Unit 9: Supporting Learning Activities

Unit code: A/601/7411

QCF Level 2:   Specialist

Credit value: 4

Guided learning hours: 25

Unit aim

This unit provides the knowledge, understanding and skills to support learning activities. It requires competence in supporting the planning, delivery, assessment and review cycle.

Unit introduction

This unit is suitable for those who support learners when they are carrying out learning activities planned by the teacher. It enables learners to understand how to deliver effective support to both the teacher and learners to ensure effective teaching and learning can take place. It involves learners in deciding what resources and activities they need to provide to support planned learning activities. The unit will help to engage learners in providing the agreed support and feedback to the teacher about the progress made by learners. Learning activities may be for individual pupils, groups of pupils, or the whole teaching group.

Learning activities could take place within the classroom environment or involve working with learners outside the classroom in a setting where teaching and learning take place. This might be breakfast clubs, educational visits, extended hours classes, field studies and study support. Teaching and learning activities will take place under the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher in accordance with arrangements made by the head teacher of the school.

This unit ensures that learners are fully prepared to support the preparation, provision, assessment and evaluation of learning activities within a safe and secure environment.

Learners will use their skills and knowledge to contribute to the learning process for learners and develop their understanding of how to supplement this with additional information from a variety of sources.

They will also develop their ability to re model resources to meet the needs of pupils with the support and guidance of teachers.

Learners will work with and motivate pupils who find the learning process challenging for a variety of reasons, literacy, numeracy or ICT for example, and develop an awareness of potential barriers to learning.

This unit develops learners' understanding of the ways in which their knowledge and understanding can impact on the teaching and learning process and helps them to identify how they can improve their current capabilities.

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria determine the standard required to achieve the unit.

On completion of this unit a learner should:

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria	
1 Be able to support the teacher in planning learning activities	1.1	Describe how a learning support practitioner may contribute to the planning, delivery and review of learning activities
	1.2	Identify own strengths and weaknesses in relation to supporting learning activities and how these may impact on the support that can be provided
	1.3	Use own knowledge of the learners and the curriculum to contribute to the teacher's planning
	1.4	Identify and obtain the information required to support learning activities
	1.5	Identify and agree with the teacher the opportunities for using information and communication technology to support learning
2 Be able to prepare for learning activities	2.1	Select and prepare the resources required for planned learning activities
	2.2	Adapt resources as directed by the teacher to meet the needs of learners
	2.3	Ensure the learning environment meets relevant health, safety, security and access requirements
3 Be able to support learning activities	3.1	Use a range of learning support strategies to meet the needs of learners
	3.2	Apply skills and techniques to engage and motivate learners
	3.3	Demonstrate ways of supporting learners to develop: literacy skills, numeracy skills, ICT skills
	3.4	Describe the sorts of problems that might occur when supporting learning activities and how to deal with these

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
4 Be able to observe and report on learner participation and progress	4.1 Apply skills and techniques for monitoring learners' responses to learning activities
	4.2 Assess how well learners are participating in activities and the progress they are making
	4.3 Record observations and assessments of learner participation and progress in the required format
5 Be able to support the evaluation of learning activities	5.1 Describe the importance of evaluating learning activities
	5.2 Provide constructive feedback on learning activities in discussion with the teacher
	5.3 Identify any difficulties encountered in supporting the learning activities
	5.4 Provide the teacher with feedback on learner participation and progress
6 Be able to evaluate own practice in relation to supporting literacy, numeracy and ICT	6.1 Identify ways in which own knowledge, understanding and skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT impact on practice
	6.2 Identify opportunities to improve own knowledge, understanding and skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT

Unit content

1 **Be able to support the teacher in planning learning activities**

Planning, delivery and review of learning activities: contributions eg importance of planning, development of plans (short, medium, long term), aims and objectives of learning activities, agreeing the support required with the teacher

Strengths and weaknesses: impact eg advice to and from colleagues, organisational policies, expectations and requirements within own role and responsibility, limitations of own role

Contribute to the teacher's planning: ways eg knowledge of pupil learning levels, knowledge of learner capability, individual learning plans, awareness of learning outcomes, awareness of curriculum content

Support learning activities: information eg learning objectives, learning resources required, own role in supporting the learning activities, any specific information or instructions relating to the pupils and/or activities

Opportunities for using information and communication technology to support learning: range of different activities eg equipment and technological devices, such as programmable toys, telephones, videos, timers, keyboards, keypads, computers/laptops, software, digital cameras, interactive whiteboards as well as new technologies as they become available

2 **Be able to prepare for learning activities**

Resources for planned learning activities: types eg equipment (including ICT), software, books and other materials

Adapt resources: adapt those resources and materials to the age range, ability and need of pupils under the direction of the teacher

Health, safety, security and access requirements: checks eg organisation's health and safety policy as it applies to learning environments, taking account of the needs of all learners in the learning environment, including those with additional or special needs eg gifted and talented pupils, bilingual/multilingual pupils, pupils with disabilities

3 **Be able to support learning activities**

Learning support strategies: range eg constructive feedback and appropriate methods and roles in the assessment of literacy, raising self-esteem and confidence building, awareness of the factors that promote or hinder effective learning

Engage and motivate pupils: techniques eg policies on use of praise, assistance, rewards and sanctions to promote and support pupils' learning

Literacy skills, numeracy skills and ICT skills: support pupils by eg reading with confidence, fluency and understanding, use and apply numeracy to practical tasks, using praise and assistance as appropriate

Problems: types eg learning activities, learning resources, learning environment, pupils

4 **Be able to observe and report on learner participation and progress**

Monitoring learner responses: techniques eg difference between formal and informal observation, importance of adhering to established school policies and procedures, not making assumptions eg avoiding prejudice, stereotyping and ignorance, checking findings with others

Assess activities and progress: ways eg knowledge of assessment criteria, mechanisms for recording assessment, monitoring progress, supporting assessment of learners, reporting and recording information accurately, evaluation and assessment of learning

Record observations and assessments: ways eg record keeping systems and procedures, roles and responsibilities for contributing to and maintaining the record keeping systems eg evaluation of learning activities and assessment of learning, updating records under direction of the teacher, accuracy and legibility of entries specified by the teacher

5 **Be able to support the evaluation of learning activities**

Evaluating learning activities: importance of eg objectivity, reasons for making judgements, evidence base

Provide constructive feedback: ways eg evaluation of learning activities, identification of successes, difficulties and challenges

Difficulties in supporting the learning activities: factors that hinder support

Feedback on learners' participation and progress: ways eg effective communication, using appropriate interpersonal and collaborative skills, keeping colleagues informed, confidentiality and exchange of information

6 **Be able to evaluate own practice in relation to supporting literacy, numeracy and ICT**

Skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT impact on practice: ways to assess eg recognise where own knowledge has supported learning or hindered the development of appropriate learning activities

Improve own knowledge, understanding and skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT: ways eg search for and select information to meet your needs, derive new information, use different information sources, updating knowledge, understanding and skills through constructive feedback on competence and performance, appraisals, training, mentors and networks

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Some of the knowledge and understanding for this unit may come from learner research or practical work experience, or from observed practice in a work placement. The unit gives learners an overview of the context in which learning takes place.

Learners should be encouraged to consult relevant organisational documents for a specific teaching and learning setting in their home country as well as key national policies. Relevant aspects of frameworks for the learner's country, for example *Every Child Matters* (applicable in England only), particularly with reference to schools, learner referral units and personalised learning, could also be consulted. Tutors should also point out other appropriate links to the learner's home country policies and particular settings, for example the Early Years Foundation Stage, The Foundation Phase and Secondary National Strategy for School Improvement.

Delivery may be a mixture of tutor input and guiding learners in selecting appropriate materials, including electronic resources. The use of DVD/video material, where possible, would complement delivery. Visiting a variety of learning environments would enhance learner experience, particularly for those learners who do not have permanent access to a setting or who have limited access to a setting. Work experience is needed to allow learners to develop their own role and they may keep a diary or log and reflect regularly on their role and personal development.

Learning outcome 1 needs to be delivered at an early stage as it will enable learners to appreciate their role and responsibilities in supporting teachers and learners within the context of the learning environment. Roles and responsibilities may differ slightly depending on the job role, type of setting or phase of education the learner has experience of or in which they are working.

Learning outcome 2 covers the knowledge and understanding of how to prepare and adapt resources to support learning and create an environment conducive to learning that complies with related policies and procedures. Learners will find it useful to draw on scenarios from their own relevant work experience or on example scenarios presented by the tutor or visiting speakers.

Learning outcome 3 requires that learners to gain an understanding of the process of using a range of strategies, resources and materials to support learning. This is a valuable part of a teaching assistant's role. It enables learners to quickly become part of the classroom team and to discuss the process with others, for example the teacher. A visit from a practitioner who works in a setting would be useful to reinforce how different settings have different systems regarding resources and materials for supporting teaching and learning. Learners will need to develop an awareness of how teaching assistants contribute to assessment, as part of teaching and learning, in ways that raise pupil achievement and build self-esteem.

The importance of keeping clear, correct records of pupil performance and achievement, along with adhering to the appropriate requirements for confidentiality and sharing of information, should also be considered. This is covered in learning outcome 4.

Learning outcome 5 covers relationships with colleagues and other adults within a setting. It covers aspects of the job role and working relationships as well as

communications skills with colleagues. This could be covered by tutor input and discussion with learners. Learners should be encouraged to be aware of the level of professionalism required in managing these relationships.

For learning outcome 6, learners will look at how their own expertise impacts on their ability to support pupils' learning. It requires them to reflect on their own development needs to enable them to better meet individual pupil needs. This would be delivered mainly through a work placement where learners seek advice and support from professional colleagues and demonstrating how they have updated their own knowledge and understanding using research and improved their practice by observing 'best practice' and/or using constructive feedback.

Suggested assessment activities

Learners should supplement their evidence with descriptions or examples of practical work where possible. Evidence could come, for example, from activities learners have undertaken in their workplace.

The learning outcomes for this unit could be covered in four assessment activities.

Learning outcome 1 requires learners to take a broad view of the role and responsibilities of a teaching assistant. This could take place through discussion.

A second task could cover learning outcomes 2, 3 and 5. The task needs to include all aspects of the learning environment as covered in the unit content and as appropriate to the setting learners could compile a portfolio of evidence to illustrate how they prepared and adapted resources to support learning and create an environment conducive to that learning and how they contributed to the assessment of learning. Learners would need to outline a range of interpersonal and communication skills needed to work with and support the team of adults within a setting and how important this was for the effectiveness of the learning environment. This could be a diary or log with records of interactions and reflection on the interactions that would also include how they made judgements about the levels of learning, describing how they fed this back to the professionals in the team/teacher.

Where assessment evidence includes references to interaction with specific colleagues, learners must comply with any relevant confidentiality requirements. This extended task could describe a specific learning plan to support the needs of an individual pupil, or a small group of pupils, in a particular learning context, expanding the learning plan to include an explanation of the importance of planning, preparation and delivery and an evaluation of the role of the teaching assistant.

For learning outcome 4, learners are required to provide examples of their record keeping of pupil learning over a period of time to illustrate progression and demonstrate how they reflects school policy and practice.

For learning outcome 6, a fourth task could be linked to the extended task (to address learning outcomes 2, 3 and 5) or stand alone. Learners could use a diary to describe their thoughts on their own development needs and illustrate when they sought advice and support from professional colleagues. The diary could record when and how they have updated their own knowledge and understanding, using research, and improved their practice.

Assessment

Assessment criteria 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 must be assessed in the workplace.

Essential resources

As this is a work-based programme, all participants in the programme will either be directly involved in learner support or have access to situations or schools/organisations running teaching and learning activities. All learners will need an opportunity to observe others supporting learning in different teaching and learning environments.

Journals

Child Education

Early Years Educator

Junior Education

Nursery World

Textbooks

Burnham L — *S/NVQ Level 2 Teaching Assistant's Handbook, 2nd Edition* (Heinemann, 2008) ISBN 978-0435449308

Burnham L – *Supporting Teaching & Learning in Schools* (Heinemann, 2010) ISBN 978-0-435032-03-6

Interactive Tutor Resource for Teaching Assistants S/NVQ Levels 2/3 (Heinemann, 2008) ISBN 978-0435117252

Lang R — *The Art of Positive Communication* (Nasen/David Fulton, 2005) ISBN 978-1843123675

Minett P — *Child Care and Development* (Hodder Arnold, 2005) ISBN 978-0340889152

Ward S, Walker J, Snaith M and Bulman K — *BTEC First Children's Care, Learning and Development Assessment and Delivery Resource* (Heinemann, 2006) ISBN 978-0435402242

Websites

Various websites are available with assessment-related content, some of which will depend on the specific sector, market and organisation. An indicative range of general websites is given below.

www.bis.gov.uk	Department for Business Innovation and Skills
www.cipd.co.uk	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
www.edexcel.com	Edexcel
www.ento.org.uk	ENTO
www.gtce.org.uk	General Teaching Council of England
www.tda.gov.uk	The Training and Development Agency for Schools
www.teachernet.com	Teachernet