foundation and Occupational Certificates
Theme 4: Equality, diversity and inclusion	**Theme 6: Equality, diversity and inclusion**	
4.1.1 Why statutory frameworks related to inclusion are important: • the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) • the special education needs and disabilities (SEND) code of practice • the Equality Act 2010	All teaching content – in the context of the early years only 6.1.2 The role of the Early Years Practitioner (EYP) to apply inclusion requirements in line with the EYFS, ensuring all children are treated fairly and have equal opportunity to thrive in an early year setting Teaching guidance for 6.1.2	The delivery of legislation and guidance relating to inclusion can be taught with minimal amendments for both the Foundation and Occupational Certificates, just benefiting from contextualisation
Theme 5: Health, safety and safeguarding	**Theme 5: Health, safety and safeguarding**	
5.1.1 Why safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection are important when sharing student information	All teaching content in the context of early years only 5.3.1 The legal requirements and guidance on safeguarding, Prevent, security and confidentiality of information to and promote the welfare of children	The content areas identified here are similar and can be taught without much amendment, although specific contextualisation will be useful to discuss principles of confidentiality and information sharing in both Foundation and Occupational Certificates

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NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
	5.1.1 The importance of knowing the legal requirements and guidance for health and safety 5.1.2 and 5.3.1 from the Foundation Certificate is noted in the Teacher Guidance of the Occupational Certificate: Learners could acknowledge the relationship between safeguarding and confidentiality of information, including exceptions to confidentiality, knowing when confidentiality can be breached and when it cannot including the significance of consent and referral Consent is included in the Tutor Guidance The Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 is referred to in the Tutor Guidance 5.3.1 The legal requirements and guidance on safeguarding, Prevent, security and confidentiality of information to and promote the welfare of children 5.1.1 The importance of knowing the legal requirements and guidance for health and safety	

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NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
	5.2.1 The role of the Early Years Practitioner in identifying risks and hazards in the provision and during off-site visits 5.2.2 The role of the Early Years Practitioner in recording and reporting of accidents and incidents and steps to take in non-emergency and emergency situations 5.1.3 The importance of knowing how to comply with the legal requirements in relation to health and safety and food hygiene in early years settings including risks and hazards, infection control techniques, and use of personal protective equipment (PPE)	
5.1.2 When confidentiality may need to be breached 5.3.1 Identify what information can or cannot be shared		The content areas identified here are similar and can be taught without much amendment, although specific contextualisation in the Foundation and Occupational Certificates will be useful to discuss principles of confidentiality and information sharing, including when confidentiality may need to be breached
5.1.3 How consent is obtained and used		The content areas identified here in both Foundation and Occupational Certificates are similar and can be taught without much amendment, although specific contextualisation will be useful to discuss principles of consent
5.2.1 The importance of the legal requirement of employers to protect employees, and		The delivery of legislation and guidance with regard to health and safety can be taught with

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NCFE CACHE Level 2 Foundation Certificate in Education (QN) theme and teaching content	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Occupational Certificate: Early Years Practitioner (QN) theme and teaching content	Delivery guidance
others, from harm including the existence of the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999		minimal amendments, just benefiting from contextualisation to the Foundation or Occupational Certificate
5.2.4 The purpose of risk assessment in education: • to identify hazards to health and safety • evaluate the risk of harm resulting from those hazards • take appropriate action to protect employees, students, and visitors		This topic content area can be considered without amendment, just benefiting from contextualisation to the Foundation or Occupational Certificate
5.2.5 The components of a risk assessment document: • what the hazards are • who might be harmed • what controls are in place • what further controls are needed • who is responsible for this		This topic content area can be considered without amendment, just benefiting from contextualisation to the Foundation or Occupational Certificate
5.2.6 Controls used to minimise risks: • removing the hazard • reducing exposure • use of personal protective equipment (PPE) • training in relation to use of equipment and other materials and equipment maintenance		This topic content area can be considered without amendment, just benefiting from contextualisation

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Change history record

Version	Publication date	Description of change

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