

Specification

Level 3 Early Years Educator Version 2.0

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Welcome to Innovate Awarding

Welcome to the Level 3 Early Years Educator v2.0. Our Innovate Awarding Specifications are designed to ensure the employer, provider and apprentice have the appropriate support and guidance to allow successful completion of an apprenticeship, providing further confidence and assurance having chosen us as an Assessment Organisation.

We are an Ofqual approved Assessment Organisation (AO), experienced in operating within a regulated market. Driven by the employers we work in partnership with, we deliver qualifications and apprenticeships in the Health, Care, Education, Leadership, Management, Leisure, Customer Service, Creative, Hospitality, Retail, Transport and Logistics sectors.

Delivering an apprenticeship is an extremely rewarding role. We recognise the need for a clear specification, resources and support, so more valuable time can be spent delivering to an apprentice.

At Innovate Awarding we stand by our 'no surprises' approach to assessment, making an apprenticeship journey as simple as possible, ensuring the best chance of success for every apprentice who undertakes their assessment with us.

About Innovate Awarding

We are an AO with a collaborative approach to doing business. We work with providers to deliver fit for purpose assessments for a wide range of apprenticeship Standards, certificating thousands of apprentices, continuing to learn and improve with each experience.

We have experienced and responsive teams to ensure the assessment experience is smooth and efficient, working closely with our provider partners.

Please see our website for the range of Standards we are approved to deliver:

https://innovateawarding.org

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The Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment Plan

An Apprenticeship Standard details the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) required to be occupationally competent:

- **Knowledge** - the information, technical detail, and 'know-how' that someone needs to have and understand to successfully carry out the duties. Some knowledge will be occupation-specific, whereas some may be more generic.

- **Skills** - the practical application of knowledge needed to successfully undertake the duties. They are learnt through on and/or off-the-job training or experience.

- **Behaviours** - mindsets, attitudes or approaches needed for competence. Whilst these can be innate or instinctive, they can also be learnt. Behaviours tend to be very transferable. They may be more similar across occupations than knowledge and skills. For example, team worker, adaptable and professional. Behaviours will be verified by employers.

Apprenticeships are an invaluable tool for upskilling in areas that matter most to employers. They are a highly effective route to recruit and train future talent, address skills shortages and develop careers across core parts of the business.

The Level 3 Early Years Educator apprenticeship has been developed by employers working in the sector detailing the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be occupationally competent and outlining the training and assessment journey for an apprentice.

The apprentice will typically spend 18 months on-programme, working towards the Level 3 Early Years Educator Standard, combining practical training in a job with study. The extent of the on-programme time should be decided for each apprentice based on their prior learning, skills and experience. If employers are using this Standard for an existing employee, it is important to be aware that the role must represent new learning. Providers should support employers with this.

It is vital the apprentice is prepared and fully ready before they commence their assessments.

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Summary of Assessment

An Apprenticeship Standard details the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) required to be occupationally competent:

Standard name	Early Years Educator
Level	3
Sector	Education and Early Years
Typical duration	18 months
Minimum time on programme	8 months
Assessment methods	• Observation with Questions • Professional Discussion
Grading	Pass / Distinction

The Apprentice

This occupation is found in a range of maintained and private, voluntary, and independent settings such as full day care, children's centres, pre-schools, reception classes, playgroups, nursery schools, home based provision, hospitals, social care settings, out of school environments, and local authority provision.

The broad purpose of the occupation is to provide high quality early education and care to children. Through an evidence based approach, early years educators provide opportunities and learning experiences for all children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Early years educators follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements set by government for the learning, development, and care of children from birth to 5 in both indoor and outdoor environments.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with children, parents, carers, colleagues, and wider multi agency professionals such as health visitors, early help services, social workers, and speech and language therapists. This includes supporting children with SEND.

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for ensuring a safe and secure environment for children's learning. They ensure that the learning environment and provision is inclusive and supports all children, and demonstrate a clear understanding of equality, diversity, and inclusion. Early years educators teach and

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facilitate children's learning and play. They apply the observation, assessment, and planning cycle to support progress and children's development. An early years educator will act as the key person for one or more children within their setting. They may play a leadership role within the setting or may act under the supervision of a manager.

Off-the-Job Training

This Apprenticeship requires a minimum 370 hours off-the-job learning.

Off-the-job training is a statutory requirement for an English apprenticeship. It is training, which is received by the apprentice during the apprentice's normal working hours, for the purpose of achieving the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the approved apprenticeship the apprentice is completing.

It is an important aspect of apprenticeship training, as it gives the apprentice time to properly develop knowledge and skills from the programme.

Off-the-job training allows the apprentice to take full advantage of the programme, improving the return on investment in training costs for the employer. A developed and upskilled apprentice will lead to an increase in productivity, a clear benefit to the business.

Examples of off-the-job training include:

- Learning new skills at work through shadowing other members of the team, where this activity has been agreed and documented as part of the agreed training plan
- In-house training programmes relevant to the apprenticeship
- Coaching sessions
- Attendance at workshops, training days and webinars relevant to the apprenticeship
- Completion of online learning
- Self-study that includes reading or watching videos
- Training in new working practices or new equipment
- Role-playing or simulation exercises
- Industry visits/conferences relevant to apprenticeships
- Writing assessments, assignments and completing projects or activities
- Practical training or training in the workplace relevant to the apprenticeship

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Assessment

The apprentice may choose to end the assessment method early. The apprentice must be confident they have demonstrated competence against the assessment requirements for the assessment method.

The Independent Assessor must ensure the apprentice is fully aware of all assessment requirements.

The Independent Assessor cannot suggest or choose to end the assessment methods early, unless in an emergency.

The Independent Assessor is responsible for ensuring the apprentice understands the implications of ending an assessment early if they choose to do so. The Independent Assessor may suggest the assessment continues. They must document the apprentice's request to end the assessment early.

Assessment Method 1: Observation with Questions

The Observation with Questions will be conducted by an Innovate Awarding Independent Assessor.

In the Observation with Questions, the Independent Assessor observes the apprentice in their workplace completing their day-to-day duties under normal working conditions. The Independent Assessor will ask questions about any Knowledge and Skills that the apprentice does not have the opportunity to demonstrate during the observation.

Simulation is not allowed.

The total time for the assessment will be 80 minutes. The observation will take 50 minutes, followed by 30 minutes for questions. 10% of time can be added to the whole assessment to allow the apprentice time to complete a task or answer a question.

Assessment Method 2: Professional Discussion

The Professional Discussion will be conducted either by Innovate Awarding or by the apprentice's training provider. In either case, the questions will be determined by Innovate Awarding.

In the Professional Discussion, the Independent Assessor and the apprentice will have a formal two-way conversation.

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During the assessment, the apprentice may have access to supporting notes to which they can refer in order to help them address the criteria.

The Professional Discussion will last for 90 minutes plus 10% to allow the apprentice to respond to a question if necessary.

The Professional Discussion should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence and can be conducted via video conferencing.

Assessment Booking

Assessments should be taken at the appropriate time for the apprentice to be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills fully.

Please refer to the assessment booking process for further details.

Passing the Apprenticeship

For an apprentice to pass their apprenticeship they will need to demonstrate that they can reliably and effectively meet all the requirements in the knowledge, skills and behaviours.

The Observation with Questions will be graded as distinction, pass or fail.

The Professional Discussion will be graded as distinction, pass or fail.

The overall grade for this apprenticeship will be distinction, pass or fail.

The behaviours will be verified by the employer.

Grades from individual assessment methods must be combined in the following way to determine the overall grade.

Observation with Questions	Professional Discussion	Overall Grading
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
Distinction	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass
Any Grade	Fail	Fail

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Fail	Any Grade	Fail

Knowledge

Knowledge	Assessment Method
K1 The importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion, and respecting children's social and cultural context.	Professional Discussion
K2 Safeguarding policies and procedures for children and colleagues, including child protection and wellbeing.	Professional Discussion
K3 Types of abuse including domestic, neglect, physical, emotional and sexual, and know how to act to protect children and colleagues.	Professional Discussion
K4 The legal requirements and guidance on health and safety, security, confidentiality of information, and safeguarding.	Professional Discussion
K5 The principles of risk assessment and management, and how to balance risks and benefits of activities for children.	Observation with Questions
K6 The statutory and non-statutory frameworks and guidance for provision in early years including SEND.	Professional Discussion
K7 The legal rights of each individual child according to their current and future needs.	Professional Discussion
K8 The role of colleagues and multi-agency working to support the child.	Professional Discussion
K9 The role and responsibilities of the early years educator, including providing supervision to staff.	Professional Discussion
K10 The role and responsibilities of the key person.	Observation with Questions
K11 Theories and significance of attachment.	Professional Discussion

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K12 The importance of professional relationships and collaboration with parents, families, or carers.	Professional Discussion
K13 The importance of professional relationships with colleagues, other organisations, and agencies.	Professional Discussion
K14 The influence of all key individuals in children's lives on children's learning and development.	Professional Discussion
K15 The development of social skills and maintaining relationships.	Observation with Questions
K16 How children learn and develop from conception to age 7; physiologically, neurologically, biologically, psychologically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially. Including the interaction and impact of biological and environmental factors.	Professional Discussion
K17 The elements and characteristics of a wide range of enabling environments.	Observation with Questions
K18 How the design, resourcing, and use of the indoor and outdoor physical environment supports children's learning and development.	Observation with Questions
K19 How the design of the day and expectations adapts to support and reflect all children's current needs (for example, those children with SEND, EAL, communication difficulties, and the most able).	Observation with Questions
K20 How the organisation's approach and values underpin the environment.	Observation with Questions
K21 How children experience change, transition, and significant events.	Professional Discussion
K22 The theories of play and its fundamental role in learning and development.	Professional Discussion
K23 How children develop characteristics for effective learning.	Professional Discussion
K24 How, when, and why to conduct observation and assessment.	Professional Discussion

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K25 How the observation, assessment, and planning cycle is used to analyse and respond to children's learning, development, and interests.	Professional Discussion
K26 How to create experiences and opportunities for children informed by the setting's curriculum and pedagogy.	Observation with Questions
K27 Methods of reflective practice, including supervision, and opportunities for continuous professional development.	Professional Discussion

Skills

Skills	Assessment Method
S1 Recognise when a child or a colleague is in danger or at risk of abuse and act to protect them in line with safeguarding policy and procedure.	Professional Discussion
S2 Apply legislation, policy and procedure to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of children in the setting (for example, food safety, diets, starting solid food, allergies, COSHH, and accidents, injuries, and emergencies).	Professional Discussion
S3 Apply the principles of risk assessment and risk management within documentation and practice.	Observation with Questions
S4 Teach children to develop skills to manage risk and maintain their own and others' safety.	Observation with Questions
S5 Use a range of communication methods, including technology, with other professionals to meet the individual needs of the child.	Observation with Questions
S6 Develop and maintain effective professional, collaborative relationships with others involved in the education and care of the child.	Professional Discussion
S7 Undertake the role and responsibilities of key person.	Observation with Questions

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S8 Recognise and apply theories of attachment to develop effective relationships with children.	Professional Discussion
S9 Provide sensitive and respectful personal care for children from birth to 5 years.	Observation with Questions
S10 Advocate for all children's needs, including children which require SEND or EAL support.	Observation with Questions
S11 Promote and facilitate children's interpersonal communication to develop their social interactions and relationships.	Observation with Questions
S12 Support children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture.	Observation with Questions
S13 Support children to understand and respond to their emotions and make considered choices about their behaviours.	Observation with Questions
S14 Assess the responsiveness of the environment for effective child-centred experiences in line with curriculum requirements.	Observation with Questions
S15 Create inclusive, child-centred, dynamic, innovative, and evolving physical environments both indoors and outdoors.	Observation with Questions
S16 Create inclusive and supportive emotional environment that enables the child to feel safe, secure, respected and experience a sense of wellbeing, maintaining and prioritising the individual child's voice.	Observation with Questions
S17 Apply strategies that support children's ability to manage change, transition, and significant events.	Professional Discussion
S18 Analyse observation evidence to assess and plan holistic individual learning based on a comprehensive understanding of the child's needs and interests.	Professional Discussion
S19 Facilitate and support child-centred opportunities and experiences based on the setting's curriculum and pedagogy.	Observation with Questions

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S20 Provide adult led opportunities and experience based on the setting's curriculum and pedagogy.	Observation with Questions
S21 Use reflection to develop themselves both professionally and personally.	Professional Discussion

Behaviours

Behaviours
B1 Confident to have difficult conversations.
B2 Child-centred and empathetic, valuing equality, diversity, and inclusion and the uniqueness of each child.
B3 Vigilant and act with professional curiosity.
B4 Caring, compassionate and sensitive.
B5 Honest, open, respectful, and a role model.
B6 Self-motivated, using initiative and proactive.
B7 Playful and creative.
B8 Reflective and reflexive and committed to CPD.

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Annex 1: Apprenticeship Details and Assessment Plan

The apprenticeship details and assessment plan can be accessed by following this link:

https://skillsengland.education.gov.uk/apprenticeship-standards/st0135-v1-3

Level 3 Early Years Educator Apprenticeship

ST0135

Version 2.0

Route: Education and Early Years

EQA Organisation: Ofqual

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Annex 2: Additional Information

Results and Certifications

All final assessment component results are published on Proficient within **ten working days** of the assessment taking place.

We will submit a certificate claim with the DfE within 15 working days after the final result has been uploaded to Proficient. The DfE will send the certificate directly to the employer.

For replacement certificates a request must be emailed to epa@innovateawarding.org Within two days of receiving the email, a replacement certificate will be requested from the DfE.

Re-sits

An apprentice who fails an assessment method, will be required to re-sit the failed assessment method only.

Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for the re-sit.

Grades will not be capped as a result of a resit.

Reasonable Adjustments, Special Considerations and Appeals

Information on reasonable adjustments, special considerations and the appeals process can be accessed by using this link:

Policies Procedures

Support Materials

All the support materials for this apprenticeship can be found on Proficient.

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Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Referencing

Apprentice submissions as part of their portfolio of evidence must be produced by themselves. Correctly cited quotes can be used to enhance and support the document, but the document itself must be the apprentice's own work and not generated by AI. If you are using AI to amend your own words, then these are no longer your own words and this becomes plagiarism.

Innovate Awarding expects all forms of plagiarism to be treated very seriously by staff at centres, and centres should have in place their own plagiarism policy and process for handling suspected cases of plagiarism.

English and Maths Qualifications

Apprentices must follow the English and Maths formal qualification requirements as set out in the Department for Education Apprenticeship funding rules.

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Annex 3: Version Record

Innovate Awarding continuously review all support material to ensure its accuracy. All amendments will be recorded in the Version Record.

Version Number	Effective From	Reason for Change	Location

Please ensure that you use the current version.

All enquiries relating to the version change of the document should be directed to epa@innovateawarding.org

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