



Chief Examiner Report

**NCFE CACHE Level 3 Extended Diploma for
Children's Care Learning and Development
(Northern Ireland)**

QN: 603/7477/9

Assessment code: CCLDNI/EDEA

**Paper number: P002687, P002688, P002689,
P002690 and P002691**

Submission date: 14 May 2025

NCFE CACHE Level 3 Extended Diploma for Children's Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland) (603/7477/9)

Introduction

This report contains information in relation to the external assessment from the chief examiner, with an emphasis on the standard of learner work within this assessment window.

The aim is to highlight where learners generally performed well as well as any areas where further development may be required.

Key points:

- grade achievements
- administering the external assessment
- standard of learner work
- assessment structure
- use of word allocation
- criteria requirements and command verbs
- referencing of external assessment tasks
- assessment criteria (AC)
- regulations for the conduct of external assessment.

It is important to note that learners should not sit the external assessment until they have taken part in the relevant teaching of the full qualification content.

Grade achievements

Theme one – Children's development

Grade	NYA	D	C	B	A	A*	Learners	17
% of learners	17.65%	5.88%	35.29%	29.41%	11.76%	0.00%	Pass rate	82.35%

Theme two – Children's play and learning

Grade	NYA	D	C	B	A	A*	Learners	45
% of learners	2.2%	15.6%	48.9%	26.7%	6.7%	0.00%	Pass rate	97.78%

NCFE CACHE Level 3 Extended Diploma for Children's Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland) (603/7477/9)

Theme three – Safeguarding the health, safety and wellbeing of children

Grade	NYA	D	C	B	A	A*	Learners	1
% of learners	0.00%	0.00%	100%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Pass rate	100%

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment is invigilated and must be conducted in line with our [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment](#) document. Learners may require additional pre-release material in order to complete the tasks within the paper. These must be provided to learners in line with our regulations.

Learners must be given the resources to carry out the tasks and these are highlighted within the [Qualification Specific Instructions for Delivery \(QSID\)](#) document.

Standard of learner work

Mixed responses dependent on the centre and many learners had only attempted the lower grades D and C but this was stretched to B grade occasionally.

In general, the lower grades were of a good standard and mostly achieved with the key themes relevant throughout.

D1 appears to be an issue and at times responses were extremely limited so as a reminder 'consider' requires careful consideration.

When attempting the higher grades specifically A and above the relevance to the theme occasionally became obscured and compliance with the command verb was limited.

Assessment structure

We would like to remind learners to write in a chronological order rather than combining criteria. assessment criteria (AC) should be clearly identified so that the both the reader and learner are clear on the criteria that is being answered.

Use of word allocation

The majority of learners made good use of the word count available. Those only attempting the lower grades fully used the word count to achieve these grades.

Some learners used up the word count within the lower grades but still attempted the higher grades, therefore the depth and breadth required were not met.

Learners should be encouraged to utilise the full word allocation to ensure criteria is covered in detail and a good depth provided.

Learners attempting the higher grades should consider escalating the word count to these so that the full context can be covered.

NCFE CACHE Level 3 Extended Diploma for Children's Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland) (603/7477/9)

Criteria requirements and command verbs

Within this assessment window a considerable number of learners attempted the higher grades compared to previous assessment windows.

When the higher grades were attempted specifically for A1 evaluation linked to the theme was quite limited and therefore should focus on the key themes.

Additionally, when attempting the higher grades some learners combined D1 and A1 which led to many underdeveloped responses for A1 and these were not achieved.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

On occasion, some learners relied too much on other sources of information, which were used in place of own knowledge and understanding, without appropriately referencing and applying to the context of the text. This limited achievement of a grade.

Some references were not traceable and therefore ideally learners should be advised to utilise the use of quotation marks to support identification of the references. The full reference should be identified within the bibliography at the end of the script and the citation should be included within the text to promote relevance and not as a separately recorded piece of criteria.

Assessment criteria (AC)

CCLDNI EDEA – Theme one Children's Development

D Criteria

Evidence provided mainly supported the theme however some learners placed focus on play and activities with limited links to the developmental areas. Additionally, when asked to 'consider' issues these were limited and not expanded to justify why the issues was relevant. Learners who combined A1 with D1 did not fully cover the criteria for the D grade or limited the A grade. Some learners did not include traceable references leading to a NYA grade.

C Criteria

Those that attempted the C grades were consistent in describing enabling environments but occasionally detailed play and learning with subsequent activities rather than linking to the developmental milestones. Centres should remind the learners to link these activities and structure of the environment to developmental milestones.

Explaining principles and values were also at times quite vague and the learners that achieved this assessment criteria (AC) were specific as to these concepts with direct links to development. Those that quoted the sources for the principles and values achieved well.

In general, the C grade scripts awarded demonstrated a good level of knowledge and understanding.

NCFE CACHE Level 3 Extended Diploma for Children's Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland) (603/7477/9)

B Criteria

Some learners were describing a recognised theory or philosophical approach rather than developing a discussion.

Additionally, learners occasionally discussed more than one theory which limited the discussion and the developed responses for a B grade.

Theories and approaches linked to development were not always clear.

Learners achieved B2 when specific ways were analysed and linked directly to development, but these were sometimes obscured by generic responses of inclusion. Learners should be analysing 'ways', and these must link to development. Analysis must be demonstrated clearly. It is important that learners include future practice suggestions that link directly to development for B3.

A Criteria

Where the discussion was effectively developed in the D grade to look at aspects of the theme / key issues from more than one perspective, A1 was achieved.

A2 was very generic and more generalised as a description of 'good practice' as opposed to a focus on skills to support development.

Centres should advise learners to apply reflection and use examples from practice referring to time management, communication for example active listening and such linked to the theme and include how future practice might be impacted.

The learners that combined A1 with D1 often did not achieve the grade as evaluation of the issues under development were not clear.

A* Criteria

Very few learners attempted A* criteria. Learners could be encouraged by centres to attempt all criteria.

Those that attempted this grade were limited with available word count and therefore the responses were underdeveloped and focus on the theme was generally lost.

Centres should remind learners to provide in depth evaluation with critical judgements linked to the theme.

NCFE CACHE Level 3 Extended Diploma for Children's Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland) (603/7477/9)

CCLDNI EDEA – Theme two Children's Play and Learning.

D Criteria

Learners completed these criteria well under this theme with clear identification of key issues in the D grade.

Evidence is provided to show how the issues identified link to the chosen theme of play and learning with a good use of examples from practice to support the explanation.

Sources of referencing appeared to remain an issue and centres are reminded to add in text quotations relevant to the theme.

C Criteria

The criteria under this theme continues to be of a good standard with many learners able to describe an enabling environment linked to the chosen theme of play and learning and good examples, supporting the evidence.

Some clear links made to own experiences within practice to show understanding of an enabling environment and key values and principles.

Reference to principles and values in respect of play and learning must be clear within the quotations.

B Criteria

Learners that attempted the higher grades were accurate in suggesting theory/ philosophical approaches and linked directly to play and learning applying examples from practice. Many learners based their responses on Vygotsky, Forest Schools and Mildred Parten and were able to support these with clear understanding linked to the theme.

Learners were also able to analyse at least two ways that equality and diversity could be ensured in relation to the theme although occasionally analysis was weak and sometimes responses generic.

Again, future practice in respect of the theme was limited

A Criteria

Those learners who achieved the grade provided clear evaluation of the issues identified within the D graded and these were balanced arguments linked to the theme.

In some cases, there was a lack of evaluation responses for A1, particularly when linking back to D1.

A2 was more generalised as a description of 'good practice', as opposed to a focus on skills to support play and learning.

NCFE CACHE Level 3 Extended Diploma for Children's Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland) (603/7477/9)

Centres should advise learners to apply reflection and use examples from practice referring to time management, communication for example active listening and such linked to the theme and include how future practice might be impacted because of this learning.

A* Criteria

Very few learners attempted A* criteria. Learners could be encouraged by centres to attempt all criteria.

Centres should remind learners to provide in depth evaluation with critical judgements linked to the theme. The writing must be clear and concise including a range of substantiated citation added. The evaluation should be balanced with clear assessment of the influence of theories and regulatory frameworks in regards the theme.

CCLDNI EDEA – Theme three Safeguarding the health, safety and wellbeing of children

D Criteria

Evidence is focussed on the theme and the full concepts of health, safety and wellbeing were considered and written in depth.

Learners supported evidence with specific examples from practice.

C Criteria

Clear links to enabling environments related to the theme and supported with examples from practice.

Relevance to values and principles were linked directly to the theme. This section was completed well with appropriate sources.
References were not always clear and identifiable.

B Criteria

Links to Maslow for B1 are applied which naturally leads to the theme and a discussion around the hierarchy follows.

B2 responses were often a generic Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and not linked to the title.

B3 responses did not include future practice. Examples of future development could assist here.

A Criteria

No evidence available

NCFE CACHE Level 3 Extended Diploma for Children's Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland) (603/7477/9)

A* Criteria

No evidence available.

CCLDNI EDEA - Theme four – no entries

CCLDNI/EDEA - Theme five – no entries

NCFE CACHE Level 3 Extended Diploma for Children's Care Learning and Development (Northern Ireland) (603/7477/9)

Regulations for the conduct of external assessment

Malpractice

There were zero instances of malpractice in this assessment window. The chief examiner would like to take this opportunity to advise learners that instances of malpractice (for example, copying of work from another learner) will affect the outcome on the assessment.

Maladministration

There were zero instances of maladministration in this assessment window. The chief examiner would like to highlight the importance of adhering to the regulations for the conduct of external assessment document in this respect.

Chief examiner: Julie Green

Date: 3 July 2025