



Malta
Further & Higher
Education Authority

CHILDCARE EDUCATOR – MQF/EQF LEVEL 4 INFORMATION HANDBOOK

ON

**The process of validation of informal and non-
formal learning for Childcare Educators in
Childcare Centres**

The Assessment Board

The Assessment Board is appointed by the Minister responsible for Jobsplus by means of Article 26 of the Employment and Training Services Act 2018 to ascertain proficiency or competency in a particular occupation.

This handbook describes the process that the Assessment Board adopts to assess applicants in Childcare at MQF level 4. Successful candidates acquire an Award as Childcare Educators pegged at Level 4 within the Malta Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework and which is endorsed by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

Eligibility:

Candidates who are interested in acquiring the *Award as Childcare Educator* can apply for their knowledge, skills and competences to be assessed, recognised and validated if they possess the necessary competences and skills as defined in the Assessment Criteria included in this handbook.

The prospective candidates need to have 3 years' experience with children in a childcare facility catering for children from 0–3 years. This is in line with the S.L. 607.02 of 2012 which regulates the Validation of Informal and Non-formal Learning.

These candidates will also need to present a reference letter by previous employer, confirming the number of hours of this experience to the Assessment Board, prior to the Assessment.

The candidates will need to present a portfolio to the Assessment Board including a description of the responsibilities of a childcare educator, a description of the contributions the candidate made at the childcare centre where s/he is employed, testimonials of any formal and/or informal training that the candidates would have undertaken and any certificates that they might possess in relation to childcare.

These testimonials are to be authenticated by signature and possibly a stamp of the institute/referee. These testimonials may be in the form of authenticated work activities, which candidates would have carried out during their studies and/or experiences (photos of activities and resources created by the candidates themselves may be included). Attached to the portfolio a candidate needs to present also a CV.

The Assessment Board is free to contact the institution and/or referee at will to confirm experiences and training claimed by the candidate.

All candidates will need to sit for a written test, a practical test and an interview.

Initial Assessment Plan:

The Assessment Board will conduct an induction session for candidates interested in acquiring the *Award as Childcare Educator* and review the portfolio and the experience presented to plan the appropriate assessments according to the individual's experience and needs. During the induction session, the candidate is also instructed on how to collect evidence used as a proof of their practical experience.

Evidence sources may include:

- Work Activity
- Witness Testimony
- Health & Safety Documents/ Reports/ Procedures
- Photographic Evidence / Risk Assessments / Instructions
- Work-based confirmation of evidence not observed by assessor.

Assessment Criteria

The Assessment Criteria for the validation process are based on the National Occupational Standards. Following is an abstract of the list of competences that the candidate must possess prior to applying for the validation process. For further information you can download the National Occupational Standards from the following link:

<https://qualifications.mfhea.gov.mt/#/more-database/06e1676f-8b9a-46b5-8f3c-ca6ac1352844>

CCE401: Understanding Child Development

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. respond to the developmental needs of every child.
2. observe and document children's learning and development to assess their progress and plan for future needs.
3. implement a holistic learning programme that incorporates all areas of child development.
4. recognise development as a continuing process of interaction between the individual child, adults, and the world around them, resulting in evolving capacities.

CCE402: Protecting and Promoting Children's Rights

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. respect children as persons in their own rights.
2. recognise that the concept of the child as rights-holder is anchored during the child's stay at the centre.
3. recognise young children as social actors, with interests, capacities and vulnerabilities.
4. adhere to national and international legislation, standards, frameworks, regulations and the centre's policies and procedures regarding children's rights and protection.
5. identify any threats to children's rights and protection and report these through the appropriate channels.

CCE403: Engaging in Quality Interactions and Developing Positive Relationships

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. recognise that reciprocal, responsive, and secure relationships with children are developed and maintained.

2. listen to children, value what they say, and stimulate verbal communication at all times.
3. support children in developing relationships with other children and adults.
4. meet the attachment needs of young children.
5. develop and nurture positive relationships with parents, Legally Responsible Persons, Centre Managers, staff members, external professionals/agencies, and other stakeholders.
6. communicate and collaborate effectively with parents, Legally Responsible Persons, Centre Managers, staff members, external professionals/agencies, and other stakeholders.
7. work well within a team; 8. respond with equal respect to different languages and cultures of all stakeholders.

CCE404: Implementing Child-Centred, Inquiry, and Play-Based Learning and Care Programmes

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. foster belief in the idea that children are not passive recipients but competent and able active participants.
2. recognise children of all ages and families as key contributors in a democratic pedagogical approach to learning.
3. implement pedagogical and curriculum approaches that are based on child-centred, inquiry, and play-based learning.
4. provide a curriculum that is informed by the children's growing interests and inquiries and guided by their pedagogical approach.
5. use observation, assessment, and planning pedagogical processes.
6. use the five broad Learning Outcomes of the Early Years Cycle as an overall guide to pedagogy and assessment (MEDE, 2012; DQSE 2015).
7. create a positive, calm, rich, and stimulating learning environment.
8. engage with parents and the community to enrich the learning experiences offered in the centre.
9. engage in collaborative inquiry and critical reflection to question theory and practice, discuss ideas, and share learning.

CCE405: Meeting Physical Development and Care Needs to Support Healthy Development

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. show responsibility for the physical care routines of the children entrusted in their care.
2. are meeting the physical development and care needs of all children to support their healthy development.
3. use physical care routines as opportunities for learning and development.
4. implement health and safety in the provision of physical care.
5. recognise and respond to children who are unwell and support children with ongoing health conditions.
6. promote and model safe and healthy eating practices and accommodate for special nutritional requirements.
7. promote and follow safe diapering and toileting practices and procedures.
8. promote and follow safe and appropriate rest/sleeping practices and procedures.
9. work in partnership with parents to ensure continuity of care between a child's home and the childcare centre.

CCE406: Reflecting on Practice and Developing Professional Competences

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. identify the purpose and value of viewing oneself as an active lifelong learner.
2. develop and sustain a reflective practice mindset to improve behaviour and practice.
3. develop agency and autonomy through ongoing reflective practice.
4. share knowledge, skills, good practice, and ideas with others to provoke and extend reflection.
5. use constructive communication with staff members.
6. develop professional accountability by creating an individual professional-development plan.
7. participate actively in ongoing professional development opportunities to develop their professional competences.
8. apply acquired knowledge, understanding, and skills through ongoing professional development in one's practice.

CCE407: Promoting Positive Behaviour

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. adhere to the national, legislation, standards, frameworks, policies, and procedures related to positive behaviour management.
2. support each child in developing a sense of belonging, so that they feel valued and welcome.
3. reinforce positive behaviour and appropriate strategies to do so.
4. deal with challenging behaviour.
5. liaise with parents and staff members to establish consistent and complementary strategies when promoting and managing behaviour both at home and at the centre.
6. observe each child to understand better their behaviour.
7. recognise children's emotional needs.
8. promote the management of feelings and behaviour.
9. work in partnership with parents to address recurring inconsiderate behaviour.

CCE408: Embracing Diversity

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. acknowledge, respect, and respond to every child's home language and culture.
2. accept each child's way of learning a new language as part of their ongoing learning and development.
3. develop a culturally inclusive learning programme.
4. celebrate and promote linguistic and cultural diversity.
5. encourage awareness, appreciation and inclusion of diverse beliefs, cultures, and religions with children and families.
6. communicate effectively and proficiently in Maltese and English.
7. expose all children to the official languages: Maltese and English.
8. foster the acquisition of English and Maltese while also encourage the development of the children's home language.
9. support the participation of parents whose home language is neither English nor Maltese, to help them integrate better.
10. prevent and address any possible discrimination based on use of language.
11. be sensitive and attentive to information about cultural and religious backgrounds.

CCE409: Supporting Inclusive Early Childhood Education and Care

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. adhere to international and national legislation and policy that promotes a rights-based approach to supporting the active participation of all children.
2. support the active engagement and inclusion of children with special rights through the curriculum; 3. foster inclusive culture, practice, and pedagogy in the childcare centre.
3. nurture inclusive social, physical, and learning environments.
4. recognise the significant role of play in the curriculum for all children.
5. develop, implement, and regularly review learning experiences and strategies aimed to address the needs of all children.
6. modify the physical environment and identify and provide resources that will allow children with disabilities access, and for them to be fully included in the learning experiences offered.
7. collect, record, and update relevant background information about children with disabilities.
8. liaise regularly with parents of children with disabilities to ensure that both the needs of the children and their parents are met.
9. collaborate with external professionals and/or agencies where appropriate, to optimise support for children with disabilities.
10. reflect to enhance their own practice in inclusive Early Childhood Education and Care.

CCE410: Working in Partnership with Parents

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. support and respect the parent's right to be involved and engaged in their child's life at the childcare centre.
2. promote partnership with parents in the ongoing day-to-day exchanges that take place between parents, educators, and children.
3. build respectful and trusting relationships with parents.
4. develop honest and regular two-way clear communication with parents.
5. enhance children's sense of emotional well-being, identity, and belonging in the service by building on the knowledge of each child's family.
6. connect and engage with parents to encourage, develop, and extend children's learning and development.
7. inform parents about their child's day at the centre.
8. document and share the progress of the learning and development of each child with parents.
9. support parents to contribute to their child's learning and development, both in the childcare centre and at home.
10. respect the family's religious and cultural backgrounds and beliefs.

CCE411: Developing and Maintaining a Healthy, Safe, and Secure Environment

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. adhere to the health and safety requirements as specified in the National Standards for Early Childhood and Care Services (0-3 years) and relevant legislation.
2. develop, together with Centre Managers, policies, procedures, and practices concerning the health, safety, and security of all children.

3. take the necessary precautions to minimise health, safety, and security risks for the children entrusted in their care.
4. assess and deal with the various health and safety risks that a child might be exposed to at the centre.
5. report any health and safety issues in the centre-to-Centre Managers, as required.
6. support individuals during any emergency and summon the appropriate assistance.
7. safeguard others by ensuring that one's own health and hygiene does not pose a threat to others; 8. understand the legal implications of care and custody.

CCE412: Meeting and Maintaining Regulatory Requirements

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise and ensure that they:

1. reflect on daily practice to ensure they are meeting the regulatory standards to which the centre is expected to adhere to.
2. take appropriate action to meet any requirements that emerge, following management's feedback and direction.
3. take appropriate action to meet any requirements that emerge following the External Review process, following management's feedback, and direction.
4. reflect on the purpose and expectation of an external review.

Mode of Assessment:

A candidate will be assessed on all the above listed competences. Assessment will be made up from different components, namely:

A. Practical Work

The practical test will consist of 2 placement visits, which will be carried out at the place of work of the candidate. The assessment will evaluate the candidate's ability to greet and integrate with children and staff, prepare and set out own activity, deliver the activity and self-evaluate said activity. To pass from the practicum, the candidate needs to obtain 50% out of a total mark of 100.

B. Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates need to sit for a 2-hour written test. The paper will contain eight questions, two in each of the four sections. The questions will focus on Childcare development and responsibilities and Health and Safety issues in the workplace (childcare centre). The candidate is requested to answer four questions, one from each section. To pass from the written test, the candidate needs to obtain 50% out of a total mark of 100.

C. Interview to verify product evidence and supplementary evidence

The candidates will be required to sit for an interview that will last approximately 45 minutes. The interview process will assess the candidates on both their academic and practical knowledge. The marking scheme would be out of 100 and the pass mark is 50.

During the interview the Board will continue assessing candidates in relation to their knowledge, skills, and competences in the respective occupation. Candidates are encouraged to present photographic evidence, workbooks, or logbooks to illustrate their work.

To successfully pass from the assessment, candidates need to proof their competences in all enlisted criteria as defined in the National Occupational Standards. Following assessment candidates will receive a formal result slip issued by Jobsplus in collaboration with MFHEA. The result slip will indicate whether the candidate has obtained a Pass or a Fail in all criteria. Nonetheless persons who fail any of these criteria will have the possibility to sit for a re-sit.

D. Portfolio

Candidates will be requested to present their portfolio during the interview. The portfolio should reflect the knowledge and skills acquired by the candidates during their past work experience. The portfolio should highlight:

1. CV detailing qualifications /work experience and professional development
2. Testimonials
3. References
4. Personal statement reflecting on your viewpoint of childcare and education at this age
5. Work- Based Evidence (Lesson Plans, Play based Learning, observation reports, collaboration with parents) (Activities and planning of such activities (indoor and outdoor) How you encourage child-led learning) (How you enable children's creativity and imagination)
6. Evidence of understanding child development stages
7. Health and safety Measures (Accident reports and hygiene procedures) (How you handle emergencies
How you enable health and safety practices at the centre)
8. Evidence of Behaviour Management (positive reinforcement, conflict resolution)
9. Evidence of Parental engagement (How you interact with parents and children)
10. Evidence of Teamwork
11. Policies and Regulations that are followed and inform their practice
12. Self-Assessment (Logs of personal reflection)
13. Evidence of Continuous development

The portfolio will be assessed by the Assessment Board, and it will be further discussed during the interview. To pass from the portfolio the candidate needs to obtain 50 marks out of 100. It is important that the portfolio is submitted before the interview.

Resits:

Candidates who do not pass from any of the enlisted criteria will be guided for further development in the failed criterion/criteria.

The areas of further development may include:

- Health & Safety Course (Safety Card)
- MCAST / Jobsplus Training Programmes
- On-Site Training
- Evidence of Training

The failed criterion/criteria will be communicated in the result slip issued by Jobsplus. Date, time and venue of re-sit would be communicated to the candidate by Jobsplus. The candidate will be guided by the Assessment Board with respect to the areas for improvement prior to the re-sit.

Appeals:

Candidates who fail the assessment and wish to contest the decision taken by the Assessment Board can submit a formal request for further feedback to Jobsplus. An appeal can be lodged within 10 working days from the result slip issued by Jobsplus. In the eventuality that the candidate's final result is changed following the appeal, a new result will supersede the previous one.

Activity Plan

Child's Gender & Age: _____

Date _____

Candidate's Name _____

Supervisor _____

Description of Main Activity	Activity Objectives	Procedures and Material	Evaluation i. child's performance ii. Effectiveness of Procedure