



MCAST

Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology

MQF Level 5

**MCAST Higher Diploma in Advanced Studies in
the Early Years**

CS5-01-19

Course Description

This course has been designed to equip students with innovative underpinning knowledge, understanding and skills for success in employment within the early years sector.

The programme provides the required experiences to link theory to practice in order to develop skills and competences as well as personal qualities and attitudes which are essential for an Early Years' professional. Along the course students will engage in pedagogical critical discussions and field internships which will help them acquire the required leadership skills to provide young children with the appropriate opportunities in their development.

Programme Learning Outcomes

At the end of the programme the learner will be able to:

- 1. Conduct research in the Early Years sector*
- 2. Maintain health and safety standards in child care and kindergarten settings*
- 3. Enhance managerial and pedagogical competences*
- 4. Provide an adequate educational environment for young learners.*

Entry Requirements

MCAST-BTEC National Diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development and SEC/O-Level passes in Mathematics, English and Maltese

or

MCAST-BTEC National Diploma in Children's Play, Learning and Development and SEC/O-Level passes in Mathematics, English and Maltese

or

2 A-Level passes and 2 I-Level passes

Compulsory A-level or I-level: 2 subjects from Mathematics, English, Maltese.

Applicants need to be in possession of a pass at SEC/O-Level in the subject that is not presented at A-level or I-level.

Other Entry Requirements

Students must possess a clean Police conduct certificate.

Current Approved Programme Structure

Unit Title	ECVET/ECTS
Sociology of Childhood	3
Philosophical Issues in Early Years Pedagogy	3
Development of Young Children	6
Communicating Values and Leadership in an Early Years Environment	3
Emergent Curriculum 1	6
Nurturing a Practice of Imagination	3
Multimodality in Young Children	3
Designing Spaces Conducive to Learning 1 (Work Placement)	6
Early Years Research Project	6
Early Years Mathematics	6
Physical Education in the Early Years	3
Documenting the Narratives of Young Children	3
Designing Spaces Conducive to learning 2 (Work Placement)	6
Creative Arts in Early Childhood Education	6
English for Young Learners (Key Skill)	6
Il-Malti għat-tfal iż-żgħar (Key Skill)	6
Child Care Management	3
Continuing Professional Development	3
Developing Play in the Early Years Curriculum	3
Designing Spaces Conducive to Learning 3 (Work Placement)	6
Promoting Positive Relationships within Families and the Community	3
Positive Behaviour in Early Years Settings	3
Contemporary Issues in Child Health	6
Promoting Language Development	6
Promoting Knowledge and Understanding of the World	6
Designing Spaces Conducive to Learning 4 (Work Placement)	6
Total ECVET/ECTS	120

Sociology of Childhood

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

We have all been children at one point in our lives and we all have our idea of what it means to be a child. This unit allows us to see what it means to be a child in the 21st century. It looks into how the definition of childhood changes over time, location, culture and social context. The unit allows us to realise that there is not one definition of childhood but a number of ways of experiencing it.

In this unit a number of contexts will be explored in order to understand what it means to be a child. This includes understanding how childhood has changed over time, the institutionalisation of learning in childhood and also the many diversity issues faced by children including race, class and gender. The unit will also explore how children's lives are affected by the broader systems of inequality and how these impact their gender identities. This will allow learners to see how these social forces shape childhood; from the type of toys children play with to the type of families they live in. The unit will also delve into how life circumstances can impact childhood including ill health, domestic violence and child abuse and how society can protect childhood through the enforcement of rights.

This course therefore explores the nature of childhood and the nature of socialisation from childhood through adolescence. It will also delve into whether children should be viewed as passive participants in society or whether they are active participants who are both shaped and shape their social world. This would incorporate exploring the future of childhood and their influence on popular culture.

In this study unit, learners will also be expected to examine and challenge own pre-conceived ideas, attitudes and values about childhood.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Understand the changing concepts and theories within the sociological study of childhood.*
2. *Understand the social institutions effecting childhood.*
3. *Evaluate the diversity dimensions of childhood including age, gender, race/ethnicity, class, nationality as well as the importance of historical context.*
4. *Identify the social issues in relation to the legislative framework related to childhood.*

Philosophical Issues in Early Years Pedagogy

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

This study unit aims to introduce learners to various philosophers and thinkers who in different ways have explored the notions of childhood, education, teaching and knowledge, influencing the education and care of young children in Early Years settings and schools over the years. They will be encouraged to reflect critically on basic educational ideas through the study of past and more contemporary philosophical perspectives.

Learners will also increase their awareness of how philosophers look at the world through the works of the great thinkers and will also be able to engage in reflective analysis on how different philosophical perspectives can inform and impact early childhood education and care.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Understand the works and thoughts of various thinkers and philosophers.*
2. *Examine the roots of present-day practices and philosophical ideas through their beginnings and subsequent development in terms of early childhood and early childhood education.*
3. *Explore and debate a range of philosophical perspectives about early childhood education in relation to issues of pedagogy.*
4. *Criticise and reflect on the relationship amongst education, care and young children in early years settings.*

Development of Young Children

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit will allow learners to develop an understanding of the significant role that different areas of development: physical, social & emotional, language and communication, and cognitive development play in children's development and learning. It will explore the key factors which can contribute to children's development and demonstrate how different factors related to different theories of development can significantly influence their ability to develop, learn and maintain healthy lifelong relationships. This unit will also investigate a range of factors which impact normative development and discover how each factor has the ability to support or delay developmental processes.

This unit will support students' observations on placement. Learners will identify the key theories which are commonly associated with children's development and recognize how these theoretical approaches are used as a foundation for current early years' practice. This unit will focus on different stages of the areas of development: prenatal development, neonatal development, infancy and toddlerhood, preschool and school-aged children. It will make the students aware of children's holistic development to enable them to provide an appropriate positive learning environment to cater for their needs. Developmental theories will provide the student a background to understand and evaluate current practices.

This unit is relevant for learners who wish to develop their understanding of particular areas of development influence young children's holistic development. It is also suitable for candidates who wish to gain employment and/or enhance their qualifications within the early education and childcare sectors.

Upon gaining this unit of work, candidates may wish to progress with further childcare qualifications. Whilst learners will be admitted at the discretion of the staff, candidates would benefit from having some prior knowledge and understanding of the key principles of how young children develop and learn.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Understand the role of genetics, prenatal development, neonatal development and physical development to the child's learning and development.*
2. *Examine the social and emotional development of children and the way this relates to lifelong learning and development.*
3. *Recognise the importance of cognitive, language and communication development in terms of lifelong learning and development.*
4. *Apply understanding of children's development to plan and evaluate learning environments.*

Communicating Values and Leadership in an Early Years Environment

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

This unit will investigate the theory of communication within a current context surrounding young children and the early year's environments that they participate in. The unit also seeks to investigate the central theme of leadership and how the values of good leadership are communicated. The unit will encourage an open dialogue between students and their peers, between students and their supervisors and the unit will give students the underpinning knowledge to enable them to speak with parents and other stakeholders who are central to a child's life.

A central theme runs throughout this unit developing student's leadership skill, primarily through effective communication, but also through their ability to demonstrate leadership by maintaining and preserving the standards expected of leaders within early years.

Early years leaders must be able to transmit positive messages to young children and their parents effectively thus demonstrating that a child's environment is an effective learning opportunity. Successful interpersonal skills are an essential part of leading early years practice.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Express a well-defined understanding of communication, the theory and the various models of effective communication.*
2. *Assess effective communication through well placed observations drawing on an understanding of how theory is practiced.*
3. *Specify and discuss developmentally appropriate strategies for helping young children successfully communicate with those around them, demonstrating effective leadership and an example of effective communication.*

Emergent Curriculum 1

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This study unit aims to introduce learners to the main approaches to curriculum and planning in the Early Years and to help them understand the benefits and challenges inherent in adopting a more emergent style of curriculum and documentation. Learners shall be encouraged to explore different curricular frameworks as well as different planning methodologies, contrasting and comparing them to analyse the differences between prescriptive methods and more open and flexible approaches in Early Childhood Education and Care.

Essentially, learners will use knowledge acquired to make informed choices when planning, organising and creating meaningful learning opportunities that emerge from taking into consideration children's interests and embracing the notions of active participation, social interaction, learning through play and a process-oriented, holistic approach to learning and development.

This unit is relevant to learners who wish to familiarise themselves with the values, principles, ideologies and practices associated with an 'emergent curriculum' approach to play and learning in early years settings as a basis upon which they will develop the skills, competences and attitudes needed for them to plan, organise and implement participatory, contextualised, emergent and quality play experiences for children aged 0 to 5 years. It will encourage them to question existing beliefs about how learning can be organised in Early Years classrooms and move from a teacher-centred approach to more flexible pedagogies and practices that are in line with an emergent philosophy.

This unit is also linked to Unit 20 where learners will be prepared for the implementation of child-initiated projects and activities based on an emergent curriculum philosophy during their work placement experiences.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Understand different curricula and frameworks in Early Childhood and analyse the differences between them.*
2. *Identify and discuss the main features of an ‘emergent curriculum’ approach to learning and planning in order to create stimulating and supportive learning spaces in the Early Years.*
3. *Analyse how the Early Years curriculum and Learning Outcomes Framework in Malta can form the basis upon which practitioners build a more emergent and flexible approach to curriculum, pedagogy and learning.*
4. *Apply a process-oriented methodology to observe, plan, assess and document children’s learning.*
5. *Reflect upon children’s involvement and responses as partners in their learning process to evaluate, review and revise own planning.*

Nurturing a Practice of Imagination

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

In this unit, learners will be encouraged to promote a pedagogy of imagination whereby they will understand that children should express themselves through different ways of communication. This is in order to develop their imagination, to explore and experiment their environment, and to learn how to develop their ideas and thinking through hands-on practice. This can transpire through music, dance, drama, art, technology, imaginative play, role-play, and more. Learners will seek ways to be creative thinkers themselves, who can use their imagination and value originality. They will be also introduced to materials and resources which support children's creativity and imagination.

Learners will have the opportunity to identify theoretical concepts that inform the definition of creativity, and recognise how these concepts promote imagination and cognitive development in young learners.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Discuss and explore the meaning and importance of creativity and imagination in early childhood education.*
2. *Understand the importance of intermingling learning, communication and creativity keeping in mind that children may use different ways of expression and communication.*
3. *Understand the theory of The Hundred Languages of Children and the role of poetic languages in young children's pedagogy.*
4. *Apply the Reggio Emilia approach in Early Years Pedagogy.*
5. *Understand the role of the adult and the environment in supporting young children's creative ways of communication.*

Multimodality in Young Children

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

This unit will help learners to look into children's meaning making processes and knowledge representations through an exploration of different modes of communication and representation. By reflecting on how they themselves acquire new knowledge, values and attitudes, learners will be encouraged to consider the idea that everything is interconnected and that young children, just like all humans, may use cultural symbols, objects and resources to understand and make sense of reality.

This unit will expose learners to notions of 'cultural capital theory' and the use of cultural tools, symbols, symbolic objects and resources as means through which children learn and develop holistically whilst integrating knowledge, making connections between different areas of learning as well as constructing meaning. Exposure to multimodal ways of communication, expression and representation will include narratives, music, drama and movement, art, imagery and digital technologies amongst others.

By familiarizing themselves with different ways in which young children can be encouraged to think, learn, explore, make connections, discover, understand, communicate and create meaning, learners will be better equipped to provide the right classroom environment to validate and enhance children's use of their symbolic repertoire. This unit is linked with Unit 18 where learners develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to foster a pedagogy of imagination as well as with Unit 22 which is specifically focused on understanding, implementing and evaluating an 'emergent curriculum' approach to ECEC.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Recognize the notion of using symbols and symbolic systems to make sense of reality and the world.*
2. *Discuss the different modes of communication and representation that children may use to construct knowledge and create meaning.*
3. *Use pedagogical documentation to identify and make children's symbolic repertoire visible.*

- 4. Create opportunities for meaningful and integrated learning in Early Childhood to make connections between different domains of knowledge and modes of representation.*

Designing Spaces Conducive to Learning 1 (Work Placement)

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit focuses on the learner actively engaging with young children in a work based scenario. There is a direct correlation between a professional's theoretical knowledge and understanding, and their ability to demonstrate their knowledge through practice and professional application.

This unit includes significant coverage of the development of young children and learning how to implement and use observations, therefore learners should find this unit challenging and stimulating. The unit will test a student's understanding of the physical environment requirements for young children, and the resources and materials that should be available in order to support an emergent curriculum. This unit measures how the learners interact with peers, parents and children to build upon existing knowledge of professionalism within the workplace.

This unit features essential links with industry needs and employability factors required by those employers with whom the learner will be gainfully employed. It allows learners to combine theory with work place experiences. It is vital that any theory based learning is placed into a vocational context. The goal of this practical unit is the core to the learning experience and qualification of the learner. Work based learning through placement is also essential to developing the reflective skills required for a modern day practitioner. These skills are intrinsically relevant to creating the employability within those who seek to become gainfully employed within the area of working with young children.

In essence, this unit offers learners an opportunity to develop confidence in their own experiences and reflections, enabling them to make a strong association between the theoretical and the practical.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Prepare an action plan for a reflective case study based upon a work placement.*
2. *Explain the key objectives of an effective work placement.*
3. *Evaluate the effectiveness of both the work carried out in the planning and development stages, as well as own performance.*
4. *Solve work problems by taking initiative.*

Early Years Research Project

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit will allow the learner to investigate a range of modes and methods of research and become familiar with qualitative and quantitative research. The module will address skills such as selecting articles for research purposes, distinguishing between primary and secondary research, identifying specific research interests, carrying out small scale research projects, collecting and analysing data and results, bibliographical techniques and the use of IT for research.

The beginning of the unit will equip the students to be able to formulate a research question, and build a comprehensive proposal to be able to carry out a research project. The students will also learn how to apply ethical considerations and issues with particular attention to ethical issue concerning minors and how to deal with these issues in a sound manner.

This unit will give students the opportunity to learn quantitative and qualitative research strategies. The course will focus on becoming familiar with these techniques and provide the students with skills of choosing an appropriate design for research question. Students will also learn the suitable method to analyse and interpret their data.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Choose an area of research in Early Childhood Education.*
2. *Plan and prepare a piece of research that is realistic, organised and allows for adequate criticality.*
3. *Present succinct ideas, being autonomous in the selection of materials and adhering to academic principles.*

Early Years Mathematics

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit will allow learners to develop an understanding of how to promote children's early mathematical skills. It will explore the key factors that can often contribute to young children's mathematical development and demonstrate how positive interactions with adults and the learning environment can positively influence young children's development and learning.

Learners will have the opportunity to develop an awareness of the potential barriers to children's early mathematical skills and learning and explore how these barriers can cause potential difficulties for later mathematical development.

Learners will also have the opportunity to identify the key theories, and national and international initiatives that are commonly associated with early mathematical development and recognise how these theoretical approaches and initiatives can be used to promote children's early mathematical development.

Learners will have the opportunity to explore key areas associated with children's early mathematical development including: counting and recognising number, shape, space and measures and problem solving within a variety of mathematical concepts. This unit is also suitable for learners who wish to gain employment and/or enhance their qualifications within the early education sector.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Explain current national and international initiatives which relate to and support the promotion of children's early mathematical development.*
2. *Explain how theories and approaches related to numeracy can be used to promote the mathematical opportunities and learning for young children.*
3. *Recognise how adults and the learning environment can be used positively to promote children's early mathematical development and learning.*
4. *Understand the factors which can contribute to and influence children's early mathematical learning and development.*

Physical Education in the Early Years

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

As the sole providers of physical education in the current educational landscape of early years schooling, educators at this key stage must possess the confidence and enthusiasm to instil a culture of physical activity in their students in order to truly aspire towards whole-child development.

In this unit learners will explore the importance and beneficence of physical education as an integral and vital part of the holistic development of children in their early years. Learners are encouraged throughout the course of the unit to foster a fervent interest and enthusiasm for planning physical education and movement activities that are fun and fit for purpose.

The integration of physical activity and exercise across the curriculum at this key stage serves not only to plant seeds for the development of a prospectively healthy and active society, but also to embrace the known efficacy of physical activity in enhancing the social, cognitive and emotional domains of child development.

Learners will examine these domains through a series of theoretical and practical sessions, and see how active play can be used to develop a range of physical as well as numeracy and literacy skills. The unit ultimately aims to instil the confidence needed by learners to broaden the scope of their pedagogical skills to include the physical domain regardless of prior experience in sport or physical activity, which are not pre-requisites for guiding children in their early years to construct positive perceptions of physical activity in tandem with the desired physical literacy learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Understand the importance and beneficence of physical education in the early years.*
2. *Apply fundamental concepts underlying physical education in the early years.*
3. *Integrate physical activity and movement across the curriculum.*
4. *Plan and deliver safe and effective physical education activities with sound educational outcomes.*

Documenting the Narratives of Young Children

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

Placed within an emergent curriculum approach to Early Childhood Education and Care, this unit aims to encourage learners to become familiar with the processes of observing, assessing and documenting children's learning through the notion of 'pedagogical documentation' on the one hand as well as through more traditional and systematic observation techniques that, used in combination will enable them to understand children's experiences, learning trajectories, dispositions as well as achievements.

Learners will be provided with opportunities to understand and value the importance of using observation and assessment to serve the educational processes themselves. Considerations linked to the motivation, purpose and usefulness of documenting young children's narratives will be made. Emphasis will be placed on the relevance of using assessment and observation to make children's thinking and learning visible through interaction and collaboration with the children themselves, with their families and other professionals as well as to help Early Years professionals to reflect upon and evaluate their own practices. Ultimately, through the documentation of children's narratives, learners will be encouraged to create learning environments that are stimulating, relevant to children's lives and conducive to learning and development.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Understand the links between observation, assessment and documentation of children's learning in the Early Years.*
2. *Create and document the narratives of young children by observations, reflections and assessment of their learning.*
3. *Collaborate with children, their families and other professionals to make tangible the children's thinking and learning processes.*
4. *Apply ethical considerations throughout the whole process of observing, assessing and documenting children's learning.*

Designing Spaces Conducive to learning 2 (Work Placement)

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit focuses on the learner actively engaging with young children in a work based scenario. There is a direct correlation between a professional's theoretical knowledge and understanding, and their ability to demonstrate their knowledge through practice and professional application.

This unit includes significant coverage of the development of young children and learning how to implement and use observations, therefore learners should find this unit challenging and stimulating. The unit will test a student's understanding of the physical environment requirements for young children, and the resources and materials that should be available in order to support an emergent curriculum. This unit measures how the learners interact with peers, parents and children to build upon existing knowledge of professionalism within the workplace.

This unit features essential links with industry needs and employability factors required by those employers with whom the learner will be gainfully employed. It allows learners to combine theory with work place experiences. It is vital that any theory based learning is placed into a vocational context. The goal of this practical unit is the core to the learning experience and qualification of the learner. Work based learning through placement is also essential to developing the reflective skills required for a modern day practitioner. These skills are intrinsically relevant to creating the employability within those who seek to become gainfully employed within the area of working with young children.

In essence, this unit offers learners an opportunity to develop confidence in their own experiences and reflections, enabling them to make a strong association between the theoretical and the practical.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Prepare an action plan for a reflective case study based upon a work placement.*
2. *Explain the key objectives of an effective work placement.*
3. *Evaluate the effectiveness of both the work carried out in the planning and development stages, as well as own performance.*
4. *Solve work problems by taking initiative.*

Creative Arts in Early Childhood Education

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit aims to help learners effectively understand the importance of creativity and expressive arts in the Early Years. They will be encouraged to understand that creative art is so much more than the physical forming of an object. It involves imagination, limitless boundaries, can take many forms, and should be free to express itself regardless of the form.

Through the exploration of the components of theories by leading proponents of Early Years creativity and arts, learners will be encouraged to further research how to put learnt theory into practice. This will then emphasise the important role creativity plays in education.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Explain creativity as the expression of thoughts, ideas and feelings that are within and the way these can be applied to childhood education.*
2. *Reflect on the theoretical framework related to the creative process for children in the early years.*
3. *Understand the role of the practitioner in provoking and facilitating creative experiences in early childhood education and care.*
4. *Understand the importance of the relationship between creativity and the learning process for the early years.*

English for Young Learners (Key Skill)

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit is aimed at prospective Early Years practitioners who will be working with young children in the local context, keeping in mind its curricular demands and its unique features when it comes to language acquisition.

Firstly, learners will explore the theoretical framework that underpins different approaches to second language acquisition, particularly in the Early Years. They will also be encouraged to researched recent developments in this area. An important element will also be to compare and evaluate various approaches and ideas in relation to the local bilingual context.

Apart from theories and international research and developments, due importance will be given to the analysis and application of the principles outlined in the local policy documentation, namely the Learning Outcomes Framework, the National Literacy Strategy and the Language Policy Consultation Document. Learners will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with what these documents advocate with regard to English language and literacy in the Early Years settings, and they will be encouraged to explore ways in which these requirements can be put into practice in a Kindergarten class.

Keeping in mind the fact that the learners themselves may be predominantly Maltese or English speaking, and some more than others may be comfortably bilingual, this unit will give the learners an opportunity to reflect on their personal attitudes toward the English language and encourage them to refine their English language skills should there be the need. Here the learners will also be exposed to children's texts in English and encouraged to cultivate a personal interest, which will be essential for them to provide young children suitable and age-appropriate literacy material.

Since language acquisition and exposure to literacy, especially in the Early Years, does not happen in a vacuum, learners will be assisted and encouraged to explore the Emergent Curriculum approach as an effective tool to expose young learners to the English language in ways that are inclusive because they are based on everyday relevance, discovery, multimodal learning and expression, as well as the involvement and participation of other significant adults and the community as a whole, both in terms of members of the community, as well as the physical environment.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Understand the theories and recent research developments in second language acquisition in the Early Years.*
2. *Apply the principles outlined in the Learning Outcomes Framework, the National Literacy Strategy and the Language Policy, with regard to exposing young learners to English language and literacy.*
3. *Be responsible to develop own personal attitudes toward the English language, including cultivating an interest in children's texts in English.*
4. *Apply the principles of the Emergent Curriculum approach to facilitate English language acquisition within a Kindergarten context.*

Il-Malti għat-tfal iż-żgħar (Key Skill)

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

Din l-unita ser tqajjem fl-istudenti għarfien ġdid ta' pedagogija kif titgħallem il-lingwa nattivha fis-snin bikrin.

Ser isiru midhla tal-kuntest Malti, fejn it-tfal fi snin bikrin qed jithalltu ma' tfal oħra li jhaddnu l-lingwi nattivha tagħhom fl-istess klassi u li issa ser jiġu esposti għall-lingwa Maltija.

L-istudenti ser isiru wkoll midhla tal-oralizmu u l-litterizmu viziv minhabba l-influwenza tal-midja u t-teknoloġija fi żmienna.

L-istudenti ser jiġu mharrġa kif permezz ta' osservazzjonijiet li ser isiru mat-tfal waqt il-ġimgħat ta' Prattika fl-iskejjel, ser jilhqqu l-għanijiet tat-tagħlim tal-lingwa billi jippreparaw riżorsi li jhajjru t-tfal jaħdmu fuq proġetti tal-għażla tagħhom filwaqt li jsir għarfien tal-kultura ta' pajjiżna.

Dawn it-tfal fi snin bikrin, ser jiġu esposti għal drawwiet Maltin fosthom l-ikel, il-logħob, il-festi, taqbili, legġendi, l-istorja ta' Malta eċċ biex nerġġu nagħtu l-hajja lil dawn id-drawwiet li jsaħħu l-kultura tagħna. Għalhekk l-istudenti ser jiġu mharrġa kif jippreparaw attivitajiet u riżorsi meħtieġa biex jintlaħħqu l-għanijiet tat-tagħlim tal-lingwa Maltija fis-snin bikrin filwaqt li jevalwaw kif marret l-attività' u x'hemm bżonn jittiejeb.

Din l-unita hija wkoll marbuta mal-unita 20, fejn l-istudenti ħa jkollhom iċ-ċans jimplementaw proġetti u attivitajiet ibbażati fuq l-interessi, kurżitajiet u xewqat tat-tfal, skond il-prinċipji tal-'Emergent Curriculum'.

Għanijiet tat-Tagħlim

Mill-istudju ta' din l-unita l-istudent irid ikun kapaċi:

1. *Jifhmu l-kunċetti ta' Bilingwiżmu, Litteriżmu bbilanċjat, u tagħlim tal-lingwa nattivna fis-snin bikrin.*
2. *Japplikaw l-'Istrateġija Nazzjonali tal-Litteriżmu għal kulhadd lokalment u il-'Qafas tal-Kurrikulu Nazzjonali' fir-rigward tat-tagħlim tal-lingwa,*
3. *Isegwu ir-regoli tal-Malti u l-applikazzjoni tal-lingwa Maltija.*
4. *Iffaslu pjan ta' ħidma u riżorsi li jiffaċilitaw it-tagħlim tal-lingwa u l-kultura Maltija, skond il-filosofija soċjo-kulturali ta' tagħlim kollaborattiv tal-'Emergent Curriculum'.*

Child Care Management

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

This unit is designed to develop the learners' knowledge and understanding of child care management in early years' settings. The unit has been written with reference to the Level 5 Child Care Occupational Standards, hence the work done for this unit should provide clear evidence for some of the underpinning knowledge, particularly for aspects of standards CDC 501,502,505,506,507 and 508.

Effective early years services contribute to the wellbeing and development of children. However, effective early years services do not arise in a vacuum. Excellent services require effective management. The National Occupational Standards demonstrate that child care management is multifaceted. It requires that managers learn how to deal with the physical and human resources which comprise the service. It also requires that managers are aware of their roles in motivating teams and of providing inspirational leadership in what can be challenging settings. Child care managers are often at the centre of a network of people and issues. Being able to understand and manage the ways in which these interact is crucial to the role. Child care management involves not only the human and physical resources of the service, but also working in partnership with parents. Finally, the manager is the outward facing element of the service, often liaising with other professionals and agencies to present the best image of their service. These various roles can be stressful but it is up to the manager to be able to deal with difficulties while ensuring the smooth running of the service.

The purpose of the unit is to understand roles and contexts involved in child care management in order to become a more effective practitioner. As part of the unit, learners will be provided with an opportunity to spend a number of hours with a manager in a child care centre to observe and be exposed to the roles and responsibilities entailed by this position.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Determine the need of good leadership and management skills in the role of a childcare manager.*
2. *Describe the key features of human and physical resource management in child care settings.*
3. *Explain the importance of working in partnership with parents for a childcare manager.*
4. *Deal effectively with different issues and stress that might arise in a childcare setting.*

Continuing Professional Development

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

This is a skills based unit that will prepare the learners to deal with an ever more rapidly-changing educational and learning organisations. Learners will demonstrate that they have the necessary skills to be able to take responsibility for their own personal growth and the development of their team within a child care setting or a school environment.

Learners will discover how to lead and manage CPD within an organisation to help them perform as rounded professionals. They will also learn how to identify key competences in order to improve the self-development process. Therefore, this unit will consider personal, management and business skills as key development areas.

The unit is relevant to learners wishing to further expand their leadership and managerial skills and to develop their personal skills to support professional growth. On completion of the unit learners will be able to lead and manage CPD within an organisation. Therefore, this unit will provide the learners with the ability to plan and meet CPD needs and conduct performance appraisal of staff in the case of child care settings. Learners will also be able to monitor and evaluate CPD plans. Finally, learners should have the necessary knowledge and proficiency to ensure that growth and success of an organisation is reflected in the personal development of the team.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

- 1. Carry out research to collect the necessary information on CPD and the organisation as a learning environment.*
- 2. Identify the key competences of personal and professional development to draft personal development plans.*
- 3. Be responsible to lead and manage CPD processes and to meet CPD needs.*
- 4. Manage performance appraisal and the impact of CPD through monitoring and evaluation.*

Developing Play in the Early Years Curriculum

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

The aim of this unit is to provide learners with an understanding of the theories and approaches to play for delivering the requirements of the Early Years Curriculum, and to develop the skills to plan and provide challenging and purposeful play opportunities. Learners shall be encouraged to explore different prescriptive methods and more open and flexible approaches in Early Childhood Education and Care. Learners will be challenged to understand the importance, value and benefits of play and the necessity of adopting a pedagogy in play that is emotionally and intellectually engaging for children and adults alike.

Play is central in children's learning, it is about high levels of learning and makes a big contribution to the development and to children's holistic growth. It is especially important that adults working professionally with young children know and understand what play is. They need to be trained to understand the central contribution to the learning that children experience. Families and early childhood settings need to support and extend children's play with sensitivity and skill.

In this study unit, learners will discuss theories and ideologies and current practices of play. They will be able to define play, stages of play, value and benefits of play, types of play, adult's expectations and the role of the adult. Fundamentally they will learn to observe children at play, realise their interests, consult and plan projects and activities to augment their considerations. This in turn will address the 'emergent curriculum' approach which will help students to become researchers in the classroom environment encouraging children to explore, investigate and discover.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the learner will be able to:

1. *Understand the different theories of play and theories of learning for the early years.*
2. *Discuss the importance and benefits of play, the right to play and related current legislation for the early years.*
3. *Understand the crucial role that play has in the holistic development of children and the way it is interrelated to learning.*
4. *Discuss the basic stages and types of play for early years.*

5. *Determine the children's interest and provide a meaningful 'play' environment through observing, consulting and interpreting the children's play.*
6. *Reflect upon own work and children's involvement to evaluate, review and revise own planning and implementation of work.*

Designing Spaces Concusive to Learning 3 (Work Placement)

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit is aimed at prospective Early Years practitioners who will be working with young children in the local context, keeping in mind its curricular demands and its unique features when it comes to language acquisition.

Firstly, learners will explore the theoretical framework that underpins different approaches to second language acquisition, particularly in the Early Years. They will also be encouraged to researched recent developments in this area. An important element will also be to compare and evaluate various approaches and ideas in relation to the local bilingual context.

Apart from theories and international research and developments, due importance will be given to the analysis and application of the principles outlined in the local policy documentation, namely the Learning Outcomes Framework, the National Literacy Strategy and the Language Policy Consultation Document. Learners will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with what these documents advocate with regard to English language and literacy in the Early Years settings, and they will be encouraged to explore ways in which these requirements can be put into practice in a Kindergarten class.

Keeping in mind the fact that the learners themselves may be predominantly Maltese or English speaking, and some more than others may be comfortably bilingual, this unit will give the learners an opportunity to reflect on their personal attitudes toward the English language and encourage them to refine their English language skills should there be the need. Here the learners will also be exposed to children's texts in English and encouraged to cultivate a personal interest, which will be essential for them to provide young children suitable and age-appropriate literacy material.

Since language acquisition and exposure to literacy, especially in the Early Years, does not happen in a vacuum, learners will be assisted and encouraged to explore the Emergent Curriculum approach as an effective tool to expose young learners to the English language in ways that are inclusive because they are based on everyday relevance, discovery, multimodal learning and expression, as well as the involvement and participation of other significant adults and the community as a whole, both in terms of members of the community, as well as the physical environment.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Understand the theories and recent research developments in second language acquisition in the Early Years.*
2. *Apply the principles outlined in the Learning Outcomes Framework, the National Literacy Strategy and the Language Policy, with regard to exposing young learners to English language and literacy.*
3. *Be responsible to develop own personal attitudes toward the English language, including cultivating an interest in children's texts in English.*
4. *Apply the principles of the Emergent Curriculum approach to facilitate English language acquisition within a Kindergarten context.*

Promoting Positive Relationships within Families and the Community

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

This unit enables early years' practitioners to understand the importance of establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with families and the community through the Ecological Systems Theory and the Socio-Cultural Theory. Furthermore, based on Malaguzzi's theory of Pedagogy of Relationships, the learners will understand the importance of having these relationships. Learners will also increase their awareness of the pedagogy of listening as promoted by the Reggio Emilia Approach and the Emergent Curriculum approach: "to listen requires mindfulness - to be present in the here and now" (Reggio Emilia Approach). Learners will be encouraged to link these theories and approach as a Pedagogy of Learning based on the view of the children, the role of the educators and families and the relationships between them. Learners will also become familiar with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Child Care Occupational Standards Nos. 401 and 405 in establishing and promoting positive relationships.

Furthermore, learners will familiarize themselves with practical strategies, programmes and projects held in Malta to reinforce more the relationships between the school, the families and the wider community. In addition learners will also be introduced to the National Literacy Strategy (2014-2019) and the Family Literacy Programmes held nationally. Furthermore the learners as prospective educators shall be introduced to Multilingualism and Multiculturalism and also explore the linguistic and cultural diversity within the Maltese Context due to the widespread of immigration.

Finally, learners will become more aware of the importance of the family, professional educators and the community to safeguard the welfare of the child. With the aid of this study unit, the learners will be in a position to identify and respond appropriately if a child is passing through difficult circumstances at home including suspected abuse, sickness and death of a near family member and separation/divorce of parents. Learners will also analyse difficult circumstances in class due to bullying or cyberbullying.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Understand the changing roles of the school, the family and the community in the development of a Pedagogy of Relationships as central to an Emergent Curriculum Approach.*
2. *Follow the correct methodology to initiate, facilitate and foster the development of collaborative relationships within and outside the early childhood setting through specific initiatives and projects.*
3. *Analyse the impact of linguistic and cultural diversity on learning and on children's overall well-being in the Early Years.*
4. *Evaluate the processes involved in nurturing and safeguarding children who may be experiencing difficult circumstances in their lives.*

Positive Behaviour in Early Years Settings

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 3

Unit Description

As the name of the unit implies, this unit aims to explore how challenging behaviour can be prevented and how positive behaviour can be promoted. It will equip the prospective early years' practitioner to understand what might cause challenging behaviour and to prevent challenging behaviour from developing where possible.

Social and Cultural factors together with the child's biology and psychology determine behaviour development in children. This unit allows learners to explore how the children's development of self, experiences and their relationships influence their social and emotional well-being. The unit will consider different classroom strategies to prevent behavioural issues in arising and techniques to promote positive behaviour as well as manage challenging behaviour. Learners are required to consider aspects of social and emotional health in order to apply strategies and techniques in managing challenging behaviour and promoting positive behaviour to children in an early years' care and/or education setting.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

- 1. Understand the impact of social and emotional development on children's behaviour.*
- 2. Identify factors that might cause challenging behaviour within an early years' care and education setting.*
- 3. Recognise how working with parents, colleagues and other professionals impacts the behaviour of young children.*
- 4. Manage and promote positive children's behaviour within an Early Years Setting.*

Contemporary Issues in Child Health

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit is designed to enable learners to gain an understanding of the many factors that affect children's health and wellbeing. It will assist the learner to develop strategies to support the health and wellbeing of children, including those who require additional support.

During the course of the unit, the learner will explore some of the controversial issues surrounding the implementation of preventative measures and examine current initiatives to promote children's health and wellbeing. The learner will look at health promotion and examine how the process of empowering people to make healthy lifestyle choices and motivating them to become better at helping themselves starts in childhood. The learner will also explore methods to achieve this, discovering that health promotion strategies need to focus on patient education; looking at the family holistically and what support and education is in place to facilitate this.

The unit is intended for learners who are in a work placement or are employed in the early education and childcare sector.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Describe the theoretical approaches to health promotion and child health.*
2. *Identify current social and cultural issues relevant to the health of children living in Malta.*
3. *Recognise the role of professionals in preventative and protective measures in the promotion of children's health.*
4. *Express opinions in relation to cultural issues and social trends relevant to child health.*

Promoting Language Development

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit is relevant for learners who wish to develop an understanding of children's early language acquisition and the significant role played by both the adult and the environment in promoting language development.

Learners will examine the major theories of language acquisition from 0-5 years alongside national initiatives designed to promote early language development and be encouraged to make theoretical connections between theory and practice.

Throughout the unit, learners will explore the role of the adult in supporting and promoting early language skills and recognise how the provision of a language rich environment can positively impact children's development and learning within an emergent curriculum approach to the Early Years. Learners will have the opportunity to consider the key factors that contribute to children's language development and explore how potential barriers to learning can impact significantly upon children's language attainments.

This unit is relevant for learners who wish to enhance their knowledge of young children's language development or who wish to gain employment and/or enhance their qualifications within the early education and childcare sectors.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Analyse how theories of language development inform own understanding of the language and literacy development of children aged 0 to 5 years.*
2. *Understand the factors which can contribute to and influence the development of children's pre-literacy, literacy and language skills.*
3. *Analyse current International and national initiatives which relate to the promotion of language development.*
4. *Explore the significant role of both adults and the learning environment in promoting and enhancing children's language development.*

Promoting Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This is a skills based unit that will enable learners to develop an understanding of how young children acquire scientific knowledge, skills and attitudes that will prepare them for lifelong scientific learning. Throughout the unit, learners will understand how young children develop scientific skills and thought processes as they interact with: different people, local environments and the wider world. Using an emergent curriculum approach, learners will also recognise the role that the adult plays in offering and promoting opportunities that encourage young children to develop scientific competencies as they explore and investigate the world in which they live.

Throughout the unit, learners will develop their knowledge of how children construct and develop their understanding of scientific skills through exploration and investigation and recognise how to provide a range of opportunities that will promote this particular area of learning. Learners will focus upon what scientific enquiry means for young children as they: explore, investigate and hypothesise about the world in which they live. Learners will explore a range of scientific pedagogy and explore how children are active participants in their own scientific learning.

This unit is relevant for learners who wish to develop or enhance their understanding of how young children develop and acquire scientific knowledge or who wish to understand the role that science plays within children's early learning and development.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

1. *Analyse and interpret key aspects of Science within the early cycle of learning.*
2. *Analyse some of the key theoretical scientific approaches and the way these can be implemented into practice.*
3. *Promote children's scientific enquiry with a range of pedagogical approaches, resources, activities and enabling environments.*
4. *Analyse how positive relationships with parents, carers and the wider community can be developed to promote children's scientific knowledge, skills and attitudes.*

Designing Spaces Conducive to Learning 4 (Work Placement)

Unit level (MQF): 5

Credits: 6

Unit Description

This unit focuses on the learner actively engaging with young children in a work based scenario. There is a direct correlation between a professional's theoretical knowledge and understanding, and their ability to demonstrate their knowledge through practice and professional application.

This unit includes significant coverage of the development of young children and learning how to implement and use observations, therefore learners should find this unit challenging and stimulating. The unit will test a student's understanding of the physical environment requirements for young children, and the resources and materials that should be available in order to support an emergent curriculum. This unit measures how the learners interact with peers, parents and children to build upon existing knowledge of professionalism within the workplace.

This unit features essential links with industry needs and employability factors required by those employers with whom the learner will be gainfully employed. It allows learners to combine theory with work place experiences. It is vital that any theory based learning is placed into a vocational context. The goal of this practical unit is the core to the learning experience and qualification of the learner. Work based learning through placement is also essential to developing the reflective skills required for a modern day practitioner. These skills are intrinsically relevant to creating the employability within those who seek to become gainfully employed within the area of working with young children.

In essence, this unit offers learners an opportunity to develop confidence in their own experiences and reflections, enabling them to make a strong association between the theoretical and the practical.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit the student will be able to:

- 1. Prepare an action plan for a reflective case study based upon a work placement.*
- 2. Explain the key objectives of an effective work placement.*
- 3. Evaluate the effectiveness of both the work carried out in the planning and*

- development stages, as well as own performance.*
- Solve work problems by taking initiative.*