T Level Foundation Programmes



T Level Foundation Course in Education and Early Years

Version V1

Contents

Summary of changes **4**
Welcome to VQA **5**
Our commitment to you 5
What you need before you can deliver a T Level Foundation Course 5
About this specification 5
Using the VQA name and logo 6
Advertising rules 6
Accessibility 6
T Level Foundation Year **8**
Overview 8
How will a T Level Foundation Course benefit your students? 8
Diagnostic assessment 9
The Foundation Year 9
Entry requirements 10
Key areas of learning 11
Course structure 11
English, maths, and digital skills in the T Level Foundation Course 12
Assessment **12**
Assessment approach 14
Establishing consistency in assessment writing 14
Achievement and progression 15
Health and safety considerations 15
Course Delivery **16**
Monitoring student progress 16
Adapted learning 16
Resources 16
Personal development opportunities 17
Student pastoral support 17
Work preparation 17
Student registration 18
Progression after this course 18
Staffing and Quality Assurance **20**
Tutor Requirements 20
Assessors 20
Quality Assurance 20
Useful Websites **22**
Teaching Content **23**
Course structure 23
Outcome (O1): Plan learning activities to support children's development 23
Outcome (O1): Plan learning activities to support children's development 23
Outcome (O2): Prepare environments for learning activities to support children's development 38
Outcome 2 (O2): Prepare environments for learning activities to support children's development 46

Outcome 3 (O3): Contribute to the assessment of children's development 49
Outcome 3(O3): Contribute to the assessment of children's development 59
Appendix 1 62
Level 2 Command Verbs.....62

Summary of changes

The following table provides a summary of the changes that have been made to the course specification since the publication of the previous version.

Version number	Summary of changes

Welcome to VQA

Our commitment to you

At VQA (VQA), we believe learning should be meaningful, flexible, and of an exceptional quality, whether it's a regulated qualification or part of our non-regulated course provision.

VQA is a recognised Awarding Organisation regulated by Ofqual in England and CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland. We apply the same high-quality standards to our non-regulated courses, ensuring they are well-designed, purposeful, and aligned with the skills, behaviours, and knowledge to support students on their learning journey.

This endorsed, unregulated **T Level Foundation Course in Education and Early Years** is part of that commitment. It provides a supportive, structured route for students who would benefit from a preparatory year before progressing to a full T Level qualification.

What you need before you can deliver a T Level Foundation Course

To deliver a T Level Foundation course, your organisation must be recognised by VQA.

Our **endorsed course requirements** check that your policies, systems, and staffing are in place to deliver high-quality learning. Centres must show they have:

- appropriate resources
- qualified and occupationally competent staff
- clear systems in place to deliver and assess the course.

Approval must be confirmed by VQA before any teaching takes place.

Full guidance on centre recognition and approval is available in the VQA Endorsed Course Customer Requirements accessible from the VQA website.

About this specification

This course specification sets out everything centres need to plan, deliver, and assess the T Level Foundation Course in Education and Early Years. Inside you will find:

- a clear statement of the course purpose
- the three national technical outcomes (NTOs) with the underpinning knowledge and skills
- practical guidance for delivery.

Reproduction of this document:

Centres may reproduce this specification for internal use only. The content must not be altered, edited, or adapted in any way.

Using the VQA name and logo

We're proud of the VQA brand and we know our centres are too. That's why we allow recognised centres to use the VQA logo and name to promote approved courses, with a few simple rules:

- logos must not be altered in colour, shape, size, or design
- use only on approved materials: e.g., course brochures, web pages, or promotional flyers relating to VQA courses
- centres must monitor how the logo is used — both by themselves and any third parties they work with.

If your centre is no longer recognised, or if your marketing relationships change, you must inform VQA and remove any use of the logo or name.

More details about logo use and brand guidelines can be found in our full brand policy on the VQA website.

Advertising rules

As an Awarding Organisation, VQA and its registered centres are subject to the Conditions of Recognition defined by the regulator, Ofqual. Two of these conditions (B5.1 and B5.2) stipulate that VQA and its centres must take steps to ensure that non-regulated products are not advertised or promoted to students as regulated qualifications.

To guarantee these conditions are met, we have provided the following requirements that all centres must follow when marketing this course:

- marketing materials should not mislead a student into believing they will gain a regulated qualification
- all marketing materials must not describe this course as “regulated” or “nationally recognised”
- all marketing materials must not describe this course as equivalent to a regulated qualification
- all marketing must not state that this course meets industry standards for employment.

Accessibility

As an Awarding Organisation, VQA is committed to ensuring that all our products are accessible, inclusive, and non-discriminatory. We ensure that no aspect of this course disadvantages any group of students who share a protected characteristic or introduces unjustifiable barriers to entry, other than those essential to the course’s intended purpose. Where such features are necessary, they will be clearly stated and justified.

VQA monitors and reviews the nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation) throughout qualification development to maintain accessibility and inclusivity. This approach promotes positive attitudes and fosters good relations among all students.

More information can be found in our Equality and Diversity Policy.

T Level Foundation Year

Overview

A T Level Foundation Year is a preparatory study programme designed to support students who have the potential to progress to a T Level.

The programme comprises 5 key components:

- industry-relevant technical knowledge and skills
- skills for successful study
- English, maths, and digital skills
- knowledge and skills for the workplace
- positive attitudes and behaviours.

The primary purpose of this T Level Foundation Course in Education and Early Years is to provide the foundational technical knowledge and skills relevant to the student's preferred T Level route.

The course is designed for students who would benefit from additional preparation and study time before starting a T Level. It supports progression to their chosen subject route by developing the knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed for level 3 study.

The Foundation Year should support students in making informed decisions about their next steps. This may include progressing to a T Level or pursuing an alternative pathway, with guidance provided to ensure each student chooses the route that is right for them.

It is designed to meet the requirements outlined by the Department for Education (DfE) in its T Level Foundation Year: framework for delivery guidance.

The VQA T Level Foundation Course in Education and Early Years is a non-regulated, accredited course.

How will a T Level Foundation Course benefit your students?

This T Level Foundation Course provides a tailored year of learning to help students prepare for the demands of level 3 study. It focuses on developing the core knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed to succeed on a T Level, providing a clear and supportive transition into level 3 study. It helps students build confidence and independence while gaining a clear understanding of what is expected within their chosen T Level route.

Students will have opportunities to engage with employers and make meaningful links between their learning and the world of work. The course also supports personal development by encouraging students to take ownership of their progress, with time built in to meet individual learning needs and provide appropriate pastoral support.

By the end of the course, students should have a clear understanding of what is required to succeed on their chosen T Level, or feel confident in making an informed decision about an alternative progression route or career path.

The course is intended for students identified through diagnostic assessment as not yet ready to meet the demands of a T Level. It provides targeted preparation and structured study to support progression to level 3 study.

Diagnostic assessment

Centres must ensure that all students complete an initial diagnostic assessment before the start of a foundation year. This may take different forms depending on centre practice but should be used to identify each student's learning, development, and pastoral support needs.

The findings should inform how a foundation year is tailored, including any support for students with SEND. It will also assist in determining whether a T Level Foundation Course or direct entry to a T Level is the most appropriate route for each student. Diagnostic activities may include taster sessions, one-to-one discussions, self-assessments, assignments or reflective tasks, and may be supported by knowledge, skills and behaviour matrices.

This stage should help students make informed decisions about their next steps. Students who have identified a preferred T Level route should be supported to confirm that it is the most suitable option for them, while those who are undecided should be given opportunities to explore alternative options.

The Foundation Year

A T Level Foundation Year is designed to support students in building a strong basis for further study. It is structured around 5 areas that provide students with the essential academic, practical, and personal skills needed to successfully progress to a T Level qualification. The 5 areas that make up a foundation year are listed below:

Technical knowledge	Skills for successful study	English, maths, and digital skills development	Knowledge and skills for the workplace	Positive attitude and behaviours
Students are introduced to key concepts and practical skills relevant to their intended T Level. This builds early technical understanding and prepares them for level 3 learning.	This area focuses on essential study skills development to include time management and independent learning. Students will also develop techniques in formal writing, research, referencing, and critical thinking.	Students who have not yet attained a GCSE grade 4 in English and/or maths (or equivalent qualification) are required to continue working towards this achievement through GCSE resits, or by completing a Functional Skills qualification.	This component introduces students to professional workplace behaviours and the expectations of a T Level industry placement. It covers key areas such as professionalism, communication, teamwork, understanding workplace policies, and effective travel planning.	This component helps students build confidence, manage stress, and cultivate a positive mindset. It focuses on goal-setting, self-reflection, and using feedback to support their personal growth and enhance their wellbeing.

Entry requirements

There are no specific entry requirements for this VQA T Level Foundation Course.

The course is primarily aimed at students aged 16-19 years, but may be suitable for students up to the age of 24 who have an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan.

NOTE: The T Level Foundation Year is designed to support students who may not yet have achieved a GCSE grade 4 or equivalent qualification in English and maths by providing targeted teaching and additional time to build their confidence and ability. Students who have not achieved the minimum requirement in English and maths will be expected to work towards achieving a GCSE grade 4 or a level 2 Functional Skills qualification during the course to meet the entry requirements for their chosen T Level route.

Key areas of learning

This T Level Foundation Course offers a balanced programme that helps students develop the essential technical knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed to progress onto a T Level in Education and Early Years.

This includes an introduction to the core principles and industry-relevant practices drawn from the National Technical Outcome (NTO) for the T Level route.

Students will explore areas such as:

- primary area of child development
- planning learning activities to support primary areas of development
- resources for learning activities
- health and safety considerations
- using observation and recording techniques to record children's development.

These topics are designed to give students a strong foundation for the more advanced technical learning they will encounter on the T Level and will support their understanding of how technical knowledge is applied in real workplace settings.

English, maths, and digital skills, relevant to education and early years and transferable skills such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork will also be developed during the course.

There are opportunities for employer engagement, personal development, and work experience linked to education and early years, helping students build confidence, gain industry insight, and prepare for the expectations of the workplace.

Course structure

Students must complete the 3 Outcomes to achieve this T Level Foundation Course.

We have devised a simple, clear structure to showcase the knowledge and skills that students must be able to evidence to ensure they can successfully demonstrate each of the 3 outcomes. The layout comprises:

- technical knowledge and skills
- blended delivery (through a combination of theoretical and engaging, practical learning)
- supplementary delivery information for student stretch and challenge
- positive behaviours that may be demonstrated (such as professionalism, resilience).

The course provides the knowledge students must develop and the skills they are expected to demonstrate to fulfil the expectations of each outcome.

Each topic includes the essential knowledge, and the skills section details what students must be able to do in practice, ensuring that learning is applied and demonstrable within relevant contexts.

To support effective teaching and learning, each topic includes some suggestions on how the content can be taught.

Supplementary information is also provided to extend learning and encourage stretch and challenge for those who are ready to progress beyond the core requirements.

Outcome title	Guided learning hours (GLH)
01: Plan learning activities to support children's development	50
02: Prepare environments for learning activities to support children's development	50
03: Contribute to the assessment of children's development	50
Total (GLH) contact time, guidance, and supervision of a student for this course	150*

*** The Guided Learning Hours (GLH)** for this course are set at 150 hours to ensure appropriate provision for students with varying needs and to accommodate opportunities for stretch and challenge in each of the three outcomes.

English, maths, and digital skills in the T Level Foundation Course

English (communication), maths (numeracy), and digital skills are essential components of the T Level Foundation Course. Details of where these skills are embedded and developed are set out in the National Technical Outcome (NTO), linked in the website section of this specification, which outline the specific opportunities for teaching and application. Some skills will be explicitly taught, while others will be embedded through the delivery of the wider course content.

- **English (Communication)**: Communication skills will be developed through tasks that require students to articulate their ideas and present information clearly. These skills will be embedded within the context of the course, ensuring they are relevant to industry and student learning.
- **Maths (Numeracy)**: Numeracy skills are integrated into the qualification, particularly when students need to apply mathematical principles in real-world contexts. This includes tasks involving measurement, calculations, and data interpretation.
- **Digital Skills**: Digital skills will be embedded through the use of relevant software and tools that students will need in education and early years. These skills will be developed and applied in context, ensuring students understand their practical applications.

Assessment

Assessment approach

All students must be assessed in English.

Centres are expected to create their own assessments that reflect the aims of this T Level Foundation Course, ensuring alignment with the National Technical Outcome (NTO) for the subject area. When designing them, tutors must consider the depth and breadth of knowledge allowed by each task.

The assessments may be carried out on an individual outcome basis or designed holistically for the whole course across all 3 outcomes. Whichever approach is used, assessments should also reflect and align with the embedded English, maths, and digital skills.

Assessment might include a mix of:

- examinations
- case studies
- projects
- observations
- role play.

Assessment activities should enable students to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and behaviours outlined across all outcomes, showing how these can be applied in realistic, work-related contexts to support progression to T Level study or employment.

The specification does not prescribe a fixed approach, as this allows centres the flexibility to adapt delivery to their own context and to respond to the individual needs of students. Tutors should use their professional judgement to select methods that provide students with meaningful opportunities to apply and develop the required skills, whether in classroom, simulated, or workplace settings.

All assessments should be supported by appropriate internal quality assurance activities to make sure they are consistent, purposeful and support each student's progression, particularly when holistic assessment is used.

All assessments must be designed to ensure that students are appropriately prepared for the demands of the T Level route and reflect real-world applications.

Establishing consistency in assessment writing

Centres must implement appropriate and consistent assessment approaches to ensure student work is marked fairly and in line with VQA expectations.

All delivery staff must be familiar with the mandatory teaching content and assessment expectations and apply the same interpretation of knowledge and skill topics when designing and marking their assessments.

Assessments should follow a standardised format to ensure consistency in language, structure, and level of demand.

Tutors must use clear marking criteria and participate in regular standardisation activities to agree on the pass standard. Processes must be in place to confirm the authenticity of student work, and centres should ensure a transparent, accessible procedure is available for students to appeal a fail decision.

Achievement and progression

This is an unregulated course, and assessment will take place throughout the year. The assessment model is based on a pass/fail outcome, with no grading.

To pass the course, tutors must be satisfied that the students have met the 3 outcomes.

It is essential that tutors actively monitor student progress and provide timely and constructive feedback, highlighting areas for improvement and reinforcing their achievements. This ongoing feedback will ensure that students are given every opportunity to address any challenges and stay on track to successfully demonstrate the outcomes by the end of the course.

Centres should ensure that the Student Certification Form, available in the T Level Foundation Course resources section on the website, is completed when claiming learner certificates. Certificates will not be issued without the submission of the completed form. Centres are required to submit the form via email to operations@vqa.org.

Health and safety considerations

Centres must ensure that all activities and tasks undertaken as part of this T Level Foundation Course are carried out with due regard to health and safety.

Students should only engage in activities within a supervised environment, or where appropriate, in a suitably controlled simulated setting. Centres are responsible for ensuring that all delivery and assessment activities comply with relevant health and safety requirements and safeguarding considerations.

Course Delivery

Monitoring student progress

Centres are expected to monitor students' progress throughout the course through regular tutor and student review points. Ongoing reviews should be used to identify each student's strengths and development needs, track progress in English, maths and digital skills, and monitor competency in employability skills and behaviours.

A range of methods should be used to review their progress, including regular feedback, formative assessments, and observations, with all activities documented to inform decisions about any additional support or interventions.

Students should be supported to take ownership of their learning and development by having a clear understanding of their goals and working with their tutors to agree on an individual development plan that sets out key objectives and milestones.

VQA has devised a number of templates to support the administration and delivery of this course. These can be accessed on the VQA website.

Adapted learning

Centres should take reasonable steps to ensure that all students are given fair access to learning and assessment opportunities. This includes anticipating potential barriers, adapting delivery methods where appropriate, and offering flexible arrangements that enable participation. Centres are encouraged to adopt a student-centred approach that reflects best practice in supporting diverse needs.

For more information, please refer to VQA's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy on our website.

Resources

All teaching materials and additional resources used to support the delivery of this foundation course must be age-appropriate. Centres should carefully consider student safeguarding and wellbeing when developing or sourcing materials in line with the centre's policies and procedures.

VQA has produced a Centre Resources Pack that includes a range of useful templates to support the assessment, ongoing monitoring, and pastoral support of your students.

This is a free, optional resource to support the administration of the T Level Foundation Course and may be accessed via the VQA website.

Personal development opportunities

Centres should include meaningful personal development and enrichment opportunities that help students to build the study skills, behaviours, and transferable skills needed for success on a T Level and in the workplace.

Additional enrichment opportunities, ideally aligned with students' intended T Level route or career goals, might include trips or volunteering activities, or participation in programmes such as The King's Trust.

Student pastoral support

Pastoral support is a vital part of any T Level Foundation Year and plays a key role in preparing students for progression to the demands of a T Level. Many students who register on a foundation year need encouragement, structure, and clear guidance to help them move forward.

A T Level Foundation Year should offer students tailored support to help them build confidence, resilience, and independence as they make the transition from GCSEs to level 3 study. This includes helping students to develop personal skills and support their wellbeing.

Centres should provide regular mentoring sessions as part of the pastoral support offer. These meetings will allow students to reflect on their progress, set goals, and address any issues at an early stage. Pastoral support should also monitor engagement, attendance, and personal development.

Safeguarding and mental health support are essential. Centres must have clear procedures in place to identify and respond to any wellbeing concerns, and students should have access to mental health services or signposting where needed. This is particularly important for students who are unsure of their next steps.

Support for students with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) must be personalised, with appropriate adjustments made both in the classroom and during work experience activities. Centres should work closely with employers to ensure that any specific needs are understood and met. Overall, pastoral support should help ensure that every student feels supported, understood, and ready to progress confidently to their T Level.

Work preparation

Work experience is a key element of a T Level Foundation Year, supporting students to prepare for their T Level industry placement. Wherever possible, placements should align with the student's intended T Level route; however, alternative opportunities may be offered where employer availability is limited. All students should participate in meaningful, work-related activities and tailored workplace preparation, informed by an assessment of their individual work readiness.

Where a formal work placement is not possible, centres are encouraged to provide alternative forms of industry engagement to ensure students gain relevant and practical exposure to the workplace.

Preparation activities should cover core workplace knowledge and skills and may include:

- employer-led talks
- presenting projects to employers
- industry visits
- pre-placement site visits

- site visits
- mock interviews
- industry mentoring
- travel planning.

Centres must work closely with employers to ensure support and accessibility, safeguarding and health and safety considerations, including reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

Student registration

Once approved to offer this T Level Foundation Course, centres must follow VQA's procedures for registering students. Student registration is at the centre's discretion, in line with equality legislation and health and safety requirements.

Centres must register students before any assessment can take place.

Progression after this course

This T Level Foundation Course aims to prepare students to progress onto a T Level. Successful students can progress to:

- T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years.

Students will need to apply for entry to the T Level via a centre's standard enrolment processes.

Where progression to a T Level is not appropriate for a student, centres will need to provide students with advice and guidance to support them in determining their next steps, which may include:

- a level 2 or level 3 study programme
- an apprenticeship
- employment.

Centres must provide appropriate careers guidance to help students plan their next steps and ensure the completion of any qualifications, including English and maths.

Staffing and Quality Assurance

All members of staff involved with the delivery of this T Level Foundation Course (tutors or internally quality assurance staff) will need to be occupationally competent in the subject area being delivered. This could be evidenced by a combination of:

- a higher-level qualification in the same subject area
- experience in the delivery/assessment/IQA of the course
- work experience in the subject area.

Staff members will also be expected to have a working knowledge of the requirements of the foundation course and a thorough knowledge and understanding of the role of tutors/assessors and internal quality assurance. They are also expected to undertake continuous professional development (CPD) to ensure they remain up to date with work practices and developments associated with the courses they assess or quality assure.

Tutor Requirements

Tutors who deliver this foundation course must possess a teaching qualification appropriate for the level. This can include:

- Further and Adult Education Teacher's Certificate
- Cert Ed/PGCE/Bed/MEd
- PTLLS/CTLLS/DTLLS
- Level 3 Award/Level 4 Certificate/Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training.

Assessors

Staff who assess this foundation course must possess an assessing qualification appropriate for the level or be working towards a relevant qualification and have their assessment decisions countersigned by a qualified assessor. This can include:

- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement
- Level 3 Award in Understanding the Principles and Practices of Assessment
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement
- A1 or D32/D33.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance for this VQA T Level Foundation course should be carried out by experienced professionals within the centre to ensure it meets learning standards.

Centres should implement regular checks on student progress, provide constructive feedback, and maintain a supportive environment.

Centres should also ensure that staff delivering the course are suitably qualified and experienced.

Additionally, centres will receive an annual request to provide samples of student work and confirmation of the qualifications of those involved in delivery.

Useful Websites

- Department for Education
- T Levels

T Level Foundation Year Framework for Delivery

The Skills Builder

Barclays Life Skills

Skills England

You may also find the following websites useful:

- National Technical Outcome in Education and Early Years

Teaching Content

Course structure

The structure of the T Level Foundation Course is informed by the National Technical Outcome (NTO) to ensure a comprehensive and cohesive learning experience for the students.

Each outcome is underpinned by a clear rationale, providing context for its relevance to support progression to a T Level.

The content is divided into **knowledge** and **skills** to support a focused and progressive approach to learning.

We provide **supplementary information** to deepen understanding and offer opportunities for stretch and challenge, ensuring students are encouraged to reach their full potential and support progression to level 3 study.

Additionally, English, maths, and digital skills are embedded throughout the course, with guidance on how these competencies may be integrated into learning activities.

The course also includes a strong emphasis on **transferable skills** and **behaviours**, preparing students for successful progression in both their further studies to a T Level and to future employment.

Outcome (O1): Plan learning activities to support children's development

This outcome supports progression to the T Level in Education and Early Years by preparing students to plan and organise learning activities that promote children's development. Students will gain knowledge of the primary areas of development, including expected patterns of growth and development, as well as the factors that can positively or negatively influence progress. This provides a foundation for recognising individual needs and planning suitable opportunities for learning.

Building on this knowledge, students will design and plan learning activities that are engaging, inclusive, and matched to the child's stage of development. The focus is on applying theory to practice, ensuring learning activities actively support and extend children's learning. In doing so, students develop the ability to make informed decisions about how best to encourage and promote children's development.

The knowledge topics in this section are mandatory and must be covered in full. Tutors have the discretion to deliver these topics at their discretion using the teaching approaches, examples, and activities that best suit their students' needs.

The delivery of this outcome should consistently reflect children across the following age groups: birth to 11 months (babies), 1 to 2 years 11 months (toddlers), 3 to 4 years 11 months (preschool-aged), and 5 to 7 years (school-aged). The 7-19 age group will also be considered regarding developmental milestones.

Knowledge Topic 1: Child development	
The student must understand:	
K1	Primary areas of development from birth to 7 years: definitions and characteristics, expected patterns, and key milestones for physical, communication, and cognitive development.
K2	Factors which may impact the primary areas of development.
Tutor guidance:	
K1 Primary areas of development: Tutors should introduce students to the three primary areas of development **from birth to 7 years** – **physical, communication, and cognitive**. Teaching will then move on to the other two areas of development – social and emotional, and behavioural development. Students will also be introduced to how **expected patterns** of development and **key milestones** across the age range 7–19 years become more advanced as children grow into adolescence and young adulthood. **K2 Factors:** Tutors should cover the **factors** that can affect a child's physical, cognitive, communication, social, and emotional development. These factors can be positive, like a supportive home environment, or negative, like poor nutrition or lack of stimulation. Understanding these influences helps identify how development can be supported or hindered. Students should learn about the factors of background, health, and wellbeing.	
Supplementary information to support stretch and challenge:	
The tutor could introduce: • **how expected transitions and unexpected transitions can impact on expected patterns of development.**	

Knowledge Topic 2: Learning activities	
The student must understand:	
K3	Learning activities to support primary areas of development: types, characteristics, components, purpose, suitability to meet development needs, suitability for different age groups, suitability to engage, enable, motivate, and challenge.
K4	Concept of learning goals and different ways these are expressed.
K5	Factors to consider when planning learning activities.
Tutor guidance:	

K3 Learning activities:

Tutors should introduce **learning activities** (adult-led, child-initiated, whole class, small group, individual) that support primary areas of development by helping children grow in physical, cognitive, communication, and social skills. They should emphasise that activities can vary in **types**, such as play-based, structured tasks, or group work, and that each activity has its **characteristics**, such as being hands-on or requiring problem-solving. The **components** may include materials, guidance, or tasks that encourage specific skills. The **purpose** of these activities is to promote growth in each development area.

When explaining the selection of learning activities, tutors should consider their **suitability to meet development needs**. Activities should be **appropriate for different age groups**, ensuring they are challenging yet achievable. Finally, these activities should be designed to **engage, enable, motivate, and challenge** children, keeping them interested while helping them progress.

K4 Concept of learning goals:

Tutors should explain **learning goals** in child development, which are clear objectives that describe what children should achieve in their physical, cognitive, communication, and social development. These goals can be expressed in **different ways**, such as broad goals or more specific goals.

Learning goals may be **short-term** (focused on immediate progress) or **long-term** (targeting ongoing development). Understanding how these goals are set and expressed helps in planning effective activities to support children's growth. Links could be made to the Children's milestones in the EYFS curriculum.

K5 Factors to consider:

Tutors should cover the **factors to consider when planning learning activities** that include the developmental stage of the child, their individual needs, interests, and abilities.

It is important to ensure activities are **age-appropriate** and align with **learning goals**. They should consider the **resources** needed and how the activity will engage, motivate, and challenge the child. They should also take into account **health and safety** requirements, and ensure the activity is inclusive and accessible for all children.

Supplementary information to support stretch and challenge:

The tutor could introduce:

- **developing learning activities to meet specific individual needs, e.g., children with special educational needs and disabilities and/or English as an additional language**
- **developing learning activities with a specific focus for example, to support healthy eating, or to promote sustainability**
- **how theories of development can be used to inform the planning of learning activities.**

Knowledge Topic 3: Resources for learning activities	
The student must understand:	
K6	Environments: types, characteristics and suitability for planned activities.
K7	Equipment: types, purpose and suitability for planned activities.
K8	Materials: purpose, quantities required and applications.
K9	Staffing needed for different learning activities.
K10	Space needed for different learning activities.

Tutor guidance:

K6 Environments:

Tutors should introduce students to the different types of **environments:** indoor, outdoor play, social and community settings, specialised environments such as forest schools, which refer to the settings in which children learn and develop. Tutors should explain that each environment has its own **characteristics** and availability of resources. When

planning activities, it is important to assess the **suitability of the environment** to ensure it supports the intended learning outcomes, provides safety, and encourages engagement. The environment should be designed to meet the needs of the children and the specific activities planned. Students could compare and contrast different environments for different age groups of children and different primary areas of development opportunities.

K7 Equipment:

Tutors should explore **equipment** that refers to the tools and resources used to carry out learning activities. **Types of equipment** can include items like toys, learning aids, technology, or physical tools. Tutors should explain the **purpose** of equipment that is to support and enhance children's learning by helping them engage with the activity in a meaningful way. When planning activities, it is important to assess the **suitability of the equipment** to ensure it matches the activity's goals, is safe for use, and meets the developmental needs of the children involved.

K8 Materials:

Tutors should explore the **materials** used to support learning activities. The **purpose** of materials is to enhance children's engagement and development, whether through play, exploration, or structured tasks. **Quantities required** depend on the number of children involved and the type of activity. Materials should be provided in appropriate amounts to ensure everyone can participate fully. The **application** of materials varies depending on the activity, such as using building blocks to develop fine motor skills or books to promote language development. The materials should be relevant, safe, and suitable for the activity's goals.

K9 Staffing:

Tutors should explain the staffing needed for different learning activities and that it depends on the type of activity, the number of children, and their developmental needs. For some activities, only one staff member may be needed to lead and supervise, while others may require additional support, such as teaching assistants or volunteers, to help manage the group or provide individual attention. It is important to ensure there are enough staff to maintain a safe environment, support children's learning, and provide guidance as needed during the activity. Staff should also be trained to understand the specific needs of the activity and the children involved.

K10 Space:

Tutors should explain the **space needed for different learning activities** and that it varies depending on the type of activity and the number of children involved. Some activities, like group discussions or arts and crafts, may only require a small, quiet area, while others, such as physical play or building projects, will need larger open spaces. It is important to ensure there is enough space for children to move freely, safely, and comfortably. The space should also be arranged to encourage interaction, exploration, and engagement, while considering factors like safety, accessibility, and the materials or equipment required for the activity.

The skills from the Planning section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching sections K1 to K10.

Knowledge Topic 4: Information and data	
The student must understand:	
K11	Sources of data and information used to plan learning activities: purpose, typical content, typical format, and terminology.
K12	Factors to consider when using information and data: confidentiality, privacy, intellectual property and security.

Tutor guidance:

K11 Sources of data:

Tutors should introduce students to **sources of data and information** that are used to **plan learning activities** that are to help ensure activities meet children's developmental needs and learning goals. Students could review the setting's policies.

Tutors should explain that the **purpose** of using data is to inform decisions about what activities to plan, what to include in session plans, staff ratios, available space, and how to support each child's development effectively. **Typical content** includes observations of the child, individual child profiles, progress reports, learning assessments, and feedback from parents or other professionals. **Typical formats** may include written reports, checklists, or digital records. **Terminology** might include terms like "learning outcomes," "developmental milestones," or "assessment criteria," which help to describe the progress and needs of each child.

K12 Factors to consider:

Tutors should explain that when using information and data to plan learning activities, they must consider several important factors. **Confidentiality** means keeping personal information about children and families private and sharing it only with those who have permission to access it. **Privacy** involves ensuring that personal details are not shared without consent. **Intellectual property** refers to respecting the ownership of resources and materials created by others, using them only in appropriate ways. **Security** ensures that all data is protected from unauthorised access or misuse. Understanding and applying these factors is essential for handling information responsibly.

Tutors may wish to draw a link to K12 in Outcome 3.

Knowledge Topic 5: Investigation	
The student must understand:	
K13	Validity of information and data: accuracy, reliability, currency and bias.
K14	Referencing of sources: techniques used to reference sources directly, paraphrasing and different types of sources.
Tutor guidance:	

K13 Validity of information and data:

Tutors should introduce students to the **validity of information and data** and how trustworthy and useful it is when planning learning activities.

Tutors should explain **accuracy,** in that the data must be correct and free from errors. **Reliability:** the information should be consistent and dependable, coming from trusted sources. **Currency:** the timeliness of the data; it should be up-to-date and relevant. **Bias:** the data should be objective, not influenced by personal opinions or preferences. Tutors should advise students that when planning, it is important to ensure the data is valid, as it helps make informed decisions about children's learning and development.

K14 Referencing of sources:

Tutors should introduce **referencing sources** and how they are important for giving credit to the original authors and ensuring the information used is reliable.

Techniques used to reference sources directly include quoting the exact words from a text, usually with quotation marks and a citation to show where it came from. **Paraphrasing** involves putting someone else's ideas into your own words while still giving them credit. **Different types of sources** can include books, articles, websites, and reports, each with its own way of being referenced. Understanding how to reference correctly helps avoid plagiarism and shows respect for others' work.

In addition, tutors should highlight the importance of various sources of information and data, such as **session plan templates, individual child profiles, staffing ratios, policies,** and **available space in the setting**. These sources provide essential context and insight when planning and evaluating learning activities and contribute to ensuring accurate, reliable, and well-referenced information.

Tutors may wish to cover the use of AI and its reliability and links with plagiarism.

The skills from the investigating section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching this section K13-K14.

Knowledge Topic 6: Communication	
The student must understand	
K15	Principles of effective communication: two-way process (send and receive messages), methods (verbal, non-verbal), styles (formal, informal), conventions of different types of written communication, and suitability for different purposes and for different audiences.
K16	Reading: principles, reading for comprehension, identifying salient points, summarising key points, and synthesising information from different sources.
K17	Spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SPAG): punctuation markers, grammatical conventions, and spelling of key technical and non-technical terminology.

Tutor guidance:
K15 Principles of effective communication: Tutors should introduce **effective communication,** which involves clear exchanges of messages, ensuring both parties understand each other. It is a **two-way process**, where one person **sends** a message and the other **receives** it, with an explanation often included to ensure understanding. There are different **methods** of communication: **verbal** (spoken words) and **non-verbal** (body language, gestures, and facial expressions). **Styles** of communication can be **formal** (used in professional settings) or **informal** (used in casual conversations). Finally, different types of **written communication** have their own **conventions,** and these should be suitable for the **purpose** of the communication and the **audience**. Understanding these principles ensures messages are delivered clearly and appropriately. **K16 Reading:** Tutors should explain that **reading** involves important principles to understand and process information effectively. **Reading for comprehension:** the meaning of the text, not just recognising words. **Identifying salient points:** picking out the most important or relevant information. Students should also practise **summarising key points:** restating the most important ideas in their own words. Finally, **synthesising information** from different sources: combining ideas from multiple texts to form a complete understanding of a topic. **Links with K14 in Outcome 2** **K17 Spelling, punctuation, and grammar:** Tutors should cover **Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar (SPAG)**. **Punctuation markers:** include full stops, commas, and question marks, used to separate ideas and make sentences easier to understand. **Grammatical conventions:** refer to the rules for forming correct sentences. **Spelling:** involves correctly writing both technical terms. **The skills from the Communicating topic could be highlighted when teaching sections K15 to K17.**

Knowledge Topic 7: Numeracy	
The student must understand	
K18	Standard units of measurement: area, weight, volume, and time.

K19	Numbers and the number system: techniques for application of the four operations (addition, multiplication, division, subtraction), working with whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percentages.
K20	Techniques for checking calculations: estimation and approximation.
K21	Measurement: principles, standards, terminology, linear and area, and volume quantities.

Tutor guidance:

K18 Standard units of measurement:

Tutors should introduce students to standard units of measurement. This will support the students to understand how **area, weight, volume, and time** are applied in supporting children's learning and care, such as timing routines or measuring ingredients for play activities.

K19 Numbers and the number system:

Tutors should explore the **numbers and the number system,** explaining the **four operations** —addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division — used to solve problems with numbers, whether working with whole numbers, **fractions**, **decimals**, or **percentages**. Students should understand how to apply these operations in different situations, such as adding fractions, multiplying decimals, dividing whole numbers, or calculating percentages.

K20 Techniques for checking calculations:

Tutors should explain the **techniques** used for checking calculations to help ensure accuracy in solving problems. **Estimation** is making a rough calculation to check if the answer is reasonable. **Approximation** is finding a close value that is easier to work with, often by rounding or simplifying numbers, to quickly check if the result makes sense.

K21 Measurement:

Tutors should explain the **principles** of measurement used to ensure consistency and accuracy when measuring. **Standards** are the agreed-upon units of measurement, such as meters for length, kilograms for weight, or litres for volume. **Terminology** for measurement includes terms **linear** (referring to length or distance), **area** (the amount of space inside a shape), and **volume** (the amount of space inside a 3D object).

The skills from the Planning section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching sections K18 to K21.

Knowledge Topic 8: Digital	
The student must understand:	
K22	Software: features, functions, applications for creating and formatting documents.
K23	Management of digital information and data: classification and organisation, naming conventions, storage systems, protection methods, accessibility formats.
Tutor guidance:	

K22 Software:

Tutors should introduce students to **software** which is used for creating and formatting documents, includes various **features** that help make the process easier, such as text editing tools, dictation tools, templates, and formatting options. The **functions** of software include tasks like typing, editing, saving, and printing documents. **Applications** for creating and formatting documents, such as word processors, allow users to adjust the layout, font, and style of text, insert images or tables, and ensure the document is ready for presentation or printing.

K23 Management of digital information and data:

Tutors should explain the **management of digital information and data,** and that it involves organising and protecting digital files efficiently. **Classification and organisation** help group-related files together, making them easy to find. **Naming conventions** ensure that files are named in a clear and consistent way, such as using dates or keywords. **Storage systems** refer to where digital files are saved, such as on a computer, cloud, or external drive. **Protection methods** include using passwords or encryption to keep data safe from unauthorised access. **Accessibility** ensures that the right people can access the data when needed. Understanding **formats** helps ensure the data can be opened and used in the right software (such as, PDF, Word, or Excel).

A link could be drawn to K20 and K21 in Outcome 3.

The skills from the Digital Skills section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching this section, K22-K23.

Outcome (O1): Plan learning activities to support children's development

Students will develop and apply a range of skills as part of this outcome and will develop transferable skills in planning, creativity, investigation, communication, numeracy, and digital literacy. In planning, they will learn to break down tasks, estimate time and resources,

prioritise and sequence learning activities, and consider health and safety requirements. Investigative skills will include creating search criteria, selecting and referencing sources, and evaluating the validity of information. Creativity will be developed through generating ideas, making connections, and refining approaches from different perspectives.

Alongside this, students will strengthen their communication by synthesising information, producing clear written plans, and applying accurate vocabulary and grammar. Numeracy skills will be applied to calculate time, resources, and space using standard measures, operations, and ratios. Digital skills will be developed through creating documents, organising information, and storing and retrieving data securely.

Skill Topic 1: Planning	
Students must be able to:	
S1	Identify discrete steps required to achieve an outcome
S2	Estimate time and resources required for an outcome
S3	Prioritise activities to achieve an outcome
S4	Sequence activities to achieve an outcome
S5	Identify health and safety requirements for an outcome

Skill Topic 2: Investigating	
Students must be able to:	
S6	Develop search criteria to support an investigation
S7	Identify sources of information and data required for an investigation
S8	Reference sources of information
S9	Interrogate information and data for validity

Skill Topic 3: Creativity skills	
Students must be able to:	
S10	Lateral thinking to consider opportunities from different perspectives
S11	Make novel connections between ideas
S12	Recognise ideas, alternatives, and possibilities
S13	Form ideas iteratively

Skill Topic 4: Communicating	
Students must be able to:	
S14	Synthesise information and data from different sources
S15	Summarise information and data
S16	Apply written communication skills to clearly articulate a message with attention to detail
S17	Produce clear and coherent texts
S18	Interpret information and data presented in different formats
S19	Apply appropriate vocabulary, grammar and form to reflect the purpose and context

Skill Topic 5: Numeracy skills	
Student must be able to:	
S20	Apply standard units of measurement to calculate area, weights, volumes and time

S21	Apply four operations to calculate requirements for learning activities: time, quantities of materials, equipment and space
S22	Apply ratio notation to calculate staffing requirements
Skill Topic 6: Digital skills	
Students must be able to:	
S23	Apply software functions to create and format documents
S24	Organise digital information
S25	Store digital information securely
S26	Retrieve digital information
Behaviours	
B1 Perceptive	**B2** Focused

Outcome (O2): Prepare environments for learning activities to support children's development

This outcome supports progression to the T Level in Education and Early Years by preparing students to create safe and suitable environments for children's learning activities. Students will develop knowledge of health and safety to ensure learning environments are safe for children to undertake activities. They will gain knowledge of typical health and safety hazards, the likelihood and severity of risks, and the controls used to minimise them. They will understand the purpose of risk assessments, organisational policies, employee responsibilities, and cleaning procedures to maintain safe and hygienic environments.

Students will also gain knowledge of safe working practices, equipment, materials, consumables, and sustainability. They will learn about minimising waste, waste management principles, and sustainable materials. Knowledge will also extend to interpreting information sources and applying reading and comprehension skills to prepare environments effectively.

The knowledge topics in this section are mandatory and must be covered in full. Tutors have the discretion to deliver these topics at their discretion using the teaching approaches, examples, and activities that best suit their students' needs.

The delivery of this outcome should consistently reflect children across the following age groups: birth to 11 months (babies), 1 to 2 years 11 months (toddlers), 3 to 4 years 11 months (preschool-aged), and 5 to 7 years (school-aged).

Knowledge Topic 1: Health and safety	
The student must understand:	
K1	Typical health and safety hazards that individuals can create and encounter when preparing environments for learning activities.
K2	Likelihood and severity of health and safety risks associated with typical hazards.
K3	Controls used to minimise risk.
K4	Risk assessment: purpose, use and content.
K5	Organisational health and safety policies, their role in meeting legal requirements and typical employee responsibilities.
K6	Cleaning procedures used to maintain safe and hygienic environments: pre-cleaning, sanitising, disinfecting, rinsing, drying and handwashing.
K7	Techniques used to support healthy and safe working practices, including manual handling.
Tutor guidance:	
K1 Typical health and safety hazards: Tutors should introduce students to typical health and safety hazards: sharp objects, small objects (choking hazard), broken equipment. They should explain that **health and safety hazards** can be created or encountered when preparing environments for learning activities. **K2 Likelihood and severity of health and safety risks:** Tutors cover that when assessing **health and safety risks: slips, trips, falls**, it is important to consider the **likelihood** (how likely the hazard is to cause harm) and the **severity** (how serious the harm could be). For example, the **likelihood** of tripping over toys is high if the	

area is cluttered, but the **severity** may be low, resulting in a minor injury. Assessing both factors helps prioritise risks and take the appropriate steps to reduce or eliminate them.

K3 Controls used to minimise risk:

Tutors should describe **controls: inspection of equipment, infection control, and housekeeping** and that these are measures put in place to reduce or eliminate risks and ensure safety. Common controls include **physical barriers**, like safety gates or non-slip mats, to prevent accidents. **Procedural controls** involve creating guidelines, such as safe working practices or checklists, to ensure tasks are carried out safely. **Personal protective equipment (PPE)**, such as gloves or goggles, can help protect individuals from hazards. **Training and supervision** are also important controls, ensuring everyone knows how to work safely. Regular **inspections** and **maintenance** of equipment help prevent accidents, and **clear signage** can alert individuals to potential dangers.

K4 Risk assessment:

Tutors should cover a **risk assessment** which is a process used to identify potential hazards and evaluate the associated risks. The **purpose** is to ensure safety by identifying risks and putting in place controls to reduce or eliminate them. The **use** is reviewing an activity or environment, assessing what could go wrong, and determining the likelihood and severity of harm. The **content** includes details about the hazards, the people at risk, the level of risk, existing controls, and any additional actions required to manage the risk effectively.

K5 Organisational health and safety policies:

Tutors should cover organisational health and safety policies, and explain that they are a set of guidelines that help ensure a safe working environment. These policies play a key role in meeting legal requirements, such as those set by health and safety laws, by outlining actions to reduce risks and protect employees. **Employee responsibilities** typically include following safety procedures, using equipment correctly, reporting hazards, attending training, and participating in safety audits or drills.

K6 Cleaning procedures:

Tutors should explain cleaning procedures and how they are essential for maintaining safe and hygienic environments. The procedures include: **pre-cleaning**: removing visible dirt, food waste, or debris before further cleaning, **sanitising**: reducing the number of germs on surfaces to a safe level, **disinfecting** – using stronger chemicals to kill bacteria and viruses on surfaces where hygiene is critical, **rinsing**: removing any remaining cleaning products or residue to prevent contamination, **drying**: ensuring surfaces and equipment are completely dry to avoid bacterial growth and prevent slips, **handwashing**: using correct handwashing techniques with soap and water to prevent the spread of germs.

K7 Techniques used to support healthy and safe working practices, including manual handling:

Teach students that **techniques used to support healthy and safe working practices** are important for preventing injury and promoting well-being in the workplace. This includes

safe lifting and carrying using correct **manual handling** techniques, such as bending the knees, keeping the back straight, and holding objects close to the body to prevent injury, and making use of appropriate equipment.

The skills from the Health and Safety skills section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching K1-K7.

Supplementary information to support stretch and challenge:

The tutor could introduce:

- preparing an environment and equipment to support a child with complex or specific needs for example, a physical disability
- preparing for a learning activity in an unfamiliar environment
- developing risk assessments for learning activities
- budgets, budget controls and costing of materials, products and consumables, and the impact on the preparation of environments for learning activities.

Knowledge Topic 2: Equipment	
The student must understand:	
K8	Equipment: characteristics: types, purpose, safety (including infection control), security, storage, maintenance and operation.

Tutor guidance:

K8 Equipment:

Tutors should introduce students to **equipment: soft play equipment, role play equipment, slides, and bikes,** and how it has specific characteristics to ensure it supports safe and effective learning. The **purpose** is to enhance learning, support development, and provide opportunities for play and exploration. **Safety** is ensuring equipment is free from sharp edges, built to withstand wear, and suitable for the children's age. **Infection control measures**, such as disinfecting toys and cleaning surfaces, help prevent the spread of germs. **Security** is keeping equipment safe from theft or damage, and ensuring it is used appropriately by children. Proper **storage** is important for keeping equipment organised and preventing accidents, while regular **maintenance** ensures everything is in good working condition. Understanding the correct **operation** of equipment ensures it is used safely and effectively, promoting a positive learning experience.

The skills from the Use of Equipment section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching this section K8.

Supplementary information to support stretch and challenge:
The tutor could introduce: • preparing an environment and equipment to support a child with complex or specific needs e.g., a physical disability.

Knowledge Topic 3: Materials, products, and consumables	
The student must understand:	
K9	Materials, products, and consumables: types, characteristics, purpose, applications, qualities and of different types used to achieve objectives.
K10	Material quantities required to ensure minimum wastage.
K11	Factors affecting choice of materials: sustainability, cost, availability, durability, form, and suitability for purpose.
Tutor guidance:	
K9 Materials, products, and consumables: Tutors should introduce students to **materials, products, and consumables** and how they play a crucial role in supporting learning and development. **Types** of materials can include paper, paint, building blocks, and sensory play items. Each material has specific **characteristics**, such as texture, durability, and safety features, making them suitable for different activities. The **purpose** of these materials is to enhance children's learning experiences, whether through creativity, sensory exploration, or problem-solving. **Applications** of these materials can vary, such as using paint for artistic activities or building blocks for developing motor skills. The **qualities** of different materials, how soft or durable they are, ensure they are fit for their intended use and help achieve educational objectives. **K10 Material quantities:** Tutors should explain that when planning learning activities, it is important to consider the **quantities of materials** required to **ensure minimum wastage**. This means estimating how much of each material is needed based on the number of children and the type of activity. By carefully planning and preparing materials in the right quantities, they can reduce excess, save resources, and teach children about sustainability. **K11 Factors affecting choice of materials:** Tutors should explain that there are several **factors** that **affect the choice of materials** when planning learning activities. **Sustainability** is important as materials should be eco-	

friendly and reusable, helping to reduce waste. **Cost** is a consideration, as materials should fit within the available budget while still meeting the needs of the activity. **Availability** affects whether materials can be easily sourced and restocked. **Durability** ensures that materials can withstand frequent use, particularly in active settings like early years environments. The **form** of materials, such as their size, shape, and texture, should be suitable for the activity and age of the children. The **suitability for purpose** ensures the materials meet the specific objectives of the activity, whether that is for building, drawing, or sensory play. **The skills from the Use of Equipment and Prepare environments skills section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching this section, K9-K11.**
Supplementary information to support stretch and challenge:

The tutor could introduce:
• budgets:
  ○ budget controls and costing of materials
  ○ products and consumables
  ○ the impact on the preparation of environments for learning activities.

Knowledge Topic 4: Sustainability	
The student must understand:	
K12	Waste management: principles, techniques (refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle) and procedures, and impact on materials and products used in learning activities.
K13	Sustainable materials: characteristics, purpose and applications.

Tutor guidance:
K12 Waste management: Tutors should introduce students to **waste management** and how it is an essential part of planning and carrying out learning activities sustainably. The **principles** of waste management involve minimising waste production and ensuring materials are used efficiently. Techniques such as **refuse** (avoiding unnecessary materials), **reduce** (using fewer resources), **reuse** (using materials multiple times), **repurpose** (giving materials a new use), and **recycle** (transforming materials into something new) help limit waste. **Procedures** include ensuring that any leftover or unused materials are disposed of properly or stored for future use. This approach impacts the materials and products used in learning activities by encouraging careful selection, use, and management of resources, promoting sustainability, and teaching children the value of reducing waste. **K13 Sustainable materials:** Tutors should explain that **sustainable materials** are environmentally friendly and have minimal negative impact on the planet. The **characteristics** of sustainable materials include being renewable, biodegradable, and non-toxic, often made from natural resources that are harvested responsibly. The **purpose** of using sustainable materials is to reduce environmental harm, promote eco-friendly practices, and encourage resource conservation. **Applications** of sustainable materials can include using recycled paper for arts and crafts, eco-friendly paints for creative activities, or natural fabrics for play-based learning tools. These materials support not only the learning process but also teach children the importance of sustainability and caring for the environment. **The skills from the Sustainability skills section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching this section, K12-K13.**

Knowledge Topic 5: Information and data	
The student must understand:	
K14	Sources of information required to set up equipment and environments: purpose, typical content, format, terminology and differences between.

Tutor guidance:
K14 Sources of information: Tutors should introduce the **purpose, typical content**, **format, terminology** and **differences** between **sources of information** required to set up environments: **learning plans**, **individual child profiles**, **staffing ratios**, **policies,** instructions for equipment set-up and use, safety instructions for use of equipment and materials, which are crucial when setting up equipment and environments. Recognising these sources helps ensure proper setup and safe use in a learning environment.

Knowledge Topic 6: Communication	
The student must understand:	
K15	Reading: principles, reading for comprehension, identifying salient points, summarising key points and synthesising information from different sources.
Tutor guidance:	
K15 Reading: Tutors should introduce students to **reading** and explain that it involves understanding and processing information in a structured way. The **principles** of reading focus on gaining meaning from texts, not just decoding words. **Reading for comprehension** means understanding the message, context, and details in the text. **Identifying salient points** refers to picking out the most important or relevant information, focusing on what matters most. **Summarising key points** involves condensing the main ideas in your own words, while **synthesising information** means combining ideas from multiple sources to create a fuller understanding of the topic. **A link could be drawn to K16 in Outcome 1.** **The skills from the Communicating section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching this section, K15.**	

Outcome 2 (O2): Prepare environments for learning activities to support children's development

Students will develop and apply a range of skills as part of this outcome and will gain practical skills to prepare environments for learning activities. This includes cleaning and checking equipment, materials, and consumables, setting them up safely and accurately,

and organising indoor, outdoor, and specialist spaces. They will apply sustainable practices to minimise and dispose of waste responsibly, while building physical dexterity through controlled handling of resources.

Health and safety are central, with students assessing areas for risks, applying safe working practices, and using correct manual handling, cleaning, and handwashing techniques. They will prepare and inspect equipment for safe use, identify defects, and follow instructions, risk assessments, and learning activity plans.

Skill Topic 1: Prepare environments	
Students must be able to:	
S1	Clean equipment
S2	Check equipment, materials, products, and consumables are safe and suitable for use, with attention to detail
S3	Set up equipment, materials, products, and consumables for safe use with attention to detail
S4	Organise environment to meet learning activity requirements

Skill Topic 2: Health and safety skills	
Students must be able to:	
S5	Assess a situation for potential adverse effects
S6	Assess an area for potential health and safety risks
S7	Establish a safe working area
S8	Apply manual handling techniques when lifting, carrying, handling and moving equipment
S9	Apply handwashing techniques
S10	Apply cleaning techniques to equipment and environment

Skill Topic 3: Use of equipment	
Students must be able to:	
S11	Prepare equipment for effective use as required by the learning activity
S12	Inspect equipment for defects and potential safety issues
S13	Apply techniques to effectively use equipment to meet requirements of a task and situation

Skill Topic 4: Sustainability skills	
Students must be able to:	
S14	Use materials, products, and consumables sustainably to minimise waste when preparing learning environments
S15	Dispose of waste sustainably when preparing learning environments

Skill Topic 5: Physical Dexterity skills	
Student must be able to:	
S16	Apply precise and controlled movements to a set up equipment and materials when preparing learning environments

Skill Topic 6: Communicating	
Students must be able to:	
S17	Interpret information and data presented in different formats
Behaviours	
B3 Self-controlled	**B4** Responsible

Outcome 3 (O3): Contribute to the assessment of children's development

This outcome supports progression to the T Level in Education and Early Years by preparing students to use observation to contribute to the assessment of children's development. Students will gain knowledge of observation methods, their purposes, and the factors that ensure accuracy, objectivity, and confidentiality. They will learn how observations are used to identify developmental progress, inform planning, and contribute to formative, summative, and national assessments.

Knowledge of the primary areas of development from birth to seven years, expected milestones, and factors that may influence progress underpins this outcome. Students will also understand the types of assessment used across different age ranges and their purpose in tracking development. To support effective practice, students will gain knowledge of equity, diversity, and inclusion, ethics, professional behaviour, and the application of communication and digital knowledge.

The knowledge topics in this section are mandatory and must be covered in full. Tutors have the discretion to deliver these topics at their discretion using the teaching approaches, examples, and activities that best suit their students' needs.

The delivery of this outcome should consistently reflect children across the following age groups: birth to 11 months (babies), 1 to 2 years 11 months (toddlers), 3 to 4 years 11 months (preschool-aged), and 5 to 7 years (school-aged).

Knowledge Topic 1: Child development	
The student must understand:	
K1	Primary areas of development from birth to 7 years: definitions and characteristics, expected patterns and key milestones for physical, communication and cognitive development.
K2	Factors that may impact the primary areas of development.

Tutor guidance:
K1 Primary areas of development: Tutors should introduce the primary areas of development from birth to 7 years by **defining** each area and explaining their **characteristics**. Students should explore the **expected patterns** and **key milestones** in physical, communication, cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioural development within this age range. Students should broaden their understanding by considering how development continues between 7 and 19 years, recognising the milestones of later childhood and adolescence. Throughout teaching, the importance of **observation** should be emphasised showing how observing children and young people provides evidence of whether expected milestones are being met, and how this information contributes to the assessment of their development. **K2 Factors:** Tutors should introduce the **factors** that can impact children's **primary areas of development**, focusing on **background** and **health and wellbeing**. Students should explore how a child's background can influence physical, communication, cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioural development. The impact of health and wellbeing on a child's progress should also be considered. Teaching should highlight that these factors may cause development to vary between children, and that careful **observation** is essential to identify when background or health factors may be influencing progress, so this can be taken into account in assessment. **A link could be drawn to K1-K2 in Outcome 1.**

Knowledge Topic 2: Observations	
The student must understand:	
K3	Methods of observation: types, characteristics, applications and suitability for different purposes.
K4	Factors to consider when undertaking observation: accuracy, objectivity, confidentiality and recognising bias.
K5	Purposes of observation: identify developmental progress, inform planning and adhering to national assessment requirements.
Tutor guidance:	
K3 Methods of observation: Tutors should introduce students to the different **methods of observation:** informal, formal, and the timescale for observations used in early years and education settings. The	

types and **characteristics** of each method should be explained, alongside examples of when and why they are used. Students should explore the **applications and suitability** of each method for **different purposes**, such as recording milestones, identifying additional needs, or planning learning activities. Teaching should emphasise that choosing the right method supports accurate and reliable observation, which in turn contributes to effective assessment of children's development.

K4 Factors to consider:

Tutors should explore the **factors** that must be considered when carrying out **observations** of children's development. Students should understand the importance of **accuracy**, ensuring that observations record what actually happens rather than being based on assumptions. **Objectivity** should be stressed, with students encouraged to focus on facts rather than their personal opinions. **Confidentiality** must be explained so students recognise that observation records should be kept secure and only shared with authorised people. Teaching should also highlight the need to **recognise** and avoid **bias**, so that personal views or expectations do not influence how a child's development is recorded.

K5 Purposes of observation:

Tutors should explain the main **purposes of observation** in early years and education settings. Students should explore how observation helps to **identify** children's **developmental progress** by comparing what is seen against expected milestones. They should also recognise how observations **inform planning**, allowing practitioners to design activities that meet individual needs and support further development. Students should understand that observations contribute to **adhering to national assessment requirements**, ensuring that children's progress is tracked and recorded in line with statutory frameworks. Teaching should highlight how each purpose is interconnected and reinforces the value of accurate, objective observation in supporting children's development.

The skills from the Observing section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching section K3-K5.

Supplementary information to support stretch and challenge:

The tutor could introduce:

- observations of children with special educational needs and disabilities
- making recommendations for future learning activities to support identified developmental needs based on findings of observations.

Knowledge Topic 3: Assessment	
The student must understand:	
K6	National assessments: purpose and information requirements for different age ranges.
K7	Types of assessments: characteristics and purpose.
Tutor guidance:	
K6 National assessments: Tutors should introduce students to the role of **national assessments** in tracking and supporting children's development. Students should explore the **purpose** of these assessments, such as monitoring progress against national standards, identifying additional needs, and informing teaching practice. Teaching should highlight the different **information requirements** for various age ranges. Students should understand how observations made by practitioners contribute to these assessments and why accuracy, objectivity, and confidentiality are essential when recording information. **K7 Types of assessments:** Tutors should explain the main **types of assessment** used in early years and education settings, such as formative, summative, diagnostic, and baseline. The key **characteristics** of each type should be explained. Tutors should also explore the **purpose** of each assessment type, such as tracking progress, planning next steps in learning, identifying specific needs, or measuring attainment against standards. Teaching should highlight how a range of assessments are used together to give a complete picture of a child's development and how observations feed into each type.	

Knowledge Topic 4: People	
The student must understand:	
K8	Equity, diversity and inclusion: definitions, principles, typical content of organisational policies, value of an equal, diverse and inclusive workforce for an organisation, potential issues associated with different roles and activities, reasonable adjustments, the effect of unconscious bias on performance.

K9	Ethics: definition, characteristics of ethical behaviour.
K10	Team dynamics: characteristics of effective teams, team formation and development, principles and processes, team dynamics and expectations of effective team members, qualities of an effective team member and roles and responsibilities of team members.
K11	Professional behaviours: definitions and how behaviours are demonstrated.

Tutor guidance:

K8 Equity, diversity, and inclusion:
Tutors should introduce students to the key concepts of **equity, diversity, and inclusion**. Students should understand the **definitions** of each term and how they apply in educational and workplace settings. The **principles** of equity (fairness in treatment and opportunities), diversity (recognising and valuing differences), and inclusion (ensuring all individuals feel valued and respected) should be clearly explained. Students should also explore the **typical content of organisational policies**. Teaching should emphasise the value of an equal, diverse, and **inclusive workforce** for an organisation, highlighting how diverse perspectives contribute to better decision-making, creativity, and a positive organisational culture.

Students should be encouraged to recognise **potential issues** associated with **different roles** and activities. Finally, students should learn about **reasonable adjustments** that can be made to support individuals, particularly those with disabilities or additional needs, ensuring equal opportunities for all. The effect of **unconscious bias** on **performance** should also be explored, focusing on how bias can unintentionally influence decisions and behaviours, and how being aware of it can lead to more equitable and inclusive practices.

K9 Ethics:
Tutors should explain the concept of **ethics**, **defining** it as a set of moral principles that guide behaviour and decision-making. Students should explore the **characteristics of ethical behaviour**. Teaching should emphasise that ethical behaviour involves making decisions that consider the welfare of others, upholding trust, and following rules or codes of conduct.

K10 Team dynamics:
Tutors should explore the concept of **team dynamics**, focusing on the characteristics of **effective teams**. Students should explore the stages of **team formation and development,** highlighting how teams evolve.
Teaching should also cover the **principles and processes** that contribute to a team's success. Students should be encouraged to understand **team dynamics**, recognising how

different personalities, skills, and communication styles influence how a team works together.

Expectations of effective team members should be discussed, and students should examine the **qualities of an effective team member**. Finally, teaching should focus on the **roles and responsibilities** of team members, explaining how each individual's role contributes to the team's overall success and how clear role definitions help maintain focus and efficiency within the team.

K11 Professional behaviours:

Tutors should explore the concept of **professional behaviours** expected in a professional environment. Students should explore how professional behaviours are demonstrated through their actions. Teaching should emphasise the importance of **demonstrating professionalism** in the workplace, such as maintaining a positive attitude, being reliable, showing initiative, and respecting confidentiality. Students should also recognise that professional behaviours contribute to a positive work environment and foster trust.

The skills from the Team working section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching sections, K8-K11.

Knowledge Topic 5: Information and data	
The student must understand:	
K12	Types of information and data created and recorded when reporting on children's development.
K13	Factors to consider when using information and data: confidentiality, privacy, intellectual property and security.

Tutor guidance:
K12 Types of information and data: Tutors should introduce students to the various **types of information and data created and recorded** when **reporting on children's development**. Students should explore the different formats for recording information, such as written reports, digital records, or visual documentation. Teaching should highlight the importance of accurately recording data to track a child's progress, identify areas of need, and inform planning for future development. **K13 Factors to consider:** Tutors should explore the **factors to consider when using information and data**. Students should explore the importance of **confidentiality**, ensuring that personal information is kept private and only shared with authorised individuals. **Privacy** should be highlighted, stressing the need to respect individuals' rights to have their personal information protected. Students should learn about **intellectual property**, recognising that some data or resources may be subject to copyright or ownership, and therefore cannot be used or shared without permission. Finally, **security** is a key consideration, and students should understand how data should be securely stored and transmitted to prevent unauthorised access or loss. A link could be drawn to K12 in Outcome 1. **The skills from the Recording section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching sections K50 and K51.**

Knowledge Topic 6: Communication	
The student must understand:	
K14	Principles of effective communication: two-way process (send and receive messages), methods (verbal, non-verbal), styles (formal, informal), conventions of different types of written communication and suitability for different purposes and audiences.
K15	Listening techniques: active and deep.
K16	Non-verbal communication: meaning of different types of body language and how they may be presented, types and value of images and support materials as visual aids and impact of non-verbal communication to support comprehension of key messages.

K17	Oral communication: pitch, tone, intonation and their impact on how a message is received.
K18	Positive communication: techniques and their application to contributing to observation and assessment
K19	Engaging with an audience: techniques for establishing rapport in conversation, in discussion, in debate, obtaining and clarifying information and presenting findings.

Tutor guidance:

K14 Principles of two-way communication:
Tutors should introduce students to the **principles of effective communication**, focusing on its key role as a **two-way process** — where messages are both sent and received, and feedback is an important part of the interaction. Students should explore different **methods** of communication, (verbal and non-verbal). Teaching should cover the different **styles of communication** – **formal** (professional, structured, and often used in work settings) and **informal** (casual, conversational, and common in personal settings). Students should understand when each style is appropriate based on the situation and audience. Additionally, tutors should explain the **conventions of different types of written communication**, and how these conventions vary depending on the intended purpose and audience.

K15 Listening techniques:

Tutors should explore **listening techniques**: **active listening** and **deep listening**. **Active listening:** fully focusing on the speaker, using non-verbal cues like eye contact, and responding to show understanding. **Deep listening**: listening with an open mind and seeking to understand the speaker's emotions and perspective.

K16 Non-verbal communication:

Tutors should explore the importance of **non-verbal communication**, focusing on the meaning of different types of **body language** and how they can influence the message being communicated. Students should consider how body language may be presented and interpreted in different contexts. Teaching should also cover the **types and value of images and support materials** as **visual aids**, highlighting how they can enhance understanding and retention of information. Finally, tutors should explain the **impact of non-verbal communication** in supporting comprehension, as body language and visual aids can reinforce or clarify key messages, making communication more effective.

K17 Oral communication:

Tutors should explain the key elements of **oral communication**: **pitch**, **tone**, and **intonation**. **Pitch** is the highness or lowness of the speaker's voice, which can affect the message's urgency or emotion. **Tone** reflects the speaker's attitude. **Intonation** is the rise and fall of the voice during speech. Students should be taught how these elements impact how a message is received, influencing clarity, engagement, and the emotional response of the listener.

K18 Positive communication:
Tutors should cover **positive communication** techniques. Students should explore how these techniques create a supportive, constructive environment for sharing information. In the context of **observation and assessment**, tutors should explain how positive communication helps build trust with children, colleagues, and parents, allowing for accurate, honest sharing of observations and assessments.

K19 Engaging with an audience:
Tutors should explore the **techniques for establishing rapport** with an audience in the context of conversations, discussions, debates, and obtaining and clarifying information, and presenting findings. Students should learn to ask clear, thoughtful questions and show genuine interest in the responses. In presenting findings, students should focus on clarity, structure, and adjusting their communication style based on the audience's needs and understanding.

The skills from the Communicating section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching this section, K14 to K19.

Knowledge Topic 7: Digital	
The student must understand:	
K20	Software: features, functions and applications for creating and formatting documents.
K21	Management of digital information and data: classification and organisation, naming conventions, storage systems, protection methods, accessibility and formats.
K22	Protection of information in relation to children: legal framework, risks, software and procedures for sharing information.

Tutor guidance:
K20 Software: Tutors should introduce students to the **features** and **functions** of software used for creating and formatting documents. They should explore key features and learn about the **functions** which help enhance document quality and accuracy. Additionally, they should explain how these software tools are applied to create documents for various purposes. **K21 Management of digital information and data:** Tutors should explain the key aspects of managing **digital information and data**. They should explore **classification and organisation** methods and **naming conventions**, including how to create clear, consistent file names that reflect the content for easy retrieval. Teaching should also cover **storage systems** and the importance of **backing up data** regularly. Tutors should explain **protection methods** to ensure data security. Finally, they should explore **accessibility** and **formats**, focusing on ensuring data can be easily accessed by authorised users and in compatible formats. **K22 Protection of information in relation to children:** Tutors should explain the **legal framework** surrounding the protection of children's information, such as data protection laws (e.g., GDPR in the UK) and safeguarding regulations. They should explore the **risks** associated with mishandling or sharing sensitive information, including breaches of confidentiality, identity theft, or harm to the child's welfare. Teaching should also cover **software and procedures** used to ensure safe and secure sharing of information. **A link could be drawn to K21 and K22 in outcome 1** **The skills from the Digital Skills section could be highlighted to be considered when teaching section K20 to K22.**
Supplementary information to support stretch and challenge:
The tutor could introduce: • how technology can support the observation process

Outcome 3(O3): Contribute to the assessment of children's development

Students will develop and apply a range of skills as part of this outcome and will gain observation skills to accurately notice and record children's behaviour and development, ensuring the information captured is relevant and reliable.

They will apply analytical skills to compare their findings against expected patterns of development and identify areas of progress or concern. Through oral communication

skills, students will practise reporting their observations clearly and appropriately to a senior colleague, demonstrating the ability to adapt their language for professional contexts.

They will also use written communication and digital skills to document their findings in a clear, structured way, making use of appropriate formats and digital tools. Alongside this, they will demonstrate data management and organisational skills to ensure that confidential information is stored securely and in line with professional expectations.

Skill Topic 1: Observing	
Students must be able to:	
S1	Identify relevant details of children's engagement during a learning activity
S2	Monitor the environment for any risks to children
S3	Listen to comments and questions children make during learning activities

Skill Topic 2: Team Working skills	
Students must be able to:	
S4	Work with others towards achieving objectives
Skill Topic 3: Communicating	
Students must be able to:	
S5	Synthesise information and data from different sources
S6	Engage an audience
S7	Summarise information and data
S8	Apply technical language in relevant contexts
S9	Apply active listening techniques to report observation findings
S10	Apply oral communication techniques to obtain and clarify information and data

S11	Apply oral communication skills to clearly articulate a message
S12	Apply written communication techniques to produce formal reports following standard conventions
S13	Apply written communication skills to clearly articulate a message
S14	Apply non-verbal communication techniques to support communication
S15	Create documents appropriate to purpose and audience
S16	Write for impact
S17	Engage in discussion/debate/conversation listening to and responding to questions and feedback
S18	Show respect for others' views and opinions
S19	Apply communication techniques to secure audience understanding
S20	Apply appropriate vocabulary, grammar, form, structural and organisational features to reflect audience, purpose and context

Skill Topic 4: Recording	
Students must be able to:	
S21	Transcribe information from one source to another
S22	Capture information from observations accurately

Skill Topic 5: Digital skills	
Students must be able to:	
S23	Organise digital information
S24	Store digital information securely
S25	Retrieve digital information
S26	Apply software functions to create and format documents

Behaviours		
B4 Perceptive	**B5** Empathetic	**B6** Respectful

Appendix 1

Level 2 Command Verbs

These command verbs require students to demonstrate their understanding of facts, ideas, or concepts.

Command word	Definition
Apply	Use knowledge or understanding in a familiar situation to complete a task
Assess	Make a judgement about the value or importance of something using simple reasoning
Calculate	Work out the value of something, showing relevant working out
Choose	Select the most appropriate option from a limited range
Classify	Group items based on shared features or characteristics
Compare	Examine in detail and identify similarities and differences between them
Define	Give a definition or specify the meaning of an idea or concept.
Demonstrate	Show understanding of a process or concept through simple examples, actions, or explanations
Describe	Give a detailed account of a subject or set out its characteristics or features
Discuss	Present key points about different ideas or strengths and weaknesses of an idea.
Estimate	Make an approximate judgement or calculation based on known information
Explain (why)	Set out purposes or reasons, or make something clear in relation to a particular situation.

Command word	Definition
Explain how	Provide a detailed account of a process or way of doing something.
Give examples	Provide specific cases or instances that support or illustrate a point.
Identify	Select from a list of options, point something out or give a list of main features.
Illustrate	Explain or clarify something using examples, diagrams, or comparisons
Interpret	Explain the meaning of information or data
List	Provide a series of items or points without explaining or describing in detail
Outline	Set out the main characteristics or features.
Plan	Outline basic steps or actions needed to achieve a goal, showing understanding of the order or purpose of each step.
Record	Accurately document information, actions, observations, or results
Select	Choose the most appropriate option from a limited range, showing understanding of why it fits the given purpose or situation.
Show	Present or demonstrate understanding through action, response, or simple explanation in a familiar setting
State	Express in clear, brief terms.
Suggest	Apply knowledge to a new situation to provide a reasoned explanation
Summarise	Give a brief account of the main points or ideas
Use	Apply a tool, technique or method correctly and safely in a familiar context, following set procedures or instructions

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