



Lead Examiner Report

Summer 2013

NQF BTEC Level 3 Nationals in
Children's Play, Learning and
Development

Unit 1: Child Development (20780E)

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For June 2013, Unit 1 Child Development, the grade boundaries are as follows:

Grade	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Unclassified
Mark	59	45	32	0

Unit 1 – Child Development

This is the first time that a BTEC Early Years qualification at level 3 has been assessed externally and it is therefore understandable that there was some apprehension about the introduction of an externally assessed unit.

It is pleasing to report that many of the learners who sat the paper responded to the case study well and that full marks were awarded to some learners on each item, although this was seen to be more frequent where there was no requirement for theories to be addressed.

Centres are to be highly commended for full coverage of the specification which enabled their learners to access all aspects of the paper.

Centres may wish to note the following observations which relate to each question and which should be used as guidance in future series.

Part One

All questions relate to the case study and therefore all responses should be applied.

- 1 Learners were required to provide two explanations of the effects of being born prematurely. Most learners responded appropriately and provided valid responses regarding the mother's condition during pregnancy. However, this was not always developed to include what the effects on the development of the child would be, hence a good number of learners could only be awarded the two marks for identification and none for further development of the response.
- 2 Many learners were not aware of the principles of development which are stated within the specification and therefore did not access the two marks which were awarded for the appropriate response.
- 3 It is very pleasing to note that the overwhelming majority of learners could correctly differentiate between gross and fine motor skills and were able to provide the correct responses from the case study.

4 a) As with the previous response, it is pleasing to note that most learners are aware of areas of development and can apply their knowledge to specific age groups.

b) The question was designed to test student knowledge on language theory and required a brief outline for four marks. The majority of learners were unable to develop the theory from what was given within the stem of the question and therefore failed to access more than one or two marks. It is important that learners are aware of all theories mentioned within the specification and can demonstrate understanding of them.

c) Learners were required to demonstrate knowledge of how the approaches used by practitioners within the case study could assist in developing language skills. Whilst the vast majority of learners were able to cite appropriate points from the case study, they failed to apply them directly to the question which related to approaches used, with responses such as 'enjoys reading' or 'prefers communicating with adults' being very common.

5 The responses to this question were variable, where learners were aware of the theory they were able to apply it with the more knowledgeable learners accessing mark band three. In other instances, the responses were very poor as learners did not know enough about the theory to provide appropriate responses. It is important that learners are aware of the entire range of theories which are covered within the specification for Unit 1.

6 As with the previous item, responses were variable, the more knowledgeable learners were able to cite two or three appropriate theories and apply them to the subject of the case study. In other examples, learners could not name the theory but managed to convey some understanding and were generally awarded marks within level 1. Centres must be aware that in future series, where learners are required to provide responses which relate to theories, no marks will be awarded unless the theories are correctly cited.

7 Most learners were aware of some aspects of the theories of both Bruner and Piaget, those who were able to apply the appropriate aspects of the theories by taking into account the relevant ages were rewarded very generously as they had provided proof that they could apply both theories. Where learners demonstrated knowledge of the theories but were unable to apply them, they were unable to access the higher level 2 and level 3 mark bands.

Part Two

- 8 The question was designed to enable learners to identify principles of development, however, very few learners were able to provide the correct response and tended to cite gross and fine motor skills as opposed to two of the three principles of development.
- 9 a) Most learners were aware of Bowlby's theory and many were able to develop their responses to access the full four marks. Some learners provided extensive responses to the question, which although being correct could not be awarded more than the four marks as stated at the end of the question. This is unfortunate as learners penalise themselves by using up valuable time to provide such answers which unfortunately cannot be credited. Centres are therefore advised to provide learners with guidance as to how to approach questions on future papers in relation to the allocated marks.
- b) Learners who were aware of comparisons between the brain and computer technology were rewarded accordingly, those who responded by implication and who referred to encoding and other jargon used in computing were also credited with one mark.
- 10 It is pleasing to note that the question was responded to very well with learners demonstrating that they could discuss education in relation to areas of development. Further credit was given where learners also made comparisons of the effectiveness of education with other factors such as poverty, social class etc. It is very encouraging to note that a good number of learners discussed both positive and negative factors as well as providing comprehensive coverage of a number of aspects and as a consequence were able to access full marks.
- 11 a) The quality of responses to the question were variable, the candidates who applied their responses in relation to the subject of Dan being gifted were in general able to provide well rounded and applied responses which enabled them to access the higher mark range. However others tended to go off at a tangent and address the consequences of Dan being gifted in relation to the effects on the other children and unfortunately as a consequence could not access many marks.
- b) The question was very often responded to well by a good number of learners who clearly understood what holistic development entailed and who gave two or three appropriate theorists with some development as to how the theories could promote Dan's further development. On this occasion, some credit was given for theorists who were not mentioned within the specification, however centres must note that in future series, credit will only be given where the theories are included within the current specification.

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