



CHILDCARE EDUCATOR – MQF/EQF LEVEL 4 INFORMATION HANDBOOK

ON

**The process of validation of informal and non-
formal learning for Childcare Educators in Child
Care 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 as Childcare Educators at MQF level 4. Successful candidates acquire an Award as Childcare Educator pegged at Level 4 within the Malta Qualifications Framework and also the European Qualifications Framework and which is endorsed by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education.

Information Meeting of the Assessment Board Members with Candidates

Prior to the Process for the validation of informal and non-formal learning, the Assessment Board will meet with the prospective candidates. During this meeting the Assessment Board will explain in detail what is expected of the candidates for them to achieve an Award as Childcare Educator at MQF/EQF Level 4.

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 L.N. 295 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 also present 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 4 hour practical test and attend an interview, besides submitting an activity plan during the practical examination.

Candidates will be assessed on the criteria laid down in the Occupational Standards issued by the Malta Further & Higher Education Authority, which can be downloaded from the following link: [Malta Qualifications Database \(gov.mt\)](http://gov.mt)

Re-sits

It is important to note that if candidates do not pass any one of the assessment components they would be eligible for a re-sit in the failed component/s. 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.

CCE401: Understanding Child Development

The Childcare Educator has a sound understanding of child development. The Childcare Educator understands how children learn, grow, and develop in the first three years of their life and uses this knowledge to support different developmental needs (including physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic) through the provision of a holistic learning programme.

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 Childcare Educator knows and understands that even the youngest children have rights and full entitlement to the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child. The Childcare Educator safeguards and promotes children's rights in practice and knows how to proceed in cases of potential harm or suspected abuse.

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

1. respect children as persons in their own right;
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 particular 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 Childcare Educator fosters reciprocal, responsive, and secure relationships with children. The Childcare Educator engages in enjoyable and stimulating interactions to support children's well-being, learning, and development, and develops positive relationships with children, parents, Centre Managers, Legally Responsible Persons, staff members, external professionals/agencies, and other stake holders.

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 Childcare Educator recognises play as the central medium through which young children learn and as a generator for the planning and delivery of quality learning and care programmes. The Childcare Educator employs the processes of observation, assessment, and planning to implement pedagogical and curriculum approaches that are based on child-centred, inquiry, and play-based learning. The Childcare Educator uses the five broad learning outcomes of the Early Years Cycle as an overall guide to pedagogy and assessment (MEDE, 2012; DQSE, 2015).

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) Directorate for Quality and

Standards in Education [DQSE] (2015). 'Educators' Guide for Pedagogy and Assessment using a learning outcomes approach'. Malta, Ministry for Education and Employment. Retrieved from this link:

[Early_Years.146700384962.pdf\(schoolslearningoutcomes.edu.mt\)](https://schoolslearningoutcomes.edu.mt/Early_Years.146700384962.pdf)

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 Childcare Educator responds to children's physical development and care needs to support their healthy development. The Childcare Educator uses physical care routines to support the learning and development of children entrusted in their care. The Childcare Educator consults with parents about the children's physical care routines to ensure continuity of care.

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 Childcare Educator regularly reflects on one's current practices and behaviours to identify strengths and consider plans for change that will bring about improvement. The Childcare Educator actively participates in ongoing professional development opportunities to ensure that their dispositions, knowledge, and skills are aligned with the profession's ever-changing knowledge base.

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 Childcare Educator encourages and promotes positive behaviour. Children are guided to understand the outcomes of their actions and are supported in learning how to cope more appropriately.

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 Childcare Educator must be prepared to meet the diverse needs of all children. The Childcare Educator employs a range of strategies to encourage awareness and understanding of diversity among the children and families. The Childcare Educator exposes children to the official Maltese and English languages as well as encourages the home development language of all children entrusted in their care. All children and their families are respected for 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 on the basis of use of language;
11. be sensitive and attentive to information about cultural and religious backgrounds.

CCE409: Supporting Inclusive Early Childhood Education and Care

The Childcare Educator acknowledges the principles of inclusive care and education in early childhood and is committed to respond to the individual needs of every child and family. The Childcare Educator uses a range of pedagogical approaches and strategies to support the participation of all children. The Childcare Educator engages effectively with parents, staff members, and wider professionals in the ongoing assessment and appropriate provision for children with disabilities.

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;
4. nurture inclusive social, physical, and learning environments;
5. recognise the significant role of play in the curriculum for all children;
6. develop, implement, and regularly review learning experiences and strategies aimed to address the needs of all children;
7. 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;
8. collect, record, and update relevant background information about children with disabilities;
9. liaise regularly with parents of children with disabilities to ensure that both the needs of the children and their parents are met;
10. collaborate with external professionals and/or agencies where appropriate, to optimise support for children with disabilities;
11. reflect to enhance their own practice in inclusive Early Childhood Education and Care.

CCE410: Working in Partnership with Parents

The Childcare Educator acknowledges that the best long-term outcomes for every child are achieved when educators and parents work in partnership grounded in mutual respect. The Childcare Educator understands, respects, and supports the parents' interest and right¹⁰ to be actively engaged in their children's well-being, learning, and development in Early Childhood Education and Care services.

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 Childcare Educator is aware of the national regulations, standards, policies, and procedures aimed at developing and maintaining the health, safety, and security of all children. Together with the Legally Responsible Person and the Centre Manager, the Childcare Educator adheres to such regulations and minimises any risks to the children's health, safety, and security. The Childcare Educator, together with the Centre Manager, communicates with families any concerns regarding the health, safety, and security of the children.

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;
'National Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care Services (0-3 years)'. Retrieved from this link [National Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care Services \(0 - 3 years\).pdf \(gov.mt\)](#).
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 Childcare Educator is aware of the main compliance regulations, directions, and standards issued by the national authorities that regulate the sector, while contributing to the up-keep of these regulations. The Childcare Educator takes appropriate action to meet the regulatory requirements within their daily practice.

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.

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
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