

**NCFE**

**CACHE**

# Qualification Specification

**NCFE CACHE Level 2 Award in an Introduction  
to Neuroscience in Early Years  
QN: 603/5216/4**

# Contents

<b>Summary of changes</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Section 1</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
Support Handbook	4
Qualification summary	5
Entry guidance	7
Achieving this qualification	7
Units	8
Internal assessment	9
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Unit content and assessment guidance</b>	<b>12</b>
Unit 01 Understanding neuroscience in early years (J/617/8537)	13
Assessment guidance	14
Unit 02 Understanding self-regulation and how to nurture this in children from birth to seven years (L/617/8538)	15
Assessment guidance	17
Recommended assessment methods	18
<b>Section 3</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Explanation of terms</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Additional information</b>	<b>24</b>
Resource requirements	24
Support for centres	24
Learning resources	24
Contact us	25

## Summary of changes

This document summarises the changes to this qualification specification.

This document summarises the changes to this qualification specification since the last version (Version 1.0 January 2020). Please check the NCFE website for the most recent version.

Version	Publication date	Summary of amendments
v1.0	January 2020	First publication
v1.1	June 2022	<p>Further information added to the how the qualification is assessed section to confirm that unless otherwise stated in this specification, all learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for external quality assurance must be in English.</p> <p>Information added to the entry guidance section to advise that registration is at the discretion of the centre, in accordance with equality legislation and should be made on the Portal.</p> <p>Information added to the support handbook section about how to access support handbooks.</p>

# Section 1

## About this qualification

## Introduction

This Qualification Specification contains details of all the units and assessments required to complete this qualification.

To ensure that you are using the most up-to-date version of this Qualification Specification, please check the version number and date in the page footer against that of the Qualification Specification on the NCFE website.

If you advertise this qualification using a different or shortened name, you must ensure that learners are aware that their final certificate will state the full regulated qualification title.

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- 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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## Support Handbook

This Qualification Specification must be used alongside the mandatory Support Handbook which can be found on the NCFE website, which contains additional supporting information to help with the planning, delivery and assessment.

This Qualification Specification contains all the qualification specific information you will need that is not covered in the Support Handbook.

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<b>Qualification summary</b>	
<b>Qualification title</b>	NCFE CACHE Level 2 Award in an Introduction to Neuroscience in Early Years
<b>Qualification number (QN)</b>	603/5216/4
<b>Aim reference</b>	60352164
<b>Total Qualification Time (TQT)</b>	120
<b>Guided Learning Hours (GLH)</b>	105
<b>Minimum age</b>	16
<b>Age ranges covered by the qualification</b>	This qualification prepares learners to work with children from birth to seven years.
<b>Qualification purpose</b>	This qualification is designed to provide an introduction to neuroscience from birth to seven years. It will support learners who are seeking a career within the early years sector. Learners may also progress to further study.
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<p>This qualification aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on the study of neuroscience in early years</li> <li>• offer breadth and depth of study, incorporating a key core of knowledge</li> <li>• provide knowledge for those seeking employment in the early years sector.</li> </ul> <p>The objectives of this qualification are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support learners to gain an understanding of neuroscience in early years</li> <li>• support learners to progress to further and higher education</li> <li>• support the Practitioner role in the workplace.</li> </ul>
<b>Work/industry placement experience</b>	This is a knowledge only qualification. Work/industry placement experience is not required.
<b>Rules of combination</b>	Learners are required to successfully achieve 2 mandatory units.
<b>Grading</b>	Achieved/Not Yet Achieved
<b>Assessment method</b>	Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence
<b>Progression</b>	<p>Learners who achieve this qualification could progress to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 2 Diploma for the Early Years Practitioner</li> <li>• Level 3 Certificate in Preparing to Work in Early Years Education and Care.</li> </ul>

<b>Qualification summary</b>	
<b>Regulation information</b>	This is a regulated qualification. The regulated number for this qualification is 603/5216/4.
<b>Funding</b>	This qualification may be eligible for funding. For further guidance on funding, please contact your local funding provider.

## Entry guidance

This qualification is designed for learners who wish to improve their knowledge of early brain development.

It may also be useful to learners studying qualifications in the following sector:

- early years education.

Entry is at the discretion of the centre, in accordance with equality legislation, and should be made on the Portal. However, learners should be aged 16 or above to undertake this qualification.

There is no specific prior knowledge a learner must have for this qualification. However, learners may find it helpful if they've already achieved a Level 1 qualification.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that this qualification is appropriate for the age and ability of learners. They need to make sure that learners can fulfil the requirements of the learning outcomes and comply with the relevant literacy, numeracy and health and safety aspects of this qualification.

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

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## Achieving this qualification

To be awarded this qualification, learners are required to successfully achieve both mandatory units.

Please refer to the list of units below or the unit summaries in Section 2 for further information.

To achieve this qualification, learners must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all learning outcomes of the units as detailed in this Qualification Specification. A partial certificate may be requested for learners who do not achieve their full qualification but have achieved at least one whole unit.

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## Units

To make cross-referencing assessment and quality assurance easier, we have used a sequential numbering system in this document for each unit.

The regulated unit number is indicated in brackets for each unit (eg M/100/7116) within Section 2.



Knowledge only units are indicated by a star. If a unit is not marked with a star, it is a skills unit or contains a mix of knowledge and skills.

## Mandatory units

	Unit number	Regulated unit number	Unit title	Level	GLH
★	Unit 01	J/617/8537	Understanding neuroscience in early years	2	45
★	Unit 02	L/617/8538	Understanding self-regulation and how to nurture this in children from birth to seven years	2	60

The units above may be available as stand-alone unit programmes. Please visit our website for further information.

## How the qualification is assessed

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

This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.

The assessment consists of one component:

- an internally assessed portfolio of evidence which is assessed by centre staff and externally quality assured by NCFE.

Unless stated otherwise in this qualification specification, all learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for external quality assurance must be in English.

## Internal assessment

We have created some sample tasks for each of the internally assessed units. You can contextualise these tasks to suit the needs of your learners to help them build up their portfolio of evidence. The tasks have been designed to cover some knowledge learning outcomes for both units and provide opportunities for stretch and challenge. For further information about contextualising the tasks, please contact the Curriculum team.

Each learner must create a portfolio of evidence generated from appropriate assessment tasks, which demonstrates achievement of all the learning outcomes associated with each unit. The assessment tasks should allow the learner to respond to a real life situation that they may face when in employment. On completion of each unit, learners must declare that the work produced is their own and the Assessor must countersign this. Examples of suitable evidence for the portfolio for each unit are provided in Section 2.

Internally assessed work should be completed by the learner in accordance with the Qualification Specification.

The Tutor must be satisfied that the work produced is the learner's own.

In practice, this means that all of the portfolio of evidence will be completed in normal class time within scheduled assessment hours and kept separate from any teaching and learning hours.

A centre may choose to create their own internal assessment tasks. They should:

- be accessible and lead to objective assessment judgements
- permit and encourage authentic activities where the learner's own work can be clearly judged
- refer to Course File Documents on the NCFE website.

## Supervision of learners and your role as an Assessor

Guidance on how to administer the internal assessment and the support you provide to learners can be found on the NCFE website.

### **Feedback to learners**

Guidance on providing feedback during teaching and learning and each stage of the assessment can be found on the NCFE website.

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# Section 2

## Unit content and assessment guidance

### **Unit content and assessment guidance**

This section provides details of the structure and content of this qualification.

The types of evidence listed are for guidance purposes only. Within learners' portfolios, other types of evidence are acceptable if all learning outcomes are covered and if the evidence generated can be internally and externally quality assured. For approval of methods of internal assessment other than portfolio building, please contact our Quality Assurance team.

The Explanation of terms explains how the terms used in the unit content are applied to this qualification. This document can be found in Section 3.

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

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**Unit 01 Understanding neuroscience in early years (J/617/8537)**

<b>Unit summary</b>	In this unit, learners will understand neuroscience and the early development of the brain. They will understand neurons, synaptogenesis and how the social brain develops.
<b>Guided learning hours</b>	45
<b>Level</b>	2
<b>Mandatory/optional</b>	Mandatory
<b>NOS mapping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCDHSC0047 Support parents and carers to acquire skills to care for and protect babies, children and young people</li> <li>• SCDCCLD0314 Promote the care of babies and children</li> <li>• SCDCCLD0303 Promote the development of children and young people</li> <li>• SCDCCLD0312 Implement positive environments for babies and children</li> </ul>

<b>Learner name:</b>	
<b>Centre no:</b>	

<b>Learning outcomes</b> The learner will:	<b>Assessment criteria</b> The learner can:	<b>Evidence record</b> eg page number & method	<b>Assessor</b> Initial and date
1. Understand the neuroscience of early brain development	1.1 Define neuroscience		
	1.2 Explain how the baby's brain develops and grows during pregnancy		
	1.3 Explain the process of early brain development from birth to seven years		
2. Understand neurons and their main functions	2.1 Identify the three main parts of a neuron		
	2.2 Describe the functions of a neuron		
3. Understand synaptogenesis	3.1 Define synaptogenesis		
	3.2 Explain the process of synaptogenesis and the factors that influence this		
	3.3 Describe pruning within sensitive periods of brain development		
4. Understand how the social brain develops	4.1 Explain how the social brain develops through the mirror neurons system		
	4.2 Explain the impact of relationships on developing the social brain		

**Assessment guidance****Types of evidence**

Evidence could include:

- written and pictorial accounts
- professional discussion
- work products such as leaflets and guides for practitioners, parents/carers.

**Learner declaration of authenticity:**

I declare that the work presented for this unit is entirely my own work.

Learner signature:

Date:

**Assessor sign off of completed unit: Unit 01**

I confirm that the learner has met the requirements for all assessment criteria demonstrating knowledge and skills for this unit.

Assessor name:

Signature:

Date:

For e-portfolio a signature is not required, providing the learner has a personalised and secure login.

## Unit 02 Understanding self-regulation and how to nurture this in children from birth to seven years (L/617/8538)



<b>Unit summary</b>	In this unit, the learner will understand the limbic system and self-regulation. They will understand self-regulation and the factors that can affect its development. They will also learn about the three types of stress and about adverse childhood experiences. The learner will also learn to distinguish between behaviourist and relational approaches to behaviour management.
<b>Guided learning hours</b>	60
<b>Level</b>	2
<b>Mandatory/optional</b>	Mandatory
<b>NOS mapping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCDHSC0047 Support parents and carers to acquire skills to care for and protect babies, children and young people</li> <li>• SCDCCLD0314 Promote the care of babies and children</li> <li>• SCDCCLD0303 Promote the development of children and young people</li> <li>• SCDCCLD0312 Implement positive environments for babies and children</li> </ul>

<b>Learner name:</b>	
<b>Centre no:</b>	

<b>Learning outcomes</b> The learner will:	<b>Assessment criteria</b> The learner can:	<b>Evidence record</b> eg page number & method	<b>Assessor</b> Initial and date
1. Understand the limbic system	1.1 Explain what the limbic system is		
2. Understand self-regulation	2.1 Describe self-regulation		
	2.2 Define the five domains of self-regulation		
	2.3 Define the five domains of stressors relating to self-regulation		
3. Understand Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and the influences that can affect the child's ability to self-regulate	3.1 Demonstrate an understanding of SEND and the influence of the five stressors on children's ability to self-regulate		
4. Understand about co-regulation and its role	4.1 Define co-regulation		
	4.2 Explain the role of co-regulation in nurturing children to achieve self-regulation		



<b>Learning outcomes</b> The learner will:	<b>Assessment criteria</b> The learner can:	<b>Evidence record</b> eg page number & method	<b>Assessor</b> Initial and date
5. Understand the types of stresses which impact on children from birth to seven years	5.1 Define the stress response system 5.2 Identify the three types of stress and the impact on the child from birth to seven years		
6. Understand adverse childhood experiences and how they influence long-term wellbeing and development	6.1 Describe the ten adverse childhood experiences that a child from birth to seven years may be subjected to 6.2 Explain how these adverse childhood experiences influence long-term wellbeing and development		
7. Understand the difference between the predominant behaviourist and alternative relational approaches and policies in behaviour management	7.1 Compare behaviourist behaviour management approaches to more relational approaches in understanding behaviour and nurturing positive behavior 7.2 Describe what Emotion Coaching is 7.3 Explain how Emotion Coaching can support practice in an early years setting		

**Assessment guidance****Types of evidence**

Evidence could include:

- written and pictorial accounts
- professional discussion
- work products such as leaflets and guides for practitioners, parents/carers.

**Learner declaration of authenticity:**

I declare that the work presented for this unit is entirely my own work.

Learner signature:

Date:

**Assessor sign off of completed unit: Unit 02**

I confirm that the learner has met the requirements for all assessment criteria demonstrating knowledge and skills for this unit.

Assessor name:

Signature:

Date:

For e-portfolio a signature is not required, providing the learner has a personalised and secure login.

### Recommended assessment methods

A recommended range of assessment methods has been identified, which may be used for the units in this qualification. This gives the opportunity for different learning styles and individual needs of learners to be taken into account.

If you are proposing to use an assessment method that is not included within the recommended list, you should contact your External Quality Assurer with full details of your proposed method. It will need formal approval from us before it can be used.

Each learner must generate evidence from appropriate assessment tasks which demonstrate achievement of all the learning outcomes associated with each unit. [Grades are not awarded.]

Please refer to the notes relating to expert witness testimony and simulation which follow this table.

Ref	Assessment Method	Assessing Competence/ Skills	Assessing Knowledge/ Understanding
A	Direct observation of learner by Assessor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>by an Assessor who meets the relevant Sector Skills Council's or other assessment strategy/principles and includes inference of knowledge from this direct observation of practice</li> </ul>	N/A	Yes
B	Professional discussion	N/A	Yes
C	Expert witness testimony* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when directed by the Sector Skills Council or other assessment strategy/principles</li> </ul>	N/A	Yes
D	Learner's own work products	N/A	Yes
E	Learner log or reflective diary	N/A	Yes
F	Activity plan or planned activity	N/A	Yes
G	Observation of children, young people or adults by the learner	N/A	Yes
H	Portfolio of evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include simulation**</li> </ul>	N/A	Yes
I	Recognition of prior learning	N/A	Yes
J	Reflection on own practice in real work environment	N/A	Yes
K	Written and pictorial information	N/A	Yes

Ref	Assessment Method	Assessing Competence/ Skills	Assessing Knowledge/ Understanding
L	Scenario or case study	N/A	Yes
M	Task set by CACHE (for knowledge learning outcomes)	N/A	Yes
N	Oral questions and answers	N/A	Yes

\* **Expert witness testimony** should be used in line with the relevant assessment strategy/principles. This method must be used with professional discretion, and only selected when observation would not be appropriate. Those providing an expert witness testimony must be lead practitioners with experience of making judgements around competence. The circumstances that may allow for an expert witness testimony include:

- when assessment may cause distress to an individual, such as supporting a child with a specific need
- a rarely occurring situation, such as dealing with an accident or illness
- confidential situations – such as safeguarding strategy meetings – where it would be inappropriate for an Assessor to observe the learner’s performance.

\*\* **Simulation.** A learner’s portfolio of evidence may only include simulation of skills where simulation is permitted by the relevant assessment strategy/principles.

# Section 3

## Explanation of terms

## Explanation of terms

This table explains how the terms used at Level 2 in the unit content are applied to this qualification (not all verbs are used in this qualification).

<b>Apply</b>	Link existing knowledge to new or different situations.
<b>Assess</b>	Consider information in order to make decisions.
<b>Classify</b>	Organise according to specific criteria.
<b>Compare</b>	Examine the subjects in detail looking at similarities and differences.
<b>Define</b>	State the meaning of a word or phrase.
<b>Demonstrate</b>	Show an understanding of the subject or how to apply skills in a practical situation.
<b>Describe</b>	Write about the subject giving detailed information.
<b>Differentiate</b>	Give the differences between two or more things.
<b>Discuss</b>	Write an account giving more than one view or opinion.
<b>Distinguish</b>	Show or recognise the difference between items/ideas/information.
<b>Estimate</b>	Give an approximate decision or opinion using previous knowledge.
<b>Explain</b>	Provide details about the subject with reasons showing how or why. Some responses could include examples.
<b>Give (positive and negative points...)</b>	Provide information showing the advantages and disadvantages of the subject.
<b>Identify</b>	List or name the main points (some description may also be necessary to gain higher marks when using compensatory marking).
<b>Illustrate</b>	Give clear information using written examples, pictures or diagrams.
<b>List</b>	Make a list of key words, sentences or comments that focus on the subject.
<b>Plan</b>	Think about and organise information in a logical way. This could be presented as written information, a diagram, an illustration or other suitable format.
<b>Perform</b>	Do something (take an action/follow an instruction) which the question or task asks or requires.
<b>Provide</b>	Give relevant information about a subject.
<b>Reflect</b>	Learners should look back on their actions, experiences or learning and think about how this could inform their future practice.
<b>Select</b>	Choose for a specific purpose.
<b>Show</b>	Supply sufficient evidence to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.

<b>State</b>	Give the main points clearly in sentences.
<b>Use</b>	Take or apply an item, resource or piece of information as asked in the question or task.

# Section 4

## Additional information



## Additional information

### 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 learning outcomes.

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### Support for centres

#### Key Facts

This document outlines the key information of this qualification for the centre, learner and employer.

#### Useful websites

Centres may find the following websites helpful for information, materials and resources to assist with the delivery of this qualification:

- [mineconkbayir.co.uk/](http://mineconkbayir.co.uk/)
  - [www.psychalive.org/minding-the-brain-by-daniel-siegel-m-d-2/](http://www.psychalive.org/minding-the-brain-by-daniel-siegel-m-d-2/)
  - [www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/may2017/caring-relationships-heart-early-brain-development](http://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/may2017/caring-relationships-heart-early-brain-development)
  - [www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnins.2015.00333/full](http://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnins.2015.00333/full)
  - [www.urbanchildinstitute.org/why-0-3/baby-and-brain](http://www.urbanchildinstitute.org/why-0-3/baby-and-brain)
  - [dera.ioe.ac.uk/18189/2/SSU-SF-2004-01.pdf](http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/18189/2/SSU-SF-2004-01.pdf)
  - [educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/early-years-toolkit/self-regulation-strategies/](http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/early-years-toolkit/self-regulation-strategies/)
  - [www.nurseryworld.co.uk/nursery-world/feature/1147538/eyfs-practice-about-neuroscience-infantbrain](http://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/nursery-world/feature/1147538/eyfs-practice-about-neuroscience-infantbrain)
  - [developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-science-of-ecd/](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-science-of-ecd/)
  - [knowingneurons.com/](http://knowingneurons.com/)
  - [faculty.washington.edu/chudler/neurok.html](http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/neurok.html)
  - [www.dana.org/](http://www.dana.org/)
  - [maxplanckneuroscience.org/](http://maxplanckneuroscience.org/)
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### Learning resources

We offer a wide range of learning resources and materials to support the delivery of our qualifications. Please check the Qualifications page on the NCFE website for more information and to see what is available for this qualification.

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## Contact us

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