



General Certificate of Education

Health and Social Care 8626/8629

HC16 Early Years Education

Report on the Examination

June 2009

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HC16: Early Years Education

It was pleasing that the standard of work presented generally showed significant improvement. Most candidates followed the order of the assessment criteria in order to present well-ordered evidence. It is important that all of the evidence presented relates to the two topics and the selected age range throughout the report.

Candidates should select 1 topic from list 1 and 1 topic from list 2. Some candidates selected 2 topics from list 1.

Throughout the report, candidates should demonstrate an understanding of how children learn and how techniques and strategies are used to enable them to learn effectively.

The evidence presented should be wholly relevant to the selected topics and the selected age range.

Candidates should research relevant techniques and strategies for enabling learning and commonly used to deliver the topics.

Higher-ability candidates provided detailed and consistently applied evidence, demonstrating thorough research into techniques and strategies for enabling learning. Formal and informal assessment were considered in depth.

Mid-range to lower-ability candidates at times struggled to apply the information gathered consistently and included some information not directly related to the age range or topics selected.

Assessment methods were often addressed but not justified in any detail. Assessment was sometimes considered in general and assessment of the topics was not explained.

Higher-ability candidates presented detailed plans which appeared highly likely to achieve aims. The plans were explicit and enabled the reader to visualise the learning experience throughout. Some of the plans, though detailed, would benefit from a more `reader-friendly` layout.

Weaker candidates presented learning plans which stated aims and were age-appropriate. However, they lacked significant detail to envisage the whole learning experience and lacked clarity.

Candidates should provide evidence of 2 learning plans, one for each topic. Any draft plans could be included in the appendix.

It is important that realistic learning plans are included, some candidates included written evidence about the activities but did not include actual plans.

Higher ability candidates evaluated the learning plans in depth and considered the effectiveness of the learning that would have taken place.

Candidates who had the opportunity to carry out the `learning experience` generally provided more in-depth evaluations. Peer assessment sheets and teacher feedback were utilised well in this section.

Relevant learning theories were well applied to the topics and were used to justify the design of the learning plans.

Work explored how effective the strategies selected had been in the learning plans. Also they considered how other strategies could have been used as an alternative approach to learning. Candidate stated specific examples of techniques used, why selected and considered how effective they were overall.

The evaluations linked back to the stated aims and the chosen age range.

Mid-range and weaker candidates' evaluations lacked some detail. Due to weak learning plans, evaluations were superficial. However, the work did consider whether the learning aims had been met. Strategies and techniques selected were sometimes evaluated but not in any depth.

Candidates at times included generic evidence on learning theories with limited application.

There was some misinterpretation of the sources section.

Candidates presented the evidence they had collated, however many candidates did not analyse the information and used the section as an appendix

Candidates should be guided to present evidence of thorough research into the 2 chosen topic areas together with sources for relevant techniques and theory.

Candidates should reference them in the correct form, analyse their effectiveness and explain how they were used.

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the AQA website at www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html .