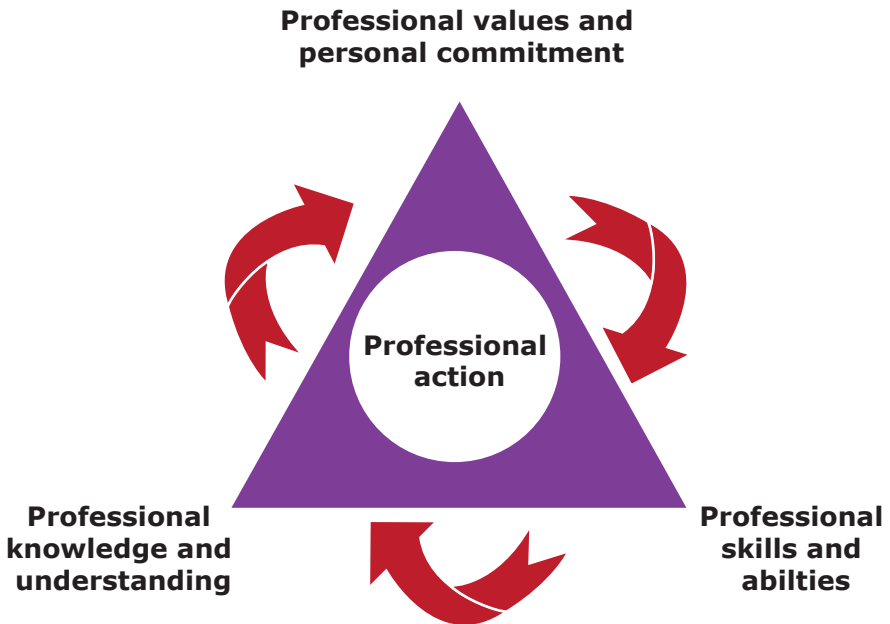




Guidance on the Standard for Childhood Practice for learners and employers

In October 2007 Adam Ingram, Minister for Children and Early Years, launched the benchmark Standard for Childhood Practice.

A subject benchmark standard is used in higher education and the Standard for Childhood Practice defines the professional knowledge and understanding, values and commitments and professional skills and abilities that are necessary for managers in early years and child care services. By putting these elements together you produce sound professional action and so ensure the best outcomes for children and young people and their families. Well informed professional action means the sector has managers who are well equipped for the complex job of leading and managing an effective early years and child care service.





Who will need the new awards?

Scottish Ministers have asked the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) to change the current qualifications requirements for managers/lead practitioners of a day care of children service from the 1 December 2011. A day care of children service includes nurseries, playgroups, crèches and out of school care clubs. This means that when managers/lead practitioners of day care of children services either register or re register after the 1 December 2011, they need to have or will have a condition set on their registration to get the new childhood practice level 9 award.

For more information about registration with the SSSC, please contact: registration@sssc.uk.com or go to: www.sssc.uk.com

What do the new awards look like?

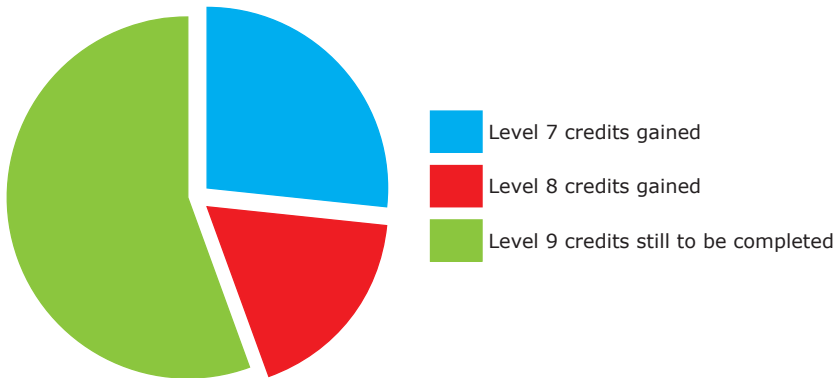
The new awards are based on learners gaining 360 Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) credits at levels 7, 8 and 9. The course providers should allow you to use relevant previous learning either to get onto the childhood practice award or as credit towards gaining the award. This is called Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The credit will be awarded for learning that maps directly to the standard. When you are doing the childhood practice award you will study a range of new topics and do further **work based** activities based on the benchmark. This will be assessed and will be added to credit you already have to make up the 360 credits.

How credit adds up

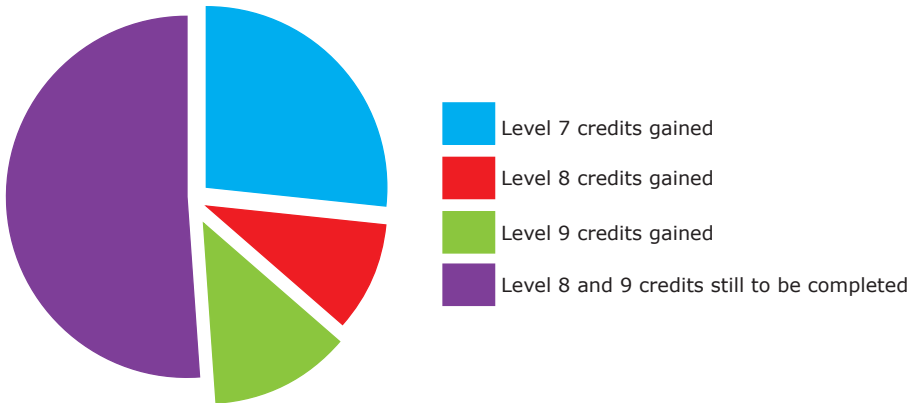
The illustrations that follow show examples of credit you may already have that can be used towards some childhood practice awards.

Each illustration shows how credit might be given for particular early years and child care awards. There is not an illustration for Scottish Nursery Nurse Board certificate as this award isn't credit rated. Information about what you might be asked to do with this type of award is explained on page 5.

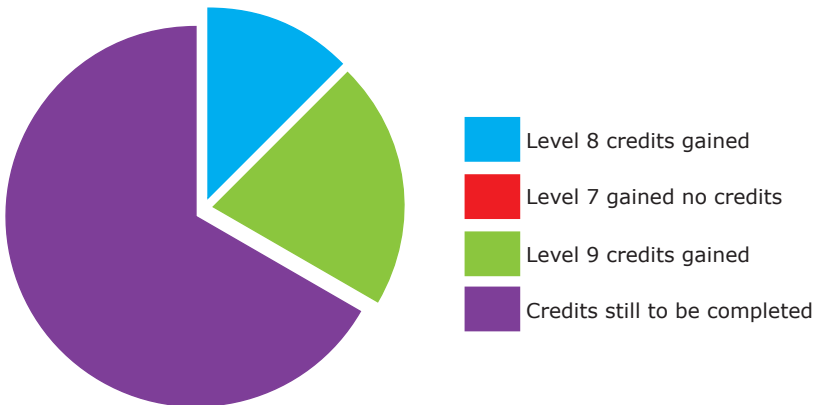
Childhood Practice with an HNC in Early Education and Child Care and PDA Early Education



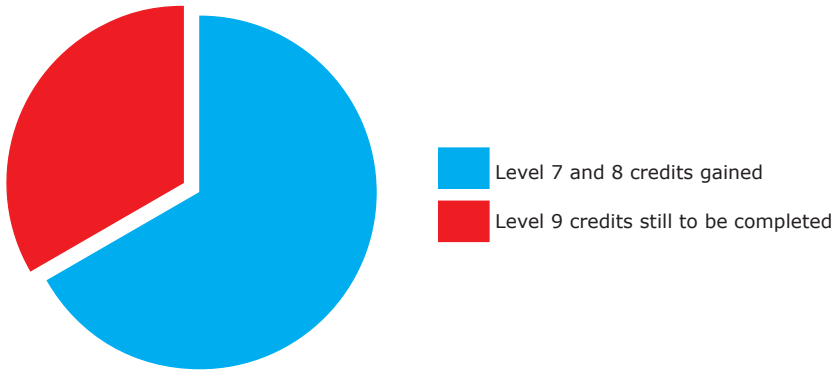
Childhood Practice with an HNC Early Education and Child Care plus an SVQ level 4 in Children’s Care, Learning and Development



Childhood Practice with an SVQ level 4 in Children’s Care, Learning and Development without an HNC



Childhood Practice with SQA's HND in Childhood Practice



Giving credit

Different course providers **may give different amounts of credit** for the qualifications you already hold. However under approval rules for the childhood practice awards providers must give some credit for the assessed learning you have done that is relevant to the childhood practice standard. If you want to know more about this you should contact the course providers directly. Please see page 9 for contact details.

Scottish Nursery Nurse Board certificate (SNNB)

When you first did your training you may have been awarded the Scottish Nursery Nurse Board (SNNB) certificate. You will find that this has not been credit rated. This is because it pre dates the SCQF. If you do have this award you can still apply to do a childhood practice award. Most awarding bodies will encourage you to submit a learning statement that provides them with an indication of your learning and your potential to do the award. For



more information about this you should contact the provider of the childhood practice award directly. Sometimes candidates are given credit for non certificated learning which can be shown through a process of recognition of prior informal learning or RPL. The course provider will be able to discuss this with you. Remember, course providers can only give credit where it is shown to be **directly related** to the Standard for Childhood Practice.

Work based activities

When you are completing the childhood practice award you will be required to complete further work based activities based on the benchmark. Work based tasks mean activities, developments or innovations, based on what you would be doing as a manager on a day to day basis in your workplace. This might be directly with the children, parents or staff you are working with or be related to the development of the centre.

It may be that to gain additional knowledge and understanding you are asked to go into another setting. If this happens it will be well supported and you would not be expected to do anything that another nursery owner would not want you to know about their business. It is likely you would be working collaboratively with a partner you have identified during your course or that your child care partnership has identified for you. You may also be asked to use an online community of learning. This is intended to support your understanding of some of the new parts of the award and to discuss issues of interest with others. It might be that you are able to share good practice with other managers in different parts of Scotland by using technology. Here is an example of how this might happen.

Case study

Sam, Ronnie and Sukla all manage pre five day care of children services. Sam is the peripatetic manager of three very small rural nurseries. In total she manages six staff. Sam has struggled to find time to put into practice appropriate performance systems across the three nurseries as part of quality improvement. She would like to implement this and will use evidence from this for a course assignment for the childhood practice award.

Sukla manages a busy multi lingual centre with 80 children and 10 members of staff that also offers a range of services for the local Bengali community. Sukla would like to expand the provision and open two smaller units in another part of the city. She needs to understand some of the more strategic requirements of this. She will be investigating this as part of her childhood practice award course requirements.

Ronnie is owner and manager of a nursery that offers full day care for children. The centre has recently been commended by the Care Commission/HMIE for the staff development and appraisal systems they use. A criticism of the centre was that the links with parents could be better. Ronnie will be investigating how this can be improved and will use it as an example for his course work for the childhood practice award.

An online peer support system has been set up by the childhood practice course team and all three managers use it to discuss and debate issues. On this occasion it has been particularly useful in bringing the three people together and allowing them to share their own areas of expertise. It has also given them opportunities for observation and work based learning in each of their nurseries.



The role of employers

Before you embark on a childhood practice course you need to make sure your employer will support you. This will include an employer agreeing to do the following to provide opportunities for appropriate learning experiences in the workplace:

- make provision for you to carry out prescribed tasks
- support the negotiation where you require experience in other work contexts
- authenticate work and reports required by the programme provider
- support you in the assessment process
- nominate a specific named person in the workplace who will make sure all of these are done. (In some authorities this might be someone from a child care partnership or another umbrella or support organisation)
- work with the course provider.

It is unlikely that you will be able to complete the award if your employer can't support you. It is to everyone's advantage to have a well qualified workforce and most employers can see the benefits, including commercial benefits this will bring their centres. High quality and well qualified managers provide leadership that will bring added value for children and parents.

Who are the course providers?

Since 2008, universities across Scotland have been coming forward for approval with the SSSC to deliver the award in childhood practice. The first graduates believe the award has enhanced and influenced their practice and provided them with

real confidence to deliver effective services. From 2010, the following universities will be delivering the award in childhood practice.

- University of Strathclyde
- University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI Millennium Institute)
- University of Dundee
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Glasgow
- University of the West of Scotland
- University of Aberdeen
- The Open University.

To find out more about childhood practice awards in any of these organisations you should contact the following people:

University of Strathclyde, Jacque Fee at: Jacque.fee@strath.ac.uk or Jacqueline Henry at jacqueline.henry@strath.ac.uk

University of the Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute (UHI), Alice Mongiello at: Alice.Mongiello@inverness.uhi.ac.uk

University of Dundee, Brenda Dunn at: B.H.Dunn@dundee.ac.uk

University of Edinburgh, Lorna McNicoll at: lorna.mcnicoll@ed.ac.uk

University of Glasgow, Mary Wingrave at: m.wingrave@educ.gla.ac.uk

University of the West of Scotland, Dorothy Johnson at: dorothy.johnson@uws.ac.uk



University of Aberdeen, Catriona McDonald at:
c.mcdonald@abdn.ac.uk

The Open University in Scotland, Lore Gallestegi at:
l.gallestegi@open.ac.uk

The universities will also be able to tell you about any partnerships they have with private training providers or with Scotland's colleges. These providers may offer one part of the award while the universities do the final level 9 part of the award.

The universities and colleges will be able to tell you how long the course will take to complete based on what you may have to complete. If you need any information about the HND in Childhood Practice, SQA Care Scotland will be able to help and you should contact Louise Gaddi or Marisa Meechan at:
Louise.Gaddi@sqa.org.uk; marisa.meechan@sqa.org.uk

Some of the providers will offer childhood practice courses through a combination of distance learning, on site learning and evening/weekend attendance. You should choose the provider whose course suits your individual needs best.

SQA are currently developing a level 9 childhood practice award. If approved by the SSSC, this award will be recognised in the same way as the BA Childhood Practice and managers/lead practitioners of day care of children services will be able to use this to meet the SSSC requirements. It is envisaged that colleges/training providers and universities will form partnership arrangements in the delivery of this award which could mean you study the entire childhood practice award with a local college. It could also be possible that you study part of the award with your local college and part with a higher education institution.

Please contact Karen Sharp at: K.Sharp@langside.ac.uk or Paul Gallagher at: Paul.Gallagher@sqa.org.uk at SQA for more information on the development of this childhood practice award.

More information

If you would like more detailed information about work based learning and assessment, the recognition of prior learning or any other feature from this booklet please contact the SSSC for a copy of the booklet **Delivering the Standard for Childhood Practice – Guidelines for providers, their partners and learners enrolled on programmes** at: enquiries@sssc.uk.com or visit the childhood practice pages on the SSSC website: www.sssc.uk.com

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How long will it take to gain the awards?

The length of the course will depend on what you still require to complete. The course provider will be able to tell you this once they have considered your previous qualifications.

What funding is available?

You should contact your employer or local authority Child Care Partnership to find out about funding available. You may be entitled to use an ILA 500 and you should follow the link to www.ilascotland.org.uk for more information. The SSSC's **Funding and Support for Training Guide** on our website: www.sssc.uk.com will also help.

Can I study part-time?

Some of the providers will offer childhood practice courses through a combination of distance learning, on site learning and evening/weekend attendance. You should choose the provider whose course suits your individual needs best.



Why do I have to do this after already gaining qualifications?

The Scottish Government has asked the SSSC to require managers/lead practitioners who are working in day care of children services to have the award from December 2011. This is because research has indicated that the best outcomes and experiences for children come from the best qualified and best led services.

The university doesn't recognise my qualifications, what now?

It is very unlikely this will happen as most people need to have specific qualifications to register with the SSSC. All of these are recognised by the universities.

What is the deadline for gaining this award?

The SSSC will ask you to have or be working towards this award from 1 December 2011 or when you re-register with us.

I don't have any awards in child care but I manage a day care of children service. Do I need to undertake a SVQ level 4 Children's Care, Learning and Development plus this new childhood practice award?

Yes you would need to undertake both qualifications. But for most people entry to the childhood practice award will be through completion of earlier awards such as HNC/D and SVQ level 3 and 4.

I am registered with the General Teaching Council (GTC) not the SSSC, do I need to undertake the childhood practice award?

The SSSC cannot ask registrants of another regulatory body to undertake any qualifications. It does not have the authority to do this.

I have an HNC/SVQ level 3 and am about to start the PDA in Child Care and Education. Should I complete the PDA or undertake the new childhood practice award?

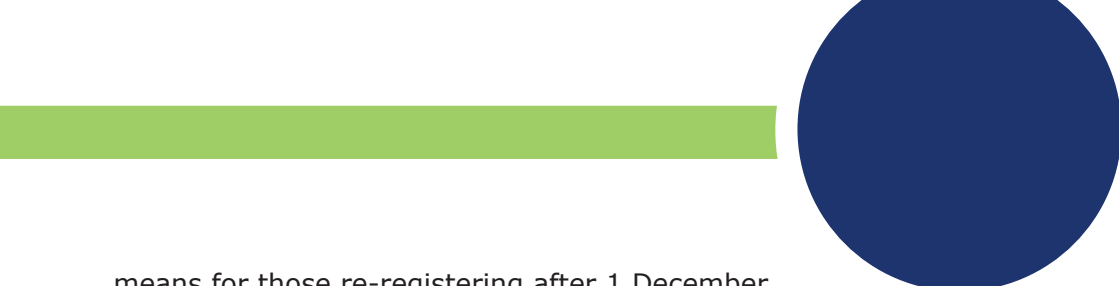
You should go ahead and complete the PDA. For example if you have an HNC Child Care and Education and are about to undertake the PDA Certificate in Early Education and Child Care, the course provider will be able to take into account credits towards the childhood practice award.

I'm halfway through a leadership/early years management qualification, do I still need to complete the childhood practice award?

Yes. You should be able to get credit for what you have already done and you may have very little additional work to complete the new award. It is best to discuss this with a course provider who will be able to tell you how well the award you are doing maps on to the Standard for Childhood Practice.

Will workers who have already registered with the SSSC as managers/lead practitioners have their registration cancelled if they don't achieve the new award by the 1 December 2011? Or would they be prevented from re-registering unless they have the new award?

When managers apply for re-registration from the 1 December 2011 onwards they will be expected to have or to have started working towards the new award. However applicants for registration who do not hold required qualifications may, if they meet all of the other eligibility criteria for registration eg evidence of 'good character', be granted registration subject to the condition that they achieve the required qualifications within a specified period – their first three year period of registration. This



means for those re-registering after 1 December 2011 they will have until 2014 to gain the new award.

What are the benefits of the new childhood practice award?

The new degree level child care awards will enhance the professionalism and leaderships skills of those who work in child care and early years. It will be an important step in giving children in Scotland the best possible start in life. Graduates of the award are well placed to work effectively with children and their families and across agencies that support children's health and well being. It's also anticipated that employers will recognise the benefits, such as increased skills, knowledge, professionalism, of employing managers/leaders with these types of qualifications in the future.

The childhood practice award provide practitioners with a real career opportunity to enhance their initial qualification.

Evidence shows that the best experiences for children come from the best qualified staff, including where the manager has a degree level award.

I am a lead practitioner, do I need to gain this new award?

Lead practitioners and managers have the same function. This award is intended for the person who manages the centre and it is not anticipated there will be more than one person in each centre. However you may choose to do the award as a career development opportunity.

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