

## **Scottish subject benchmark statement**

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### **The Standard for Childhood Practice**

2007

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## Contents

<b>Preface</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Ministerial foreword</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Part one: Guidelines for programmes leading to qualification as manager/lead practitioner in Childhood Practice in Scotland</b>	<b>1</b>
Introduction	1
Guidelines for the approval of programmes	2
The Standard for Childhood Practice	3
Nature and scope of the Standard for Childhood Practice	6
Delivering the Standard for Childhood Practice through an integrated qualifications framework	7
Learning, teaching and assessment	8
Professional development	9
<b>Part two: The Standard for Childhood Practice programmes in Scotland</b>	<b>11</b>
Introduction	11
Professional values and personal commitment	11
Professional knowledge and understanding	12
Professional skills and abilities	16
<b>Appendix A: Supporting references</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Appendix B: Membership of the Steering Group</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Appendix C: Membership of the Technical Expert Group</b>	<b>24</b>



## Preface

While this subject benchmark statement has been informed by the *Recognition scheme for subject benchmark statements*, it has also taken account of the fact that subject benchmark statements that are specific to the higher education (HE) sector in Scotland are handled by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Scotland and are subject to a separate process and consultation.

Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of programmes in a specific subject. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level and articulate the attributes and capabilities that those possessing such qualifications should be able to demonstrate.

Subject benchmark statements are used for a variety of purposes. Primarily, they are an important external source of reference for higher education institutions (HEIs) when new programmes are being designed and developed in a subject area. They provide general guidance for articulating the learning outcomes associated with specific programmes but are not a specification of a detailed curriculum in the subject. Subject benchmark statements provide for variety and flexibility in the design of programmes and encourage innovation within an agreed overall conceptual framework.

Subject benchmark statements also provide support to HEIs in the pursuit of enhancement-led institutional review (ELIR). They enable the learning outcomes specified for a particular programme to be reviewed and evaluated against agreed general expectations about standards.

Finally, subject benchmark statements may be one of a number of external reference points that are drawn upon for the purposes of ELIR. Reviewers do not use subject benchmark statements as a crude checklist for these purposes; however, they are used in conjunction with the relevant programme specifications, the institution's own internal evaluation documentation, in order to enable reviewers to come to a rounded judgement based on a broad range of evidence.

The subject benchmark statement is subject to future revision that reflects developments in the subject, the experience of HEIs in utilising the statement, and the evolving nature of the early years and childcare sector in Scotland.

## Ministerial foreword

Early years and childcare workers throughout Scotland play a key role in providing the care and early education that our children need to help them get off to the best start in life. They are critical in providing good quality services and contributing towards positive outcomes for children and families. That is why I am committed to a programme to improve their status and professionalism. I want to ensure we have well-qualified, motivated early years and childcare professionals working together with other professionals, to provide the types of services our children and families need.

Investing in Children's Futures was the Scottish Government's response to the National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce. It highlighted two initial areas for action in the sector: the need to strengthen leadership; and the need to improve career opportunities for all by creating a single integrated qualification and professional development framework.

I am pleased that the first output of this work, the Standard and Guidelines for Childhood Practice, can now be published. I am sure that this new award (360 credits and at level 9) will help to strengthen leadership in the sector. I want us to ensure that as many lead practitioners/managers as possible can begin to undertake study towards this qualification on a part-time basis from September 2008. This course needs to reach people in every geographical location around Scotland through flexible delivery routes and 'take the learning to the learner'. The task is challenging and for that reason Scotland's universities and colleges will both be key to ensuring the right courses are developed and delivered utilising their expertise and established networks.

The recent challenges set for this workforce around qualifications and registration with the Scottish Social Services Council have been significant and I am immensely proud of the commitment and ability shown by those working in early education, childcare and playwork to rise to these challenges.

This is an exciting time to be involved in early years and childcare. The new early years and childcare strategy will bring a fresh focus to our work with children and families and will bring new challenges for the workforce. The entire early years and childcare workforce will be key to delivering on our strategy and I have complete confidence that they will rise to meet those challenges in the future.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Adam Ingram'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Adam Ingram**

# Part one: Guidelines for programmes leading to qualification as manager/lead practitioner in Childhood Practice in Scotland

## 1 Introduction

### Scottish Government policy

1.1 The Scottish Government response to the National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce (2006) specified key actions the Minister intended to take. These included developing leadership in the early years and childcare sector by creating a workforce that is led by professionals qualified at level 9 in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

1.2 This qualification will take the form of a work-based bachelor's degree, graduate diploma or other appropriately approved award. Awards will be required to meet the Standard for Childhood Practice and contain the appropriate volume of learning credit.

1.3 Programmes offering the new qualifications and professional development for leaders are expected to be in place by September 2008.

### Purpose of these Guidelines

1.4 These Guidelines are intended to support:

- the development and delivery of programmes of learning that will enable participants to demonstrate that they have achieved the knowledge, skills and values defined in the Standard for Childhood Practice
- the development of an integrated qualifications and professional development framework for workers in the early years and childcare services.

### Definition of awards

1.5 Within *The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland* a bachelor's degree is defined as requiring at least 360 credits of which a minimum of 60 is at level 9 of the SCQF. Typically, the 360 credits will be gained during a programme of learning where learners will have been assessed at levels 7, 8 and 9. The validation of a bachelor's degree or other appropriately approved award should therefore include the recognition of learning assessed at levels 7, 8 and 9 in the SCQF. The Guidelines assume that these awards will be built on and explicitly include learning assessed at levels 7 and 8.

1.6 Graduate diplomas are defined as requiring a degree or equivalent as an entry qualification followed by at least 120 credits of learning assessed at the minimum of level 9. The validation of awards of this kind should therefore meet these criteria. Other types of award **that meet the requirement of the Standard for Childhood Practice** will be considered as they are proposed for development.

## **Qualifications and a professional development framework**

1.7 From 2011, registration as a manager/lead practitioner will require a qualification that meets the Standard for Childhood Practice and has the appropriate volume of credit. The definition of the Standard for that qualification will therefore provide a benchmark for the development of an integrated qualifications and professional development framework that builds on existing qualifications at levels 7 and 8 of the SCQF.

1.8 Programmes of learning such as Higher National Qualifications (HNQs), Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and Professional Development Awards (PDAs) provide practitioner qualifications and continuing professional development for workers. They can contribute to the professional progress of workers towards the degree or other award.

## **Work-based learning and professional development**

1.9 Work-based learning means learning closely bound to the work role and often, but not always, located in the workplace itself. An important aspect of work-based learning is that through the experience of performing the work role, complemented by other activities such as directed reading, researching and group work, it is possible for learners to achieve planned learning outcomes that can be evidenced and assessed.

1.10 All programmes of learning that enable participants to demonstrate that they have achieved the professional knowledge, skills and values required of managers/lead practitioners in the early years and childcare service will include learning that takes place in and through the workplace.

## **2 Guidelines for the approval of programmes**

### **Approval by Ministers**

2.1 Scottish Ministers will approve only those programmes that meet the following conditions:

- programmes must be subject to normal institutional validation and review processes
- programmes must be acceptable to the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) as leading to registration with the SSSC as a manager/lead practitioner in the early years and childcare service.

### **Requirements of all programmes**

2.2 Programmes for managers/lead practitioners must:

- allow learners to meet the Standard for Childhood Practice and assess their achievement of it
- have an appropriate volume of learning credit
- be grounded in work-based learning, both current and planned
- have an appropriate balance of learning related to professional knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities, and values and personal commitment
- contain clear arrangements for up-dating in accordance with national developments



- have effective partnership arrangements with employers or workplace managers and, where appropriate, with other programme providers
- accept the need for flexibility in provision for learning and aim to take learning to the learners
- have effective procedures for the recognition and accreditation of prior learning
- have appropriate arrangements for quality assurance.

### **Accessibility**

2.3 Professional workers in the early years and childcare service work in a wide range of geographical locations in Scotland and in a variety of forms of service delivery. Programmes of learning will therefore be required that are available to workers working or living in urban or rural environments and working in a wide range of settings. The accreditation of an award will be an important element in assuring its quality and fitness for purpose.

## **3 The Standard for Childhood Practice**

### **Purpose**

3.1 The Standard for Childhood Practice specifies what is expected of a worker seeking registration with the SSSC as a manager/lead practitioner in the early years and childcare service in Scotland

3.2 The elements of the Standard for Childhood Practice provide a set of statements that are the required outcomes of each programme of learning for managers/lead practitioners in Scotland. The statements provide a means of describing the nature and characteristics of programmes of learning in early years and childcare that lead to awards made by providers of higher education in Scotland.

3.3 The information in the Standard for Childhood Practice therefore specifies the knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities, values and commitment which programmes should address and assess. It describes the attributes and capabilities that those achieving such qualifications should be able to demonstrate.

### **The vision**

3.4 The requirements of the Standard for Childhood Practice are based on a vision of the manager/lead practitioner in the early years and childcare service who, having demonstrated the competences/learning outcomes defined, will:

- lead and support the provision of high quality and flexible early years and childcare services
- work in partnership with families and communities and
- collaborate with other agencies and other children's services.

3.5 In consequence, early years and childcare services will:

- enable children to be successful learners capable of meeting their potential and developing the social skills and attitudes that will stand them in good stead in later life
- provide the safe and stimulating environment parents and carers want for their children
- enable parents and carers to take up employment and training opportunities.

### **Core professional sector**

3.6 Learners achieving manager/lead practitioner qualifying awards will work with children between birth and 16 years of age in early years and childcare contexts.

### **National standards**

3.7 The Standard for Childhood Practice is defined in terms of the descriptors of level 9 in the SCQF but also takes account of the following:

- the National Occupational Standards for Children's Care, Learning and Development
- the National Occupational Standards for Playwork
- the Roles and Responsibilities Framework developed as part of the National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce in Scotland
- the Early Years Professional National Standards of the Children's Workforce Development Council
- the National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16 of the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care
- the National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership.

### **The national learning context**

3.8 Scotland's Lifelong Learning strategy envisions 'the best possible match between the learning opportunities open to people and the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours which will strengthen Scotland's economy and society'.

3.9 The Standard and Guidelines for Childhood Practice fit firmly within that context and with other strategic developments across the Scottish Government, notably the National Priorities in Education, A Curriculum for Excellence, A Smart, Successful Scotland, Closing the Opportunity Gap and Choosing Our Future: Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy.

3.10 The organising principles for the implementation of the Standard for Childhood Practice are informed by the recommendations of the report of the Leitch Review of Skills, Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills, (HM Treasury, 2006). Programmes of learning:

- should be demand led
- should build on existing structures

- should share responsibility between employers, providers and learners
- where possible, knowledge and skills should be portable between sectors and services
- should be able to adapt and respond to developing circumstances.

In addition, and crucially, learning in this professional context should be work-based.

## **The European context**

3.11 Programmes of learning leading to the award of a Scottish bachelor's degree conform to the requirements of the First Cycle defined by the framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (the Bologna Process) and carry 180 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits. Learners achieving a bachelor's degree are also entitled to be issued with the European Diploma Supplement.

3.12 The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) will additionally allow the recognition of credit and credit transfer within the vocational education sector.

## **Audience**

3.13 It is expected that this subject benchmark statement for the Standard for Childhood Practice will be useful to:

- learners undertaking programmes
- employers and prospective employers
- committee members in the voluntary and local authority sectors
- those involved in designing, approving, validating and accrediting programmes
- those who teach and assess in programmes
- those who are responsible for the assessment, review and monitoring of programmes
- those who are responsible for building opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) using the statements in this Standard, including training providers and awarding bodies
- members of other professions who have an interest in the delivery and development of early years and childcare services
- those with a responsibility for the development of policy
- parents and carers.

3.14 The Standard for Childhood Practice is also expected to inform provision and partnership by and between Scotland's universities and colleges, training providers, awarding bodies, and public, private and voluntary sector employers. Partnerships for provision may engage any or all of these.

## **4 Nature and scope of the Standard for Childhood Practice**

### **Professionalism**

4.1 High quality early years and childcare services benefit children and their parents/carers. A well-qualified, professional workforce is the most important factor in delivering the quality of services that will give children the best possible start in life.

4.2 The Standard for Childhood Practice will support the establishment and recognition of the professional status of workers providing early years and childcare services. It will inform the integrated qualifications and professional development framework and so impact on the professional development of all workers.

4.3 The new learning programmes based on the Standard for Childhood Practice will be designed to enhance and improve service standards. They will facilitate the development of the whole profession and in particular will support the development of managers/lead practitioners who are:

- competent to work across a wide range of settings
- confident in what they know and can do
- clear about their own professional identity and that of other professionals
- flexible and adaptable
- committed to continuous improvement
- proactive in responding to and implementing change
- able to demonstrate leadership and vision
- able to contribute to the development of the profession.

### **Expectations**

4.4 The Standard for Childhood Practice consists of outcome statements that set out what learners must know, understand and be able to do to achieve the qualification. Programme providers must show that the programme they offer meets the requirements of this Standard.

4.5 The Standard for Childhood Practice does not set a national curriculum for programmes leading to the award of qualifications. It seeks to encourage programme and service providers to work collaboratively in the design and delivery of their curricula. Its essential feature is the specification against which providers are expected, as a minimum, to set their standards for an award.

## Level of performance

4.6 The Standard for Childhood Practice describes the level of performance expected of learners who successfully complete a programme leading to an award.

4.7 Programmes should enable learners to achieve a threshold level of performance in relation to each of the elements of the standard and should allow the achievement of particular strengths in some of them. They should allow, additionally, the development of skills in specific areas that can be transferred to other areas of professional practice or further developed through continuous professional development.

## 5 Delivering the Standard for Childhood Practice through an integrated qualifications framework

### Attributes of the qualification framework

5.1 The main attributes of the qualification structure will be:

- there will be one framework for the whole sector
- services will be led by SCQF level 9 qualified professionals
- there will be entry and exit points at each level
- there will be college, university and other work-based provision
- prior learning will be recognised and accredited
- progression and continuing professional development will be supported
- the identification of a shared knowledge and skills base across children's services will be supported.

### Recruitment to programmes

5.2 Potential recruits to programmes leading to an SCQF level 9 manager/lead practitioner qualification through the integrated qualifications and professional development framework will include:

- **workers already in post as leaders/managers** without a qualification at SCQF level 9 that will meet the SSSC's new requirement for managers/lead practitioners
- **workers moving on** from level 7 practitioner qualifications such as SVQ3 and Higher National Certificates (HNCs) through additional CPD qualifications like Higher National Diplomas (HNDs), SVQ4s, PDAs, Diplomas of Higher Education, and then on to level 9
- **'direct entry' candidates** with existing awards at level 9 or above eg graduates with vocational degrees eg in teaching, community learning and development, social work, health; or with non-vocational degrees eg in history, chemistry, media, international relations, psychology, or with other equivalent awards
- **workers from other workforces** with relevant level 7, 8 or 9 qualifications eg in residential childcare.

## **Possible forms of delivery of the complete framework**

5.3 Among the possible forms of delivery of programmes to support the achievement of the Standard for Childhood Practice will be:

- new awards, covering SCQF levels 7, 8, 9
- new top-up awards for practitioners with HNC/SVQ3, and those with additional qualifications such as HND/SVQ4, PDA, Registered Managers Award (RMA)
- new awards for candidates with degrees or equivalent awards.

5.4 All routes to qualification can be part-time or full-time, or a blend of both.

## **Collaboration**

5.5 Delivery of programmes for managers/lead practitioners will be through partnership arrangements with employers and workplace providers. Delivery may also involve partnership arrangements between a number of different training providers.

5.6 Within partnerships the provision of learning experiences must be jointly planned with the roles and responsibilities of managers, of tutors and assessors, and of learners clearly defined. This definition will normally take the form of a service level agreement.

5.7 The quality of the arrangements for partnerships will be kept under consideration by the partners through a process of ongoing self-evaluation and considered both in its initial accreditation processes for awards and in subsequent reviews.

# **6 Learning, teaching and assessment**

## **Principles**

6.1 The organising principles for programmes leading to the qualification are that they will:

- be based on learning in and through the workplace
- be delivered through partnership
- provide flexible, responsive and adaptable opportunities for learning
- be challenging and stimulating
- provide effective support for learners.

## **Learning in and through workplace settings**

6.2 Programmes for learners working towards manager/lead practitioner recognition, and who are already working as practitioners in the sector, will require at least one additional learning experience in an early years and childcare setting other than their own workplace in order to achieve the level 9 qualification.

6.3 Programmes for learners who have not yet achieved practitioner status must include a minimum of two practice for learning experiences in different and distinct settings. The minimum amount of time in a placement workplace setting will depend on local circumstances but it should be of a sufficient length to enable significant learning.

6.4 It will be a requirement for approval that all programmes leading to the qualification at level 9 will include a minimum of 50 per cent of learning time being spent in workplace settings. The providing organisation's procedures for the recognition of prior learning can contribute to this requirement.

6.5 It will be open to providers to use the arrangements for SVQs as part of the practice for learning element in their provision. Practice Learning Qualifications (Social Services) level 9 modules might also be included. Consideration could also be given to the use of virtual learning environments as one of the means of providing learning through the workplace.

## **Assessment**

6.6 All assessment should be related to learning outcomes defined by the Standard for Childhood Practice with a substantial proportion directly connected to learning in the workplace. Appropriate arrangements should be put in place for the assessment of practice skills. Assessment procedures might include observation, reflective accounts, critical incident analyses, self and peer assessment, portfolios, learning contracts, case studies, projects, and simulations. They might also include critical analyses based on reading or on lectures and tutorials. Use might be made of virtual learning environments.

6.7 It will be for the providers of programmes to propose forms of assessment that are appropriate to their particular methods of delivery.

6.8 The role of employers and placement supervisors in supporting assessment processes should be carefully considered. Their support will be central in contributing to the provision of an appropriate environment for the demonstration of the learning outcomes defined by the Standard for Childhood Practice and will be an important element in partnership arrangements.

## **7 Professional development**

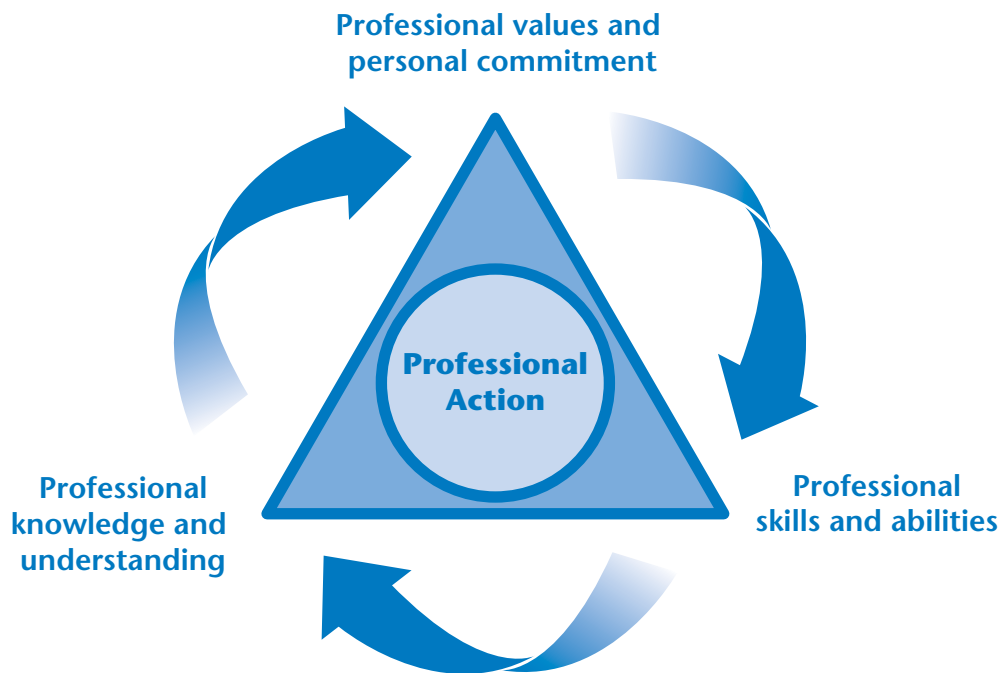
### **Interrelationship of aspects of professional development**

7.1 Programmes leading to the qualification for managers/lead practitioners in Childhood Practice will promote three main aspects of professional development:

- professional values and personal commitment
- professional knowledge and understanding
- professional skills and abilities.

7.2 The significance of placing these three aspects in a single structure is to emphasise that they are not simply lists of competences or outcomes. They are inherently linked to each other in the development of the professional, and one aspect does not exist independently of the other two. It is the interrelationship among all three which develops professionalism and leads to appropriate professional action. The interrelationship is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The interrelationship of the main aspects of professional development



7.3 The design of each programme will offer a distinctive balance but will develop all three aspects.

### **Transferable skills**

7.4 Programmes within the framework will help learners to develop skills that are transferable to other areas of learning and other areas of professional employment. These skills are not additional to the Standard for Childhood Practice but are implicit in the outcomes that successful learners will demonstrate.

### **A common format**

7.5 The format of the Standard for Childhood Practice parallels that used for standards in social work education and in initial teacher education as well as comparable documents for nursing, midwifery and health-visiting. This allows for the identification of common elements in the training of these different professions and for the possibility of future integrated training initiatives.



# Part two: The Standard for Childhood Practice programmes in Scotland

## 1 Introduction

1.1 The Standard for Childhood Practice programmes in Scotland will inform all awards and qualifications in the integrated qualifications and professional development framework.

1.2 The Standard for Childhood Practice contains the following:

- the **elements** that specify what is expected of a learner who has completed a programme in Childhood Practice and so meets the qualification requirement for registration as a lead practitioner/manager with SSSC. The elements also specify the design requirements for programmes
- the **expected features** that are intended to clarify and illustrate aspects of learner performance which the programme is designed to achieve. These features will be used by programme providers in designing assessment strategies to ensure that the requirements for learner performance are met. Expected features are shown in bullet points following the element.

## 2 Professional values and personal commitment

2.1 Managers/lead practitioners value and demonstrate a commitment to inclusion, diversity, social justice, anti-discrimination, and protecting and caring for children. They:

- respect and value children as unique, whole individuals and their right to participate and be consulted
- have high expectations for all children and a commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full potential
- respect the rights of all children without discrimination as defined in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991)*, the *Children (Scotland) Act 1995* and the *National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16 (2005)*
- have a commitment to promoting and supporting the *Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards*
- value and promote fairness and justice and adopt anti-discriminatory practices
- safeguard the children in their charge and promote and support their well-being and development.

**2.2 Managers/lead practitioners value themselves and others by taking responsibility for their own professional learning and development and that of the workers for whom they are responsible. They:**

- demonstrate the standards of conduct and practice set out in the *Code of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers* (SSSC, 2005)
- value and develop an environment for learning that enables and supports learning for themselves and for others and where practice is valued and developed
- show a commitment to the learning and development of workers for whom they are responsible, including volunteers and students on work placements
- show a commitment to reflection, critical self-evaluation and continuing professional development as means of improving practice and broadening expertise
- collaborate on continuing professional development with others in the service and in other children's services
- contribute to, influence, and respond to changes in the service and in other children's services.

**2.3 Managers/lead practitioners value, respect and show commitment to the parents and carers, families, communities, and other agencies and partnerships with whom they work. They:**

- value and respect the contribution of parents and carers to their children's learning and development
- establish a culture to promote positive, non-discriminatory and inclusive relationships with and between each child and family
- promote and advocate a high quality service for each child and family
- provide a service that reflects clear and shared values and respect for individuals
- promote and respond to partnerships with children, parents and carers, families, other agencies, colleagues, and other professional workers
- provide opportunities to foster children's understanding of different beliefs and cultures
- promote developing communities, community involvement and citizenship.

## **3 Professional knowledge and understanding**

### **Children and childhoods**

**3.1 Managers/lead practitioners have a broad and balanced knowledge and understanding of children and childhoods which underpins their practice and is used to inform their leadership of others. They:**

- demonstrate a critical understanding of how childhood is conceptualised and experienced in today's society by drawing on a range of theoretical disciplines including sociology, social policy and psychology

- are able to analyse and critically evaluate the contribution of parents and carers, families and communities to children's childhoods and the contribution of children themselves
- can draw on different disciplines and different theoretical perspectives to inform and challenge their understanding of concepts such as childcare and playwork and the blurring of boundaries between care, education, health, social welfare and play in a changing society
- have a critical understanding of children's personal, social and emotional development and know how to use it to support children's wellbeing and development
- have a critical understanding of children as thinkers and active learners and can link this to decisions about provision
- demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and models of health relevant for work with children and their families

## **Frameworks and programmes**

**3.2 Managers/lead practitioners have a critical understanding of the content of relevant organisational frameworks and statements of principles for supporting and enabling play, learning opportunities and experiences. They:**

- demonstrate secure knowledge, understanding and practical skill in relation to the content of a range of organisational frameworks used by the service for supporting play and learning
- know how to select, prepare, and use a range of resources to engage, support, stimulate and challenge children and to meet/match their needs
- know how to plan and provide safe and appropriate child lead and adult initiated experiences, activities and play opportunities in indoor, outdoor and out of setting spaces, which enable children to develop and learn
- have detailed knowledge of how to make effective personalised provision for children taking account of their ages, interests and abilities and of respect for diversity, promoting equality and inclusion
- can identify the range of influences and transitions within a play space or setting which affect children and their behaviour and link these to appropriate strategies to underpin policy and practice.

**3.3 Managers/lead practitioners have a critical understanding of the theories and principles required to analyse and critically evaluate the programmes provided by the service. They:**

- demonstrate an in depth knowledge and understanding of methods and underlying theories and are able to justify the content of programmes in relation to their relevance for children's development
- know how to evaluate and further develop programmes in order to maximise the opportunities for effective engagement by children.

**3.4 Managers/lead practitioners have a broad and integrated knowledge and understanding of the scope and nature of relevant organisational frameworks and their ongoing development. They:**

- show an understanding of the principles that underpin organisational frameworks and policy statements in the service and consequently be able to encourage enjoyment, challenge, choice and relevance of provision for children while responding to the requirements of families
- demonstrate informed knowledge of current innovations in framework and programme development and of how these may be integrated into practice
- know how to critically evaluate the process of framework and programme development and the factors that influence it
- can make links and connections to framework development in related sectors and to developments both in other parts of the United Kingdom and internationally.

### **Systems and professional responsibilities**

**3.5 Managers/lead practitioners have a critical understanding of the principle features of local, national and international systems, and of policies, practices, and legal requirements relevant to the service. They:**

- demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the implications for the service of current legal requirements, national policies and guidance on, for example, employment law, health and safety, and on safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children
- are able to use their understanding of relevant legislation and policy to establish a culture that promotes children's rights, equality, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice in all aspects of practice
- can critically consider links between theory, policy and practice through analysing and critically evaluating the relationship of their service to relevant quality standards and policy initiatives
- can use their understanding of local community resources and interprofessional involvement to build the capacity of the service and contribute to wider strategic developments within children's services.

**3.6 Managers/lead practitioners have a working knowledge of the breadth of the service and the professional roles and responsibilities of Early Years and Childcare workers within it. They:**

- demonstrate an understanding of breadth of the service and the range of systems which underpin provision within it
- demonstrate an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of early years and childcare workers in the service and the range of professional development opportunities available to them
- know about and understand the societal context, including the economic and political climate, within which the service is provided and can analyse and evaluate its impact on provision and professional roles

- demonstrate a critical understanding of the evolving nature of the service and its workforce and the likely implications of this for systems and for professional responsibilities.

**3.7 Managers/lead practitioners have a critical understanding of the contribution of other professionals to the service and to other children's services. They:**

- demonstrate an understanding of the professional attributes, roles and responsibilities of the range of other professionals who work in the service and in other children's services
- know about a range of concepts and models of working with other professionals, including interprofessional and interagency approaches, and have a critical understanding of how these may contribute to service developments in the future.

**3.8 Managers/lead practitioners have a critical understanding of the principles, theories and concepts of leadership and management practice relevant for their role. They:**

- demonstrate an understanding of models of leadership and leadership styles and can reflect on the implications of these for their current and future roles and practice
- are able to analyse a variety of approaches for developing the vision and culture of an organisation, and for developing and implementing policy and practice to suit strategic objectives
- demonstrate an understanding of a variety of strategies for communicating, building and managing teams, and supporting individual worker development
- can analyse the complexities of the management role in relation to managing self and others, as well as physical and financial resources, and can identify the management skills required
- can analyse priorities and risks in developing and implementing business and operational plans and can identify approaches for managing these in practice.

### **Evidence informed practice**

**3.9 Managers/lead practitioners have the knowledge and understanding needed to support evidence informed practice. They:**

- know how to access, and apply relevant research and enquiry-based findings
- know how to reflect on and engage in the systematic investigation of practice
- can make informed choices among particular research methods and methods of evaluation
- draw on a range of sources of evidence to analyse and evaluate practice
- draw on relevant principles, theories and approaches to inform their practice
- demonstrate the ability to share and discuss with others the principles and perspectives that underpin their own professional practice.

## 4 Professional skills and abilities

### Supporting play, learning opportunities and experiences

**4.1 Managers/lead practitioners coordinate and lead the provision of environments that are safe, secure, caring and nurturing, and inclusive. They:**

- provide environments and play spaces that are comfortable, welcoming and accessible to each child and her/his family and promote children's well-being and development
- develop policies and practices to provide a safe, secure environment for each child which meet all regulatory requirements and where each child can develop skills and knowledge to keep him/her safe
- understand and carry out responsibilities in relation to child protection by having procedures for child protection in place that are understood and implemented by all staff and by having an ethos of trust where staff feel confident and supported in raising concerns about child protection issues
- establish and maintain relationships with other agencies and ensure that workers understand their responsibilities and arrangements for liaising with other agencies when appropriate.

**4.2 Managers/lead practitioners lead and support the development of positive and caring relationships with each child and family. They:**

- enable good relationships to be established with each child and family, and build the ethos of the service around respect for and commitment to each child and family, workers, other colleagues and visitors
- encourage workers to listen and pay attention to what children communicate, value and respect their views, and provide them with opportunities to express their views and make decisions
- support sensitive and effective communication with all children
- demonstrate the values, attitudes and behaviour expected from children
- create environments and play spaces where relationships with each child are positive and affirming and each child's confidence and resilience is promoted
- provide opportunities for children to develop positive and supportive relationships with each other.

**4.3 Managers/lead practitioners coordinate and lead the provision of balanced and flexible programmes that support play and learning opportunities and encourage children to be healthy, active and achieving. They:**

- plan, implement and justify balanced and flexible programmes that provide enriching learning experiences and promote children's play, learning and development, using national and local guidelines
- promote children's active participation in programmes and their planning
- develop and make available resources to support programmes and their ongoing development

- demonstrate the continuous development of an environment to meet the needs of each child, informed by how children develop and learn and with a clear understanding of possible next steps in development and learning
- provide opportunities for sustained shared thinking with children and support the development of children's language and communication skills
- enable constructive and sensitive feedback to and from children to help them understand the process of their learning, what they have achieved and what they could do next
- demonstrate that they can develop strategies to promote children's positive behaviour, self control and independence.

**4.4 Managers/lead practitioners coordinate and support the tracking of children's progress and the planning and management of transitions. They:**

- develop and implement relevant ethical procedures for using observation and other strategies to document and record children's experiences, development and progress; enable children to participate and contribute
- use the information gained from observation and other strategies to inform planning and to improve and develop practice
- have procedures in place for producing reports on each child's achievements and progress for others, including parents and other professionals, in line with national and local guidance
- critically evaluate different models of assessment, recording and reporting
- identify and coordinate support for children whose progress is affected by changes or difficulties in their personal circumstances and know when to refer them to colleagues for specialist help
- enable children's planned and managed transitions within and between settings, providing relevant information to children and families and working with other services as appropriate
- establish good links with services that children move from and to.

**4.5 Managers/lead practitioners engage in professional reflection for continuing improvement. They:**

- identify and analyse routine professional problems and issues
- draw on a range of sources of evidence to question and be critical of practice and to support innovation and change
- use reflection on practice to act on and improve their own practice and that of colleagues
- involve children and families in reflection for continuing improvement of practice
- produce written reports that are well structured, convincingly argued and evidenced, and technically accurate.

## **Communication, collaboration and partnership**

### **4.6 Managers/lead practitioners lead and support teamwork and collaboration. They:**

- establish and develop a culture of collaboration and cooperative working between colleagues
- ensure that colleagues understand their role, are involved appropriately in supporting children, and understand their role when liaising with other agencies
- demonstrate their ability to work together with colleagues on policy development, on identification of examples of good practice, and on the establishment of a culture of continuous development and learning
- lead, influence and shape the policies and practices of their workplace and promote a collective responsibility for their implementation.

### **4.7 Managers/lead practitioners promote and actively lead others in working with parents and carers, families and communities. They:**

- confirm and empower parents and carers in their role and promote their involvement and engagement with the service
- establish fair, respectful, trusting and constructive relationships with parents/carers and families, communicate sensitively and effectively with them and in so doing ensure that parents' and carers' contributions are listened to and addressed
- provide a service that can be accessed by and meets the needs of each child and family
- demonstrate that they can work in partnership with families and parents/carers at home and in the setting to improve outcomes for children
- promote the involvement and engagement of parents through the provision of formal and informal opportunities through which information about their children's learning and development can be shared with parents/carers
- provide parents/carers and families with information about additional support services and support them to access specific services where appropriate
- establish effective partnerships with the local and wider community and provide opportunities to support children's developing understanding of their roles and responsibilities as citizens.

### **4.8 Managers/lead practitioners lead and support collaboration with other agencies and other children's services to build capacity and develop services. They:**

- enable workers in the service to understand how their service fits into the wider context of children's services
- are proactive in developing or contributing to integrated working and interprofessional collaborative practice with other professional workers and with agencies, networks and organisations in order to strengthen support for children and families and improve coordination across services
- actively participate in and contribute to joint service planning with other agencies to build the capacity of services and develop them for the future



- contribute to, and where appropriate lead, the work of a multi-professional team and coordinate and implement agreed programmes and interventions on a day-to-day basis.

## **Leadership and management**

### **4.9 Managers/lead practitioners take responsibility for identifying and supporting their own personal learning and professional development needs. They:**

- demonstrate the use of a range of routine communication, information and communication technology and numeracy skills, and some advanced and specialised skills to support their work with children and wider professional activities
- reflect on, review and evaluate their practice, modifying approaches where necessary
- take a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation and change, and adapt their practice if benefits and improvements are identified
- demonstrate the skills required to work in multi-professional teams and joint service planning, and to develop personal networks
- demonstrate their capacity to manage their own resources and to identify and undertake continuing professional development, taking account of registration requirements.

### **4.10 Managers/lead practitioners take responsibility for identifying and supporting the learning and professional development needs of workers for whom they are responsible and for supporting students learning in and through the workplace. They:**

- establish effective working relationships with learners
- create an environment for learning that enables and supports professional learning and where practice is valued and developed
- encourage and facilitate others to reflect on existing and new principles and practice, to share knowledge and evaluate their learning
- manage the quality of what workers do with children and identify gaps in their professional learning
- work with colleagues to identify their continuing professional development needs and plan and coordinate the delivery of appropriate learning programmes
- lead arrangements for the support, mentoring and supervision of students on work placements.

**4.11 Managers/lead practitioners take responsibility for the delivery and ongoing development of a high quality service for each child and family.** They:

- seek to ensure that all workers are aware of the core values, vision and culture of the service and have opportunities to contribute to their development
- develop effective management and communication strategies so that each worker is clear about her/his role and responsibilities within the service
- develop and maintain processes for developing, implementing and reviewing policies and operational plans for the service and for researching and evaluating innovation, impact, and change
- develop systems to support continuous quality improvement and effectiveness of the service for each child and family
- foster innovation and manage change
- provide leadership, motivation and support to colleagues in ongoing self evaluation
- coordinate and support the revision of policies, procedures and practice for registration and inspection and be accountable for them
- provide opportunities to share and contribute to the development of integrated services and joint planning of services with other agencies and the community.

**4.12 Managers/lead practitioners engage with the business management of the services they provide.** They:

- develop procedures for effective administration of the service provided, including promoting the use of technology
- have procedures in place to manage the physical resources of the service including the physical environment and health and safety
- develop procedures for the safe selection, recruitment, induction and retention of workers
- plan and control budgets, identifying and managing priorities and risks
- undertake organisational and workforce development planning , taking account of the individual learning plans of workers
- develop, implement and evaluate relevant business, operational and work plans as appropriate to their role.

## Appendix A: Supporting references

### Guidelines and codes of practice

Providers will be expected to make appropriate use of the following guidelines/codes of practice. These identify already agreed definitions of good practice in the design and delivery of awards.

QAA (2001) *The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland*  
[www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/SCQF/2001](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/SCQF/2001)

QAA (2001) *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*  
[www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section9](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section9)

Scottish Advisory Committee on Credit and Access (2004) *Facilitating credit-based links in higher education: Guidelines to support colleges and higher education institutions*  
[www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/scottishadvisory/credit\\_based.asp](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/scottishadvisory/credit_based.asp)

SCQF (2004) *SCQF Handbook Volume 1, SCQF Credit Rating Guidelines; Credit Transfer Guidelines' and Level Descriptors* [www.scqf.org.uk/downloads/HandbookVol1\\_2007.pdf](http://www.scqf.org.uk/downloads/HandbookVol1_2007.pdf)

SCQF (2005) *SCQF Handbook Volume 2, Recognition of Prior Learning*  
[www.scqf.org.uk/downloads/HandbookVol2\\_2007.pdf](http://www.scqf.org.uk/downloads/HandbookVol2_2007.pdf)

SCQF (2005) *Recognition of Informal Prior Learning (RPL) Core Principles and Key Features*  
[www.scqf.org.uk/downloads/rpl/RPL%20Core%20principles%20Key%20Features-final.pdf](http://www.scqf.org.uk/downloads/rpl/RPL%20Core%20principles%20Key%20Features-final.pdf)

### Other references

#### Books and articles

Brennan J, Little B et al (2006) *Towards a strategy for workplace learning. Report to HEFCE by CHERI and KPMG*  
[www.hefce.ac.uk/Pubs/rdreports/2006/rd09\\_06/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/Pubs/rdreports/2006/rd09_06/)

Gallacher J and Reeve F (2002) *Work-based learning: the implications for higher education and for supporting informal learning in the workplace*, Milton Keynes: Open University  
[www.open.ac.uk/lifelong-learning/papers](http://www.open.ac.uk/lifelong-learning/papers)

Glass A, Higgins K and McGregor A, (2002) *Delivering work-based learning*, Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, Edinburgh: the Stationary Office  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2002/06/14558/3244](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2002/06/14558/3244)

Gray D (2001) *A briefing on work-based learning*, York: Higher Education Academy  
[www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp?process=full\\_record&section=generic&id=11](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp?process=full_record&section=generic&id=11)

Nixon I, Smith K, Stafford R and Camm S (2006) *Work-based learning: illuminating the higher education landscape*, York: Higher Education Academy  
[www.heacademy.ac.uk/employability.asp?process=full\\_record&section=generic&id=692&project\\_area=pa5](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/employability.asp?process=full_record&section=generic&id=692&project_area=pa5)

## **Government publications**

Leitch S (2006) Review of Skills, Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills, HM Treasury  
[www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/523/43/leitch\\_finalreport051206.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/523/43/leitch_finalreport051206.pdf)

Scottish Executive (2005) The National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/04/12103332/33397](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/04/12103332/33397)

Scottish Executive (2006) National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce in Scotland, Astron  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/07/10140823/0](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/07/10140823/0)

Scottish Executive (2006) Building on Success: A Discussion of Specific Issues Related to Lifelong Learning in Scotland  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/11/06141044/2](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/11/06141044/2)

Scottish Executive (2007) National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce: Analysis of Written Consultation and Workshop Responses  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/03/21090538/0](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/03/21090538/0)

## **National standards**

The National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16 of the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/04/12103332/33329](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/04/12103332/33329)

The National Occupational Standards for Children's Care, Learning and Development  
[www.ukstandards.org/Find\\_Occupational\\_Standards.aspx?NosFindID=5&search\\_string=child+care](http://www.ukstandards.org/Find_Occupational_Standards.aspx?NosFindID=5&search_string=child+care)

The National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership  
[www.management-standards.org](http://www.management-standards.org)

The National Occupational Standards for Playwork  
[www.ukstandards.org/Find\\_Occupational\\_Standards.aspx?NosFindID=5&search\\_string=Playwork+here](http://www.ukstandards.org/Find_Occupational_Standards.aspx?NosFindID=5&search_string=Playwork+here)

The Early Years Professional National Standards of the Children's Workforce Development Council  
[www.cwdcouncil.co.uk/pdf/Early%20Years/Draft\\_EYP\\_Standards\\_Nov\\_2006.pdf](http://www.cwdcouncil.co.uk/pdf/Early%20Years/Draft_EYP_Standards_Nov_2006.pdf)

## **QAA publications**

QAA (2003) *Handbook for enhancement-led institutional review: Scotland*  
[www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/ELIR/handbook/scottish\\_hbook\\_preface.asp](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/ELIR/handbook/scottish_hbook_preface.asp)

QAA (2006) Flexible Delivery publications  
[www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/themes/FlexibleDelivery/publications.asp](http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/themes/FlexibleDelivery/publications.asp)

## **Other relevant sites**

Playwork foundation degree and standards information  
[www.playwork.org.uk/HE/SEFD.php4](http://www.playwork.org.uk/HE/SEFD.php4)

## Appendix B: Membership of the Steering Group

Anne Hughes	Deputy Principal, University of Strathclyde (Chair)
Carol Ball	UNISON
Penny Curtis	Convention of Scottish local Authorities
Sylvia English	National Day Nurseries Association
Susan Bain	Association of Quality Nurseries in Scotland
Jo Hughes	Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (Pre-Fives)
Ann Brady	Chief Executive Care and Learning Alliance
Anne Rooney	Childcare Partnerships
Dr Jane Polglase	Association of Scotland's Colleges
May Geddes	HMIE
Eleanor Ramsay	Scottish Qualifications Authorities Care Scotland
Dr Simin Abrahams	Universities Scotland
Ian Mclaughlan	Scottish Pre School Play Association
Maggie Simpson	Scottish Childminding Association
Irene Audain	Scottish Out of School Network
Phil Ford	Skills Active
Heather Gibson	QAA Scotland
Pauline Holland	Barnardos
Rosemary Milne	Chief Executive, Smile Childcare (voluntary sector)
Catherine Agnew	Care Commission
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Frances Scott	Scottish Social Services Council
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Joan Menmuir	Consultant

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