



Centre for Education  
& Lifelong Learning

# Placement Booklet for Supervised Placement Practice Observation and Reflection in ECEC Practice

*BA (Honours) in Early Childhood Education and Care  
Year 2 (Day Delivery)*

*September 2023 Version 1*

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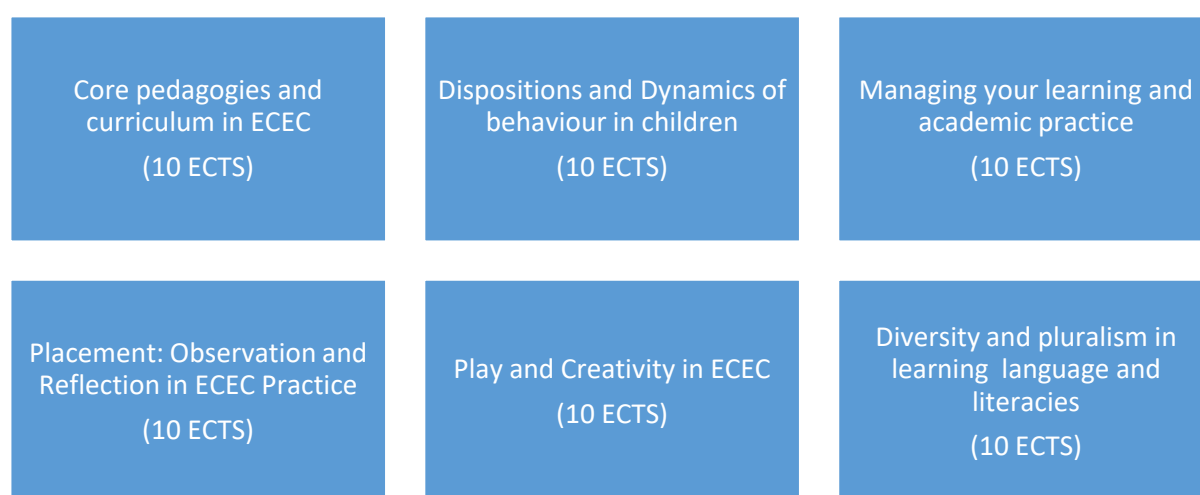
# INTRODUCTION

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National College of Ireland offers the BA (Honours) in Early Childhood Education and Care (BAHECEC) programme designed to provide student Early Childhood Educators with a firm foundation in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), to practice as Professional Early Childhood Educators in a range of ECEC environments for children from birth to six years. The programme aims to present Early Childhood Educators with a comprehensive foundation in the principles and pillars of professional practice of ECEC through the placement component of the programme.

The BAHECEC programme adheres to the Professional Award Criteria and Guidelines and is accredited by the [Qualifications Advisory Board \(QAB\) for the Early Learning and Care \(ELC\) Sector](#). The supervised placement component accounts for at least 35% of the overall Hons Degree.

The Supervised Professional Practice Placement is underpinned by all taught modules.



**Figure 1: Modules in Year 2 of the BA (Honours) in Early Childhood Education and Care**

This Placement booklet describes a module of the programme called Supervised **Placement Practice: Observation and Reflection in ECEC Practice**. **This 10-credit module** must be completed by all student Early Childhood Educators in year 2 of the BA (Honours) in Early Childhood Education and Care (BAHECEC) programme.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide **information on the processes and procedures involved**.

The aim of the module is to introduce students to the integration of theoretical principles, concepts and professional knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through the taught modules while observing staff and children in supervised practice in an early childhood education and care placement setting.

Specifically, the learning outcomes for *Supervised Placement: Observation and Reflection in ECEC Practice* module are:

- ❖ LO1: Illustrate an awareness through observations of diversity and plurality in language learning and literacies.
- ❖ LO2: Recognise and display essential ethical considerations and approaches to working with children, including child protection and well-being.
- ❖ LO3: Develop a reflective stance in diverse early childhood environments.
- ❖ LO4: Recognise and demonstrate an understanding of the holistic nature of learning and Development in Early Childhood.

## PLACEMENT OVERVIEW

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The Placement module content focuses on the following:

- **Identifying ethical reflective practice in Early Childhood and Care environment through Observations.** Observation of and reflection on how the core principles of ECEC are underpinned by National frameworks Aistear and Síolta. Recognising child-centred, democratic, rights-based and ethical practice, and developing values and attitudes required of the reflective early childhood educator. Student Early Childhood Educators will begin the development of writing a reflective journal.
- **Recognising how to plan for diversity, plurality, inclusion in learning and practice in ECEC environments.** Observation of and reflection on ECEC practice areas such as play, creativity, music, art, drama, problem-solving, early language, literacy and mathematics. Awareness of how observation supports planning, curriculum implementation and differentiation for the various emerging interests and strengths of the children. Reflection on personal learning in this area.
- **Recognise common aspects in relation to child health nutrition and well-being.** Observation of children's holistic development being prepared for and supported, in areas such as relationships, nutrition, exercise, prevention of infectious diseases, awareness of hygiene practices and infant care needs. Reflection on personal learning in this area.
- **Illustrate the elements involved in protecting children.** Observation of working within a setting's policies and procedures in relation to Children First and other statutory regulations to provide a safe environment, assess risk, report procedures and inter-professional collaboration. Reflection on personal learning in this area.

Student Early Childhood Educators will develop skills in a variety of ways to integrate their knowledge in placement including observation, critical reflection, discussion/supervision, collaboration, planning and conducting appropriate early childhood learning experiences and other placement-based assignments.

Student Early Childhood Educators practice will be guided by the above and their Placement Supervisor will encourage reflection on learning and practice in relation to:

1. Children	Observing children Building relationships with children Embracing diversity in children's needs
2. Collaborating with staff	Building relationships and collaborating with the team/ setting What you receive or gain working with this team/setting What you contribute to the team/setting
3. Engaging in professional practice	Adhering to all policies and procedures Engaging with the curriculum in the room or setting Engaging with the pedagogical approach in the room or setting Professional behaviours: confidentiality, being punctual and reliable

## SELECTION OF SETTING TO COMPLETE THE PLACEMENT

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Student Early Childhood Educators will be supported by NCI Careers to make placement arrangements, and the suitability of the placement setting will be determined by the Programme Director.

National College of Ireland (NCI) recognises that Early Childhood Education and Care takes place in a wide variety of environments, locations and times and that the quality of the placement is fundamental to the development of a competent, safe and effective early childhood educator. The BAHECEC Programme endeavours to be as flexible as possible to support many different contexts. However, NCI also needs to be in a position to arrange supervision and to support the student Early Childhood Educator throughout the Placement and therefore a number of practical considerations need to be taken into account when selecting the environment, location and time for the Placement.

A suitable ECEC placement setting:

- ✓ Delivers high quality ECEC services as determined by NCI.
- ✓ Will be Tusla (The Child and Family Agency) registered and inspected as per the [Register of Early Years Services](#).
- ✓ Provide sessional and/or full/part time care, such as crèche, pre-school, Montessori and 'Naionrai'. Junior/Senior infant classes in Primary schools, after-school service, registered childminders or other environments may be deemed appropriate by the Programme Director.
- ✓ Focuses on education and care of children within any/all of these age ranges:
  - Babies: birth to 18 months
  - Toddlers: 18 to 36 months
  - Young children: 2½ to 6 years
- ✓ Will be where student Early Childhood Educators can engage in activities with children from birth to six years of age.
- ✓ Will be graduate led wherever possible.
- ✓ Can be a student Early Childhood Educators work environment.

Placement may take place in more than one ECEC setting to ensure students experience all age ranges 0-6, but only with the prior agreement of the Programme Director.

## DURATION OF PLACEMENT

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Placements will be completed within the academic year from September to May; until all placement activities are successfully completed, typically attending the ECEC placement setting for two or three days per week (9hrs per week min).

Student Early Childhood Educators must have their placement setting confirmed, pre-placement documents completed prior to commencing placement activities. Placements for 2023/24 will commence on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and continue until Friday 26th April 2024.

The Placement activities will typically take place on Tuesdays, Thursdays and/or Fridays at agreed times between the hours of 8am-8pm.

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

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## 1. Preparing for Placement

Garda Vetting is required as part of the admissions process to the BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Education and Care programme. *Early Childhood Educators may not commence their placement until this process has been completed.*

Student Early Childhood Educators will:

- Prepare Garda Vetting paperwork in advance of placement.
- Review the placement requirements i.e. duration, times, assessment details.
- Make arrangements in collaboration with NCI Careers to complete the placement with a suitable ECEC setting (see p.5).
- Attend all placement preparation workshops, and participate in all lectures, modules and meetings relating to placement. *Failure to attend may result in the Early Childhood Educator being deemed 'not progressing' and placement being paused.*
- Become familiar with all relevant policies and procedures including Child Protection Guidelines (see Appendix 1), Code of Conduct (Appendix 3), and NCI's disciplinary codes of behaviours and policies.
- Become familiar with essential legislation and regulatory practices. For instance ECEC settings will be guided by [Aistear.Síolta Practice Guide](#), [Early Year's Quality and Regulatory Framework \(TUSLA\)](#), [Children First](#) and the [Code of Professional Responsibilities and Code of Ethics for Early Years Educators](#).
- Undertake a pre-placement visit to the ECEC setting, introduce yourself, complete paperwork, familiarise yourself with the environment and become aware of any expectation the placement setting may have of you while engaging in placement.
- Prepare all necessary paperwork in advance of placement including the consent form and learning agreement with the Placement setting/ Placement Mentor.

## 2. Responsibilities during Placement

- Present a professional demeanour including professional dress, a positive attitude, good attendance, time keeping, confidentiality and any other professional behaviour required by the placement environment.
- Notify the placement setting, Placement Coordinator and Placement Supervisor of any unexpected absences in a timely manner.
- Adhere to national and institutional policies and protocols related to the placement setting.
- Adhere to all relevant policies and procedures including Child Protection Guidelines (see Appendix 1), Code of Conduct (Appendix 3), NCI's disciplinary codes of behaviours and policies and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines.
- Complete the placement checklist (Appendix 6) and become familiar with and adhere to all policies and procedures of the environment.
- Engage in any induction training provided in the environment.
- Always respect the rights of children and act in their best interests, as outlined in the [Code of Professional Responsibilities and Code of Ethics for Early Years Educators](#).
- Build positive relationships with children, listen to and respond appropriately to them.
- Interact positively with and respect the staff team and their contributions.
- Become familiar with the diverse cohort of children in the environment, backgrounds, languages, cultural heritage and interests.



- Show initiative, become proactive and get involved as much as possible in the daily routine.
- Be prepared, plan for and participate in all activities and children's learning experiences in the environment.
- Adapt learning experiences to meet the children's diverse backgrounds, abilities, needs and interests
- Consult with the Placement Mentor/ Placement Supervisor about any activities they wish you to undertake with the children.
- Seek permission from the Placement Mentor, parent/guardian and children to undertake child observations as necessary.
- Attend all placement related meetings as scheduled. This includes site visits from Placement Supervisor and supervision meetings.
- Complete all paperwork and assignments associated with placement in a professional and timely manner, within agreed deadlines.
- Engage in reflective discussions with the Placement Supervisor and Placement Mentor.
- Discuss any issue or concern relating to placement in confidence with the Placement Supervisor.
- Uphold the professional integrity of NCI and the BAHECEC programme.
- Resist engaging in any activity that would bring NCI or the programme into disrepute e.g. Social media, exchanging stories about children etc.
- In keeping with GDPR, safeguard the confidentiality of information about children, parents and families that you may be exposed to in the placement environment. Keeping information confidential protects student Early Childhood Educators, the Placement setting and the relationship between NCI and the placement setting.

### **3. Responsibilities following Placement**

Following placement, student Early Childhood Educators must:

- Participate in all meetings relating to placement.
- Submit paperwork and assignments associated with placement in a timely and professional manner, within agreed deadlines.
- Send an email/ thank you' letter to the placement setting.

**Student Early Childhood Educators will not progress into Year 3 of the BAHECEC Programme until all requirements of Year 2 Placement and all other modules have been completed.**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### WHEN CAN I START ACTIVITIES IN THE PLACEMENT SETTING?

Placements can commence from Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Student Early Childhood Educators will commence activities in placement settings only after:

1. They have informed the Programme Team of their placement arrangements.
2. Attended all placement preparation sessions.
3. Uploaded the required placement documents and information.

### PLACEMENT PREPARATION

Placement preparation sessions will take place between weeks 1-5 and attendance at these are essential. During these workshops student Early Childhood Educators will be provided with support from NCI Careers to arrange a suitable placement, and the placement lead will provide an overview of the placement and processes that support it. This includes an introduction to observation methods, reflective practice and an introduction to the Placement Portfolio.

If you are unable to attend placement preparation lectures and meetings, you must contact the Placement Lead.

### WHAT PLACEMENT DOCUMENTATION DO I NEED TO UPLOAD?

The following documents must be completed by student Early Childhood Educators ahead of carrying out activities in the placement setting. These documents must be uploaded to Moodle.

1. Placement arrangements – Early Childhood Educators are required to provide the programme team with details such as the name of the placement setting, Placement Mentor name, contact details etc. (see link on Moodle)
2. Student Early Childhood Educators must complete the 'Acceptance of the National College of Ireland Child Protection Guidelines & Principles for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults' form (Appendix 2)
3. Placement Documentation (Appendix 3) – Student Early Childhood Educators must complete the following documents with the Placement Mentor
  - Consent Form
  - Learning Agreement
4. A plan for completing the first 10 weeks of placement activities which is shared and agreed with their Placement Supervisor and Placement Mentor (see page 12 and Appendix 5). The plan must be added to the *Planning for Placement* section on Moodle.

## HOW DO I COMMUNICATE WITH MY PLACEMENT SUPERVISOR AND PROGRAMME TEAM?

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**Communication throughout the programme is managed exclusively through NCI e-mail, Moodle and Microsoft Teams systems.** It is the responsibility of student Early Childhood Educators and Placement Supervisors to access and check their NCI emails regularly.

We use Moodle and/or Turnitin to support all submissions during the Placement. Submissions by other means such as email attachment are not accepted.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

**For Placement queries, the first point of contact for Early Childhood Educators should always be their assigned Placement Supervisor.**

Programme Team		
Role	Name	Email Address
Placement Supervisors	Anna Barr Elaine Morrissey Sara Ponce Leah Russell Wendy Walsh Siobhan Wemyss	<a href="mailto:anna.barr@ncirl.ie">anna.barr@ncirl.ie</a> <a href="mailto:elaine.morrissey@ncirl.ie">elaine.morrissey@ncirl.ie</a> <a href="mailto:Sara.ponce@ncirl.ie">Sara.ponce@ncirl.ie</a> <a href="mailto:leah.russell@ncirl.ie">leah.russell@ncirl.ie</a> <a href="mailto:Wendy.walsh@ncirl.ie">Wendy.walsh@ncirl.ie</a> <a href="mailto:Siobhan.wemyss@ncirl.ie">Siobhan.wemyss@ncirl.ie</a>
Placement Lead / Programme Director	Anna Barr	<a href="mailto:anna.barr@ncirl.ie">anna.barr@ncirl.ie</a>
Placement Coordinator	Stephanie Roe	<a href="mailto:stephanie.roe@ncirl.ie">stephanie.roe@ncirl.ie</a>
Programme Coordinator	Ariadny Bittencourt	<a href="mailto:ariadny.bittencourt@ncirl.ie">ariadny.bittencourt@ncirl.ie</a> Alternatively, you can submit a request to Academic Operations at <a href="#">NCI Support Hub</a>

## WHEN CAN I MEET MY PLACEMENT SUPERVISOR?

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Placement Supervisors support, guide, mentor and facilitate student Early Childhood Educators throughout their placement.

At the beginning of the placement, Placement Supervisors will schedule an introductory meeting with the student Early Childhood Educator. This meeting will take place on Microsoft Teams. Placement Supervisors are allocated after student Early Childhood Educator submits their placement information via the MS Form.

Meetings will typically take place in mid Sept – early October (before placement workshop).

Placement Supervisors will check in with their allocated student Early Childhood Educators throughout their placement to ensure they are progressing through their planned placement activities.

Student Early Childhood Educators communicate with their Placement Supervisors throughout the Placement using NCI systems such as NCI email, Moodle, and Microsoft Teams. Early Childhood

Educators can request one to one meetings with their Placement Supervisor. Meetings can take place in-person or via Microsoft Teams.

## WHEN WILL MY PLACEMENT SUPERVISOR VISIT ME?

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Arranged supervisor observation visits by Placement Supervisors are part of the evaluation process and absence is equivalent to not presenting at formal assessment/examination.

Each student Early Childhood Educator will have a minimum of three observation visits (one in semester 1 and two in semester 2) from their Placement Supervisor throughout the placement. The observation visits will take place onsite in the placement setting. These visits are entirely formative and designed to give students useful feedback on their practice. The Placement Supervisor may also meet with the Placement Mentor. The Placement Supervisor will arrange a suitable time after each observation visit to provide the student Early Childhood Educator with formative feedback. Typically, Placement Supervisors will give verbal feedback before leaving the setting and written feedback will be provided at a later date. Written formative feedback will be underpinned by the placement criteria and formative feedback template (Appendix 7).

Typically, the observation visits will take place as follows:



Placement Supervisors may arrange further observation visits if they deem it necessary.

Dates and times for site visits will be arranged in agreement with the Placement Supervisor, Placement Mentor and student Early Childhood Educator and will be included in the student Early Childhood Educators Planning for Placement.

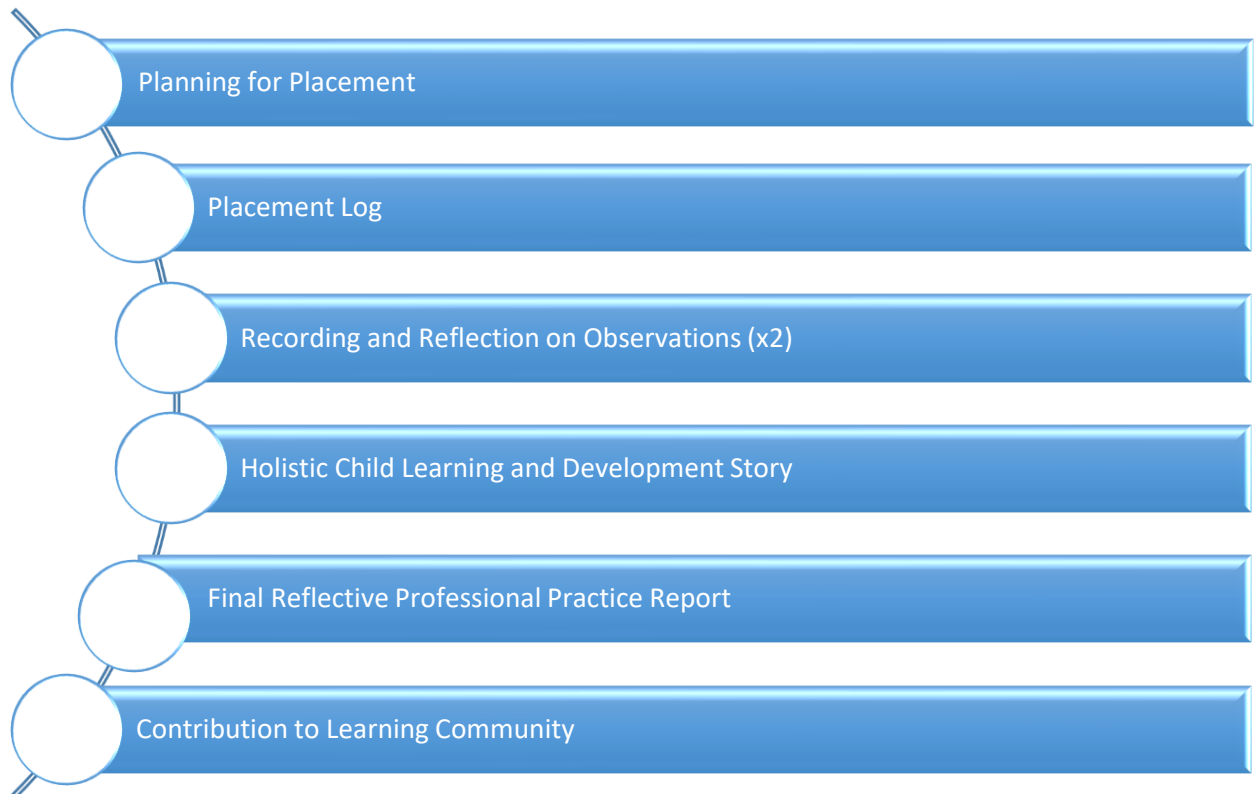
**Placement Supervisors are required to contact the Mentor teacher before each of their visits to ensure they can accommodate the visits and where possible, arrange to discuss feedback on the student's engagement and progress.**

## HOW DO I DOCUMENT MY WORK? – PLACEMENT PORTFOLIO

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Student Early Childhood Educators will use Moodle to document their progression through the required placement activities throughout the academic year. Guidelines will be provided during the placement preparation workshops.

The Placement will require student Early Childhood Educators to document their learning and progression through the required placement activities through as part of the Placement Portfolio. The Placement Portfolio components consists of the following:



Note: Every document that you upload to Mahara for the above components should clearly state the following information at the top of the page:

**Assessment:** For example, Holistic Child Learning and Development Story

**Name:**

**Student Number:**

**Date:**

# WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF MY PORTFOLIO?

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## 1. PLANNING FOR PLACEMENT

The purpose of Planning for Placement is to timetable the placement activities to be completed (see Appendix 5). Placement activities includes activities that need to be completed in relation to the Portfolio, to early childhood education and care within the Placement setting and other placement and module requirements. Student Early Childhood Educators will complete their Planning for Placement approximately every 8 weeks (Plan A&B).

The plan must reflect an awareness of ethical practice in working with children, such as obtaining consent, and maintaining confidentiality when working with children.

The student Early Childhood Educator can share draft plans with their Placement Supervisors, but the final plan (A&B) must be added to the Planning for Placement section on Moodle. It is the responsibility of the student Early Childhood Educator to share the plan with their Placement Mentor. Only when the plan is approved by the Placement Supervisor can the student Early Childhood Educator commence specified elements of the Portfolio.

If there are changes to the Plan (A&B), the student Early Childhood Educator must inform their Placement Supervisor and note it in the placement log. (See appendix 9 for assessment rubric)

## 2. PLACEMENT LOG

Student Early Childhood Educators are required to maintain the Placement Log approximately **once every 14 days** throughout the period of the Placement. Each entry on the Log will be between 100-150 words, dated and state the number of hours completed to date.

The Placement Log is characterised by brief comments and factual information – it is not intended for commentary or reflection. The Log is used by the Programme Team to keep track of the student Early Childhood Educator's progress through the Placement activities scheduled as part of Planning for Placement.

Suggested areas to log, include settling in, getting to know children and educators, completing observations, contributing to the setting and children's care and learning, building relationships with colleagues and Mentor feedback. Changes to expected observations, activities, unique incidents observed, unexpected absences, meetings with Placement Supervisors, meetings with Placement Mentor may all be signalled in the Log. If the Placement deviates from your intended Planning for Placement activities, record a brief update of this in your Log. No personal or inappropriate information will be added to the Log.

**Logs cannot be back dated** so it is important that student Early Childhood Educators upload their logs every 14 days. Failure to keep the Log up-to-date will be considered during grading of the Placement. (See appendix 9 for assessment rubric).

### 3. RECORDING AND REFLECTION ON OBSERVATIONS

Student Early Childhood Educators will outline and develop their skills in observations by completing **twelve observations in total. Early Childhood Educators will record three observations in each of the four methods listed below.** (see appendix 8 for description of each method)

- i) Running Record x 2
- ii) Event Sampling x 2
- (iii) Time Sampling x 2
- (iv) Reggio Approach x2

Student Early Childhood Educators will complete their observations in two parts, Part A&B. See below timeline for further clarification on the submission dates. Each part consists of recording and reflecting on four observations and receiving feedback from the Placement Supervisor after each part is completed. There will be a different focus for each part which is as follows:

- Part A: The focus is for student Early Childhood Educators to observe a child/children and use their recordings on observations to aid them in developing their holistic child learning and development story in semester 2.
- Part B: The focus is for student Early Childhood Educators to observe children in diverse contexts as part of instances of inclusive practice.

The placement workshops that are scheduled in the timetable will guide and support student Early Childhood Educators in their observation skills.

Observations should include a diversity of experiences and are to be completed on curriculum areas within the placement environment. Depending on the placement environment, curriculum areas might include:

- ❖ **Activities focusing on play and learning (indoor or outdoor)** such as free play, guided activities like circle time, story time, music and movement, field trips etc.
- ❖ **Interactions and relationships** such as parent partnerships, between children, between colleagues and between children and adults.
- ❖ **Health and well-being routines** such as feeding/snack time, toileting/nappy changing, dressing, sleep/nap time etc.
- ❖ **Transitions** such as arrival and departure, in between activities.
- ❖ **Activities related to planning and preparations** such as preparing for transitions, documenting etc.

Student Early Childhood Educators are required to schedule the observations (Part A&B) as part of the Planning for Placement (Plan A,B) in agreement with their Placement Supervisor before they commence the observations. If there are changes to a scheduled observation, the student Early Childhood Educator must inform their Placement Supervisor and note this in their placement log. It is the responsibility of the student Early Childhood Educator to ensure that the placement setting is informed of the scheduled observations.

Once your scheduled observations have been agreed and approved, you can commence recording and reflecting on the observations that you have listed in the Planning for Placement.

**The recording and reflection on these observations should be completed on the template provided and uploaded to Moodle by the agreed deadline as part of your Planning for Placement (Plan A&B).** (See appendix 9 for assessment rubric)

All observations will include the following:

- **Description of context:** Provides the context of the observation, for example, outdoor play, greeting time, circle time, snack time etc. The child /children's unique context; a child settling in, a child's birthday, following a child's emerging interest.
- **Observation rationale:** Provide the context, for example, Rita has recently started attending the creche, and you want to know more about her interactions/friendships.
- **Ethical considerations:** Provide information on receiving permission/ protecting identities etc.
- **Observation method:** Select method depending on context and purpose of observation. Focus use of appropriate method, for example, use a time sample for making sense of a child's interactions during the free play session.
- **Evaluation:** Making meaning of the observation of the observation, for example, what does the time sample tell you about the child's interactions/friendships, do you, for instance, notice any patterns? Provide links with theoretical principles. Also, include related health and safety concerns and child protection issues.
- **Recommendations:** Based on the observations, recommend activities or learning opportunities to support the child further, making links to good practice and national frameworks. Recommendations should support high quality practice.
- **Reflection on personal learning:** Reflection of personal skills and technique in using the observation method, and in maintaining ethicality. What did you learn from this observation experience? Would you choose this method again next time for the same context?

#### 4. HOLISTIC CHILD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STORY

Student Early Childhood Educators are required to select a child and create a Holistic Learning and Development journey for the chosen child. The Holistic Child Learning and Development Story will be approximately 800 words and will be submitted to Moodle.

**The Holistic Child Learning and Development Story should be uploaded to Moodle by the agreed deadline as part of your Planning for Placement (Plan A).** (See appendix 9 for assessment rubric)

The Holistic Child Learning and Development Story will be structured as follows:

- **Introduction:** Provide a brief description of the child's background and source of information on the basis of which the story emerges. Include a rationale as to why the child was selected (approx. 250 words)
- **Body:** Provide a description of the learning, development, and wellbeing of the child. Include a section on how the child's learning, development and wellbeing can be facilitated or supported. Link this with theory. (approx. 450 words) You can append completed observations to support the story.
- **Possibilities and Implications for future planning:** Outline the plan you would recommend for this child to enhance their capabilities and holistic learning, development, and wellbeing (approx. 100 words)



## 5. FINAL REFLECTIVE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE REPORT

Student Early Childhood Educators are required to write a Final Reflective Professional Practice Report. The report will be approximately 1000 words and will be submitted to Moodle. This report will reflect all the learning outcomes for the module (see page 2).

The report should focus on the entire learning journey of the student Early Childhood Educator over the duration of the Placement. This includes experiences related to the elements of the Portfolio as well as discussions and feedback with your Placement Supervisor, Placement Mentor and peers. It will also include theoretical principles linked to year 2 modules.

Student Early Childhood Educators are encouraged to send a draft report to their Placement Supervisor for feedback before they submit the final version to Moodle at the end of the placement.

The report must include an introduction, body and conclusion. Specific guidelines are provided below.

### **Guidelines for writing a Final Reflective Professional Practice Report:**

- ❖ Include an introduction, body and conclusion.
- ❖ How positive or otherwise do you feel about your learning experience?
- ❖ Did you engage with enthusiasm and energy?
- ❖ In what ways was it successful / unsuccessful for you?
- ❖ What did you learn about observing, the curriculum, holistic child learning and development, planning for diversity?
- ❖ How did you handle any challenges?
- ❖ Were your interactions with the children/environment professional? Did you develop their thinking and give them positive feedback?
- ❖ Did you manage to make any observations and evaluations of the children's learning?
- ❖ What aspects would you have enjoyed the most/least if you had been one of the children?
- ❖ Have you discussed how it went with your supervisor – what was their feedback?
- ❖ Were you able to relate theory/knowledge to practice?
- ❖ What would you do differently next time?

**The Final Reflective Report should be uploaded to your Moodle by the agreed deadline. (See appendix 9 for assessment rubric)**

## 6. CONTRIBUTION TO LEARNING COMMUNITY

Student Early Childhood Educators will post as well as respond to insightful experiences on the Contribution to Learning Community forum on Moodle. Each student Early Childhood Educator will post **at least one event** and provide **at least one response** to a post of a peer online.

Example topics for discussion would be 'What are your thoughts about including smart phones/iPads in children's learning environments?' or 'What are the strategies that can be used by parents, to help them to support children with additional learning needs?'

## WHAT IS THE ASSESSMENT STRATEGY & SUBMISSION DATES?

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Below is the assessment strategy and submission dates for Placement: Observation and Reflection in ECEC Practice. All documentation must be added to Moodle.

**It is not possible to pass by compensation for the BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Education and Care programme. All assessment elements must be attempted and passed.** (See Appendix 9 for assessment rubrics.)

Documentation		Submission Dates	LO's achieved	Grade
Planning for Placement		Plan A: 20 <sup>th</sup> October 2023 Plan B: 9 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	LO1 & 2	10%
Placement Log		Ongoing every 14 days	LO3	10%
Portfolio	Recording and Reflection on Observations	Part A: 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2023 (20%) Part B: 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024 (20%)	LO1 & 2	40%
	Holistic Child Learning and Development Story	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	LO3 & 4	15%
Final Reflective Professional Practice Report		29 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	LO3	20%
Contribution to Learning Community in Practice		Anytime up until end of semester 2	LO1,2,3&4	5 %

## HOW WILL MY PLACEMENT PORTFOLIO BE GRADED?

The grading of the Portfolio will be based on submissions and guided by progress observed by Placement Supervisors during visits, feedback being implemented, as well as discussions with Placement Mentors. The rubric criteria will guide the grading (See appendix 8 for assessment rubrics).

## HOW DO I REQUEST AN EXTENSION OR DEFERRAL?

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### PLACEMENT TIMEFRAME

Student Early Childhood Educators typically complete their placement within the timeframe of the first two semesters i.e. September - May. In some cases, Placement may be completed within a 3-semester window with prior agreement with the Programme Director. Where a student Early Childhood Educator has to extend their placement beyond these periods, permission of the Programme Director and in some cases the Registrar is required.

Student Early Childhood Educators who fail the Placement are permitted to repeat the module subject to NCI's regulations. In all events, a student Early Childhood Educator will not be able to complete the programme without completing the Placement.

### DEFERRAL REQUEST

Student Early Childhood Educators who are unable to complete a Placement due to extenuating circumstances such as illness, bereavement etc. may apply for a module deferral. This means the student Early Childhood Educator can pause the Placement and continue the following academic year. Email the Placement Coordinator cc'ing your Placement Supervisor for details on applying for a deferral.

Where circumstances in the ECEC setting change during placement and the placement setting is not in a position to provide placement anymore to the student Early Childhood Educator, the student Early Childhood Educator will be allowed to repeat the placement without penalties if they cannot find another placement setting in sufficient time of the academic year.

### WITHDRAWAL

On the advice of the Placement Supervisor, the Programme Director may withdraw a student Early Childhood Educator from a Placement where there is serious infringement of the ECEC setting's policies, code of practice or where the student Early Childhood Educator fails to follow the procedures. A student Early Childhood Educator may appeal this decision in accordance with National College of Ireland's Appeals Process.

Where a student Early Childhood Educator fails to maintain a Placement, they will forfeit their place on the BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Education programme.

## NOT-PROGRESSING/ FITNESS TO LEARN

In certain circumstances student Early Childhood Educators may be deemed to be 'not-progressing' during the Placement. The Placement is in-effect paused.

- This may happen for a variety of reasons, for example substantial changes to a Planning for Placement brought about by changes in employment, change of venue, problems with placement setting or changes in the Early Childhood Educator's circumstances.
- In some cases, this may be beyond the control of the student Early Childhood Educator and if this is the case, the Programme Team will endeavour to work with the student Early Childhood Educator to find a suitable alternative ECEC setting.
- In other cases, the student Early Childhood Educator may be deemed as 'not progressing' by the Programme Team (usually the Programme Director in conjunction with the Placement Supervisor) due to a deficit in 'fitness to learn' on Placement.
  - 'not progressing' due to a deficit in 'fitness to learn' includes:
    - When the student Early Childhood Educator is deemed to be unable or unwilling to follow guidance from the Placement Supervisor.
    - Persistent failure to progress with Planning for Placement.
    - Persistent failure to maintain an up-to-date Log of Activities.
    - Absence of communication with the Placement Supervisor and Programme Team (including failure to reply to email correspondence).
    - Failure to act and communicate professionally and within the standards required of the placement environment (including punctuality or attendance)
    - Failure to prepare adequately to carry out the placement activities.
    - Failure to adhere to the Code of Conduct for student Early Childhood Educators

Where a student Early Childhood Educator is deemed 'not progressing' due to fitness to learn issues the student Early Childhood Educator will be provided with communication outlining the issues of concern and will be required to demonstrate that these issues have been rectified before the placement may re-commence.

# WHAT ARE THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF NCI?

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## 1. Preparing student Early Childhood Educators for Placement

To support student Early Childhood Educators arrange their placement, NCI have:

- A Careers Advisor.

Student Early Childhood Educators are provided with a copy of the Placement booklet prior to commencing the placement and are advised of the following within the booklet:

- Duration and hours of placement and arranging a suitable ECEC setting to complete placement.
- When placement supervision will happen, the duration and what they entail.
- Details of the documentation which the student Early Childhood Educator must undertake prior to commencing and during Placement.
- Details of the assessment requirements and associated timeline.
- Details of relevant guidelines, policy and procedures.

NCI will provide student Early Childhood Educators with:

- A tri-party agreement signed by Students, placement setting manager and NCI Careers before placement starts.
- A letter of introduction for student Early Childhood Educators to give their placement setting.
- A letter indicating their level of insurance cover while on placement.
- An assessment timeline, the intended learning outcomes and an overview of assessment details.

The consent form and learning agreement (Appendix 4) which the student Early Childhood Educator must be completed in partnership with the Placement Mentor.

## 2. Supporting student Early Childhood Educators during Placement

Student Early Childhood Educators will be assigned a Placement Supervisor and the Placement setting designates a suitable mentor for the student Early Childhood Educator.

To support student Early Childhood Educators throughout placement, NCI have:

- A full-time Placement Coordinator.
- A Placement Lead.
- An NCI Placement Supervisor appointed to each student Early Childhood Educator.
- Programme meetings to identify challenges for individual student Early Childhood Educators, ECEC settings and Placement Supervisors, and to take steps to redress these including provision of additional supervision/support for the student Early Childhood Educator, and/or meet with the Placement Mentor.

## 3. Responsibilities in relation to maintaining a positive relationship with the Placement setting.

Clear and open communication between all partners is essential. It is incumbent upon NCI to nurture positive relationships with placement environments. Accordingly, NCI will:

- Communicate with placement settings using email.
- Provide the setting in charge with a copy of the Placement booklet at the beginning of the academic year indicating roles and responsibilities, the timing and duration of placement, the intended learning outcomes and an overview of assessment details.

- Provide details of the student Early Childhood Educator/s undertaking placement in a timely manner.
- Clarify NCI expectations of the placement setting with regards to facilitating placement including how supervision occurs (e.g., site visits by NCI Placement Supervisor, direct observation of the student Early Childhood Educator/s working with children etc.).
- Ensure a tri-party agreement and learning agreement is completed by the student Early Childhood Educator and NCI in partnership with the placement setting. These agreements document what is to be achieved in the placement to meet the student Early Childhood Educator's learning needs. These agreements will also set out the shared responsibilities to be undertaken by the student Early Childhood Educator, the Placement Supervisor and the Placement Mentor.
- Encourage the Placement setting to communicate any concerns relating to placement with the Programme Team.
- Share NCI's complaints policy and procedure with the Placement setting, if required, ensuring to work to redress any concerns in a timely manner.
- Send an email to the setting following placement.

#### **4. Responsibilities in relation to Supervisors and Mentors**

- Provide NCI Placement Supervisor and Placement Mentors with an induction to Placement.
- Provide NCI Placement Supervisors and Placement Mentors with a copy of the Placement booklet at the beginning of the academic year indicating roles and responsibilities, the timing and duration of placement, the intended learning outcomes and an overview of assessment details.
- Meet with NCI Placement Supervisors and clarify expectations prior to placement.
- Provide opportunities for CPD.

## **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE PLACEMENT COORDINATOR?**

The Placement Coordinator has overall administrative responsibility for the BAHECEC placements. The coordinator will assign Placement Supervisors to each student Early Childhood Educator and monitor progress to ensure that student Early Childhood Educators keep up-to-date submissions. The Placement Coordinator will also act a liaison person with the selected Placement Mentor.

# WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PLACEMENT SUPERVISORS?

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The Placement Supervisor is part of the National College of Ireland Programme Team. The role of the Placement Supervisor is as a facilitator, guide and assessor using a strengths-based approach during the Placement. Placement Supervisors will look for a cycle of continuous improvement and evidence of a professionally and academically appropriate reflective stance on the part of the student Early Childhood Educator.

## 1. Responsibilities prior to Placement

Prior to engaging in student Early Childhood Educator supervision, the Placement Supervisor must:

- Review the placement booklet to become familiar with the Placement programme, duration, intended learning outcomes, placement supervision and assessment requirements.
- Read the NCI Child Protection Guidelines (Appendix 1) and sign the Acceptance form (Appendix 2)
- Determine the number of student Early Childhood Educators for whom they are responsible. The Placement Coordinator will allocate each supervisor several student Early Childhood Educators.
- Prepare a schedule of placement supervision which will entail site visits and regular communication with allocated student Early Childhood Educators.
- Liaise with the Placement Mentor for introduction and planning site visits.
- Review and check that all pre-placement documentation including a learning agreement is completed.
- Participate in induction, placement orientation and workshop Programme meetings and scheduled CPD events.

## 2. Responsibilities during Placement

- Supervise, observe, facilitate, guide and review the student Early Childhood Educator in practice using a strengths-based approach in the ECEC setting.
- Guide student Early Childhood Educators to explore their learning needs and what sort of learning opportunities they look for, and how they can add to children's learning experiences in the placement setting.
- Support, review and agree student Early Childhood Educators planning for placement on an ongoing basis.
- Agree a variety of practice tasks that student Early Childhood Educators can engage in within the placement setting in conjunction with the learning outcomes. Collectively these will provide the range of learning opportunities for the student Early Childhood Educator to attain the learning outcomes of the placement and learning agreement.
- Support and work in conjunction with the Placement Mentor.
- Ensure that regular and timely supervision and mentoring of student Early Childhood Educators occur.
- Contact the Placement Mentor prior to all site visits to ensure they are aware you will be onsite observing the student Early Childhood Educator.
- Use the first supervision meeting to reinforce the learning outcomes set and the kind of learning experiences student Early Childhood Educators wish to have in the placement.
- Use supervision as an opportunity to provide guidance and feedback to the student Early Childhood Educator.
- State clearly what is being looked for, and what sort of performance evidence will be used, based upon the assessment criteria.

- Use supervision meetings to support and motivate student Early Childhood Educators.
- Ensure that timely and supportive feedback is provided to the student Early Childhood Educator on work submitted for assessment.
- Provide follow-up meetings to student Early Childhood Educators deemed 'not progressing'.

### **3. Responsibilities following Placement**

- Participate in scheduled meetings relating to Placement with NCI, including grading meetings
- Complete and submit any outstanding paperwork, assessment and marking on Mahara.
- Follow up with student Early Childhood Educators in instances where there may have been concerns during Placement.



## INFORMATION FOR HOST SETTINGS SUPPORTING PLACEMENTS

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The Placement forms an integral part of the BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Education and Care programme where student Early Childhood Educators are required to demonstrate that they have achieved the appropriate level of competence in the practice of observation and reflection in an Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) setting of their choosing. This requires that the student Early Childhood Educator is enabled and supported to assume the role, responsibilities, values and practices associated with professional practice in an ECEC setting.

The cooperation of the Placement setting is an important aspect in the running of this programme and the information as set out here is intended to provide assurances on what is required and the supports in place. It also outlines the benefits of such cooperation.

### WHY SHOULD AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SETTING SUPPORT PLACEMENTS?

- It is an opportunity to contribute to the enhancement and professionalisation of the ECEC sector through involvement in the formation of future Early Childhood professionals.
- Student Early Childhood Educators are willing participants to support many of the activities that take place in support of learning.
- Student Early Childhood Educators may be a source of fresh ideas, new energy and provide theory based good practice that can be applied within the placement environment.
- Participating ECEC settings will be invited to attend and engage in professional development events in Early Childhood Education and Care that take place from time to time in NCI.
- Placements help to promote and reinforce a lifelong learning culture within an organisation through links with National College of Ireland (NCI) and to encourage staff to mentor student Early Childhood Educators.
- Student Early Childhood Educators will be supported throughout their Placement by the Programme Team i.e. Placement Supervisor, Placement Coordinator, Placement Lead, Programme Director and lecturing staff.

### WHAT IS REQUIRED OF THE HOST PLACEMENT SETTING?

- Provide the student Early Childhood Educator with a placement that facilitates fulfilment of the requirements of the programme (i.e. two or three days per week from September – May, with direct interaction with children from birth to six years of age)
- Allow student Early Childhood Educators to complete the requirements of the Placement such as observations, planning and conducting appropriate early learning and care experiences, and collaborating with staff.
- Designate an experienced Educator as Placement Mentor to support and guide the student Early Childhood Educator.
- Review and sign the student Early Childhood Educator's consent form and learning agreement (Appendix 4) to consent to the educator completing their placement in the environment and ensure they maintain ethicality in practice.
- Provide appropriate induction in compliance with the [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](#) and [CHILD CARE ACT 1991 \(EARLY YEARS SERVICES\) REGULATIONS 2016](#) and ensure the student Early Childhood Educator is aware of workplace policies and procedures as

- appropriate.
- Support the student Early Childhood Educator to complete the placement checklist (Appendix 6 ) and gain awareness of essential regulation and legislation and Tusla compliance in ECEC environments.
- Facilitate observation visits by the Placement Supervisor on behalf of National College of Ireland (see page 9 ).

## WHAT IS THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PLACEMENT MENTOR?

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A Placement Mentor is an experienced Educator who works in the placement environment. The mentor will support and guide the student Early Childhood Educator through the Placement and act as a point of contact between NCI and the placement setting.

As stated in Best Practice guidelines (PLÉ 2019), 'A mentor is involved in a variety of tasks such as coaching, advising, modelling best practice, engaging in reflection with student Early Childhood Educators and prompting and supporting their interest in and commitment to working in the sector'.

Placement Mentors play a significant role in the formation of the student Early Childhood Educator. The importance of the relationship between the Placement Mentor and the student Early Childhood Educator cannot be over emphasised. The student Early Childhood Educator will depend on the mentor to gradually introduce them to the professional practices of educating in an Early Childhood Education and Care setting.

### 1. Responsibilities prior to Placement

- Review the Placement booklet to become familiar with the Placement overall, duration, intended learning outcomes and assessment requirements
- Attend an online induction workshop with NCI
- Meet with student Early Childhood Educator
- Review and complete the learning agreement and consent form with the student Early Childhood Educator
- Provide student Early Childhood Educators with an orientation to the placement setting.
- Discuss expectations for the student Early Childhood Educators regarding ethical practice and Code of Conduct including GDPR, confidentiality, responsibility during working hours, timekeeping and dress code.
- Seek clarification from the Placement Coordinator in NCI with regards to any areas of uncertainty.

### 2. Responsibilities during Placement

- Introduce the student Early Childhood Educator to the placement settings curricular approach and methods for leading and managing the daily routine.
- Support the student Early Childhood Educator to complete the Placement checklist (Appendix 6) and ensure they are aware of the policies, practices, procedures, location of rooms and resources etc.
- Provide an induction in compliance with the [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](#) and [CHILD CARE ACT 1991 \(EARLY YEARS SERVICES\) REGULATIONS 2016](#) and ensure the Early Childhood Educator is aware of workplace policies and procedures as appropriate.
- Mentor the student Early Childhood Educator by providing feedback throughout the placement

- Model professional ethical behaviour for the student Early Childhood Educator.
- Guide student Early Childhood Educators in carrying out tasks such as planning, integrating ideas from theory and managing environment activities.
- Facilitate student Early Childhood Educators to complete the requirements of the Placement.
- Maintain a professional relationship with the student Early Childhood Educator.
- Identify the student Early Childhood Educator's strengths and areas for attention.
- Encourage student Early Childhood Educator to be innovative in their work with children
- Provide analysis of practice opportunities for student Early Childhood Educators to reflect respectfully and confidentially about their placement experience.
- Facilitate site visits by the NCI Placement Supervisor and accommodate the Placement Supervisor when they are onsite for observations (see page 9).
- Collaborate with NCI Placement Supervisor and Placement Coordinator.
- Contact the Placement Supervisor and Placement Coordinator if concerned about the student Early Childhood Educator's attendance, professional conduct etc.

### **3. Responsibilities following Placement**

- Participate in scheduled meetings relating to placement with Placement Supervisor
- Follow up with Placement Supervisor and Placement Coordinator in instances where there may have been concerns during the placement.

## APPENDICES

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### APPENDIX 1: CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

NCI's Child Protection Policy is based on the [Children's First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children \(2017\)](#) and [Our Duty of Care – The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People](#) (or any revisions of such guidance/principles). NCI acknowledges that the Child Protection responsibility applies whether the child is an student Early Childhood Educator of the College or is otherwise under the care or supervision of College staff or Early Childhood Educators. NCI is obliged to report any incident reported to them by a third party in respect of;

- suspicion of child abuse
- child welfare

Staff and student Early Childhood Educators have a responsibility at all times to:

- Refrain from any inappropriate behaviour towards children
- Avoid situations which could give rise to allegations of abuse
- Report bullying of children
- Report disclosures, suspicions or concerns of abuse that relate to children

Children's First National Guidance, states that if in the event, that judicial proceedings ensue, protection of the anonymity of the person who has witnessed and/or reported the incident of child abuse/ welfare cannot be guaranteed.

#### NCI CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

Placement Supervisors and student Early Childhood Educators must read the [NCI Child Protection Guidelines](#) and must sign an 'Acceptance of the National College of Ireland Child Protection Guidelines & Principles for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults' form (Appendix 2) returning it to the Placement Coordinator.

## APPENDIX 2: ACCEPTANCE OF NCI CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

### **Acceptance of the National College of Ireland Child Protection Guidelines & Principles for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults**

I have read and understand the National College of Ireland Child Protection Guidelines & Principles for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults and agree to abide by its contents. There is no reason why I would be considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

For Faculty/Staff

- This form should be returned to their Head of School/Head of Department/Line Manager who will forward it to the Human Resources Department for retention there.

For Students

- This form should be returned to the College Department co-ordinating their activities for retention.

## APPENDIX 3: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to inform student Early Childhood Educators of the professional behaviour expected from them while undertaking the Placement element of the BAHECE Programme. Student Early Childhood Educators must abide by the terms, conditions and policies of their ECEC setting as well as NCI's policies and procedures.

### **The responsibility of the student Early Childhood Educator**

Student Early Childhood Educators engage in a learning process where they will be guided and supported by their Placement Supervisor and Placement Mentor. They will come into contact with a range of stakeholders including children and their parents. Student Early Childhood Educators are expected to actively participate in activities appropriate to their level of knowledge and practical experience, under the supervision and guidance of their Placement Mentor. As their knowledge, skills and competences develop, it is expected that they will increasingly accept more responsibility. It is not expected that they will undertake unsupervised activities for which they are not prepared for.

### **Professional code for student Early Childhood Educators**

- Approach your work diligently, take responsibility and show a willingness to use your initiative.
- Always act in a professional, respectful manner with the placement setting supervisors, staff team and all stakeholders.
- Fully adhere to the working practices and terms and conditions of the placement organisation – working conditions, health and safety, GDPR, confidentiality and child protection.
- Ensure that your health and safety needs are met.
- Be sensitive and responsive to the needs of the ECEC setting and stakeholders.
- Be aware of your limitations and seek help when necessary.
- The use of drugs or alcohol by a student Early Childhood Educator is a serious breach of conduct and will not be condoned. The use of drugs or alcohol by any student Early Childhood Educator during their placement period will necessitate a disciplinary action.
- Remember the principles of equal opportunities and implement them with respect to everyone you work with.
- Be willing to learn from all the professionals you work with in the ECEC setting.
- Organise thoroughly for all your activities by ensuring resources and activity plans are prepared in advance and in consultation with your Placement Supervisor/Placement Mentor as appropriate.
- Always notify the ECEC setting as early as possible on the day if you are unable to come in during school placement, for example, due to illness.
- Be punctual; you should be in the environment approximately 15 minutes before you are due to start work and remain long enough to clear up, review the activity with the Placement Mentor/room leader if they are available, and make provisional plans for your next session.
- Involve yourself in the wider life of the ECEC setting.
- Dress appropriately in accordance with the dress codes operating in the ECEC setting.
- Do not leave the premises during the duration of the placement, unless it is essential, in which case seek permission and let a senior member of staff know.
- Offer, and be available to attend, informal and formal meetings, which may be outside working hours.
- Attend the ECEC setting on the agreed days. Any changes to the agreed Planning for Placement should be notified to both the Placement Supervisor and the ECEC setting.

## APPENDIX 4: PLACEMENT DOCUMENTATION

The -placement documentation consists of the following two sections:

- i) Consent form
- ii) Learning agreement

All sections of are to be read, completed by the student Early Childhood Educator and their Placement Mentor and NCI Placement Supervisor and signed before commencing the Placement. When completed, the student Early Childhood Educator needs to scan the document and upload to Moodle under the relevant section.

### **(i) Consent Form**

I am currently a student Early Childhood Educator on Year 2 of the BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Education and Care programme in National College of Ireland.

As part of the course, I am required to complete the Placement: Observation and Reflection in Practice module.

As part of Placement, I am required to:

- Engage in activities with children from birth to six years of age.
- Develop observation and reflection skills in using a range of techniques in a variety of curriculum areas.
- Develop a child's holistic learning and development story, which includes all areas of development including the child's health and wellbeing.
- Develop awareness and skills in inclusive practice.
- Plan and conduct appropriate early learning experiences and other placement-based assignments.
- Take part in activities in the placement setting, which are appropriate to my level of knowledge, skills and competences, which may develop as the Placement progresses.
- Interact and collaborate with the placement setting team.
- Write a Final Reflective Professional Practice Report based on the experience of my participation throughout the Placement.

The documentation, including observations of children and the placement setting will be shared with the Programme team for education and assessment purposes. All identifying features will be anonymised and kept confidential.

## **(ii) Learning Agreement**

The goal of the student Early Childhood Educator is to achieve the module learning outcomes outlined below:

- LO1: Illustrate an awareness through observations of diversity plurality in language learning and literacies.
- LO2: Recognise and display essential ethical considerations and approaches to working with children, including child protection and well-being.
- LO3: Develop a reflective stance in diverse early childhood environments.
- LO4: Recognise and demonstrate an understanding of the holistic nature of learning and Development in Early Childhood.

The student Early Childhood Educator agrees to abide by the roles and responsibilities (Pages 6-7) and the Code of Conduct for student Early Childhood Educators (Appendix 3) set out in the learning process in the Placement booklet.

The Placement Mentor and the NCI Placement Supervisor agree to abide by the roles and responsibilities set out for each stakeholder in the learning process in the Placement booklet (Pages 21-25).

**By signing below, I confirm that I have read, completed and agree to the details in the two sections i.e. (i) consent form and (ii) learning agreement.**

Student Early Childhood Educator Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Early Childhood Educator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NCI Placement Supervisor Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

NCI Placement Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement Mentor Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement Mentor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name & address of ECEC Placement Environment: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Early Childhood  
Education and Care  
environment - Stamp  
Here.



## APPENDIX 5: PLANNING FOR PLACEMENT

Planning for Placement involves scheduling the placement activities that need to be completed during the year. Student Early Childhood Educators will set up their planning for placement approximately every 10 weeks (Plan A&B).

Planning for Placement 2023/24	
Pre-placement activities	Agreed dates
Sign and upload <i>acceptance of NCI Child Protection Guidelines</i> (1 page)	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> September
Complete and send <i>CV, Work placement form</i> and <i>placement triparty agreement</i> for your arranged placement to NCI careers (Laura Walshe)	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> October
Sign and upload <i>consent form and learning agreement</i> signed by Placement Mentor and Placement Supervisor (pages 1 and 2)	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> October
Upload agreed Plan A	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> October
Plan A Holistic Child Learning and Development	
Upload completed placement checklist within first 2 weeks of placement.	
Agree a date for first supervisor visit between November 6 <sup>th</sup> - December 8 <sup>th</sup>	
Complete a placement log every 14 days on Mahara every 2 weeks starting from Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October: Areas to log: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• settling in</li> <li>• getting to know children and educators.</li> <li>• completing observations</li> <li>• supervisors visit</li> <li>• contributing to the setting</li> </ul>	Log 1 by 6 <sup>th</sup> November Log 2 by 20 <sup>th</sup> November Log 3 by 4 <sup>th</sup> December Log 4 by 18 <sup>th</sup> December Log 5 by 12 <sup>th</sup> February
Agree a Part A schedule of observations focused on target child with your supervisor.	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November
Complete these observations focused on target child in your setting (between 6 <sup>th</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup> November): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Running record</li> <li>✓ Reggio approach</li> <li>✓ Time sample</li> <li>✓ Event sample</li> </ul>	
Send draft observations to supervisor for feedback changes by Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> December	
Submit the four observations focused on target child using the template.	Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> December
Review and reflect on supervisors' feedback from first visit by end of Semester 1	
Submit Holistic Child development and learning story based on Target Child	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> February
Review and reflect on supervisor feedback from Part A Observations submission	

Plan B Instances of Inclusive Practice	Agreed Dates
Agree a date for second supervisor visit between Jan-Feb	
Plan B agreed and uploaded	Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> February
<p>Complete placement logs every 14 days from 12<sup>th</sup> February</p> <p>Areas to log:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completing observations on inclusive practice</li> <li>• Supervisors visit</li> <li>• Contributing/ leading children's care and learning</li> <li>• Building relationships with colleagues</li> <li>• Mentor feedback</li> </ul>	<p>Log 6 by 26<sup>th</sup> February</p> <p>Log 7 by 11<sup>th</sup> March</p> <p>Log 8 by 25<sup>th</sup> March</p> <p>Log 9 by 8<sup>th</sup> April</p> <p>Log 10 by 22<sup>nd</sup> April</p>
Agree a Part B schedule of observations focused on instances of inclusive practice with your supervisor	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February
<p>Complete these observations focused on instances of inclusive practice in your setting (between 26<sup>th</sup> February-15<sup>th</sup> March):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Running record observation</li> <li>✓ Reggio approach observation</li> <li>✓ Time sample</li> <li>✓ Event sample</li> </ul>	
Submit the four observations focused on instances of inclusive practice using the template	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> April
Agree a date for third supervisor visit between March-12 <sup>th</sup> April.	
Review and reflect on supervisors' feedback from second/ Third visits and Part B submission	
Submit Final Reflective Professional Practice Report	Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> April
Add a contribution to the learning community forum by end of semester 2	
Add in other plans for other placement activities you need/ want to do in your setting	

## APPENDIX 6: PLACEMENT CHECKLIST

**Name:**

**Student Number:**

**Date:**

Complete the placement checklist within the two weeks of starting placement. Plan and agree a date for completion as part of Planning for Placement (Plan A). When completed, scan the document and upload to Mahara.

This Placement Checklist is based on [Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate Quality and Regulatory Frameworks](#). In the case where certain items on the checklist are not available in the Placement environment, please indicate with an 'X'.

Please Check	Response
<b>Preschool regulations and Inspections (TUSLA)</b>	
Where is the Registration certificate displayed?	
<b>Staff</b>	
Is there a complaints policy?	
Is there a supervision and training policy?	
Do the staff have the minimum required qualifications? Please specify.	
Is there a recruitment policy?	
Is there a policy on staff absences?	
Are adult/child ratios maintained as per regulatory framework?	
Is there a complaint policy for staff, parents and other stakeholders?	
<b>Insurance</b>	
Indicate the type of insurance held	
Name of the Insurance Company	
Policy expiry date	
Where is the insurance certificate displayed?	
<b>Health and Safety</b>	
Is there a written Health and Safety statement?	
Is there a policy on infection control?	
Is there a risk management policy?	

Is there a policy on accident and incidences?	
Who is the qualified first aider in post?	
What is the expiry date of their certificate?	
Where is the first aid box located	
When was its contents last checked?	
Is there a policy on administration of medication?	
<b>Fire Precaution</b>	
Is there a fire safety policy?	
Is there a fire certificate, if so what is the date of issue?	
Where are the fire assembly points?	
Where are the fire extinguishers located and what type are they (foam, powder)?	
<b>Safeguarding Child Protection</b>	
Are you aware of your role and responsibility under the Child Protection Policy?	
Is there a Child Safeguarding Statement?	
Who is the designated Liaison Officer in the environment?	
Has all staff been Garda Vetted?	
Is there a policy on managing behavior?	
Is there a policy on safe sleep?	
Is there a policy on outings?	
Is children's learning and development documented?	
Is there a policy on healthy eating?	
Is there a policy on allergies?	
Is there a policy on outdoor play?	
Is there a policy on authorisation to collect children?	
Is there a parent/family participation policy?	

Is there a settling in policy?	
Is there the allocated space per child as per regulatory framework?	
Is there a policy on the use of the internet and photographic and recording digital devices?	
<b>Inclusion</b>	
Is there a nominated inclusion coordinator in the environment?	
Is there an inclusion policy?	
<b>General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)</b>	
Is there a data retention and recording policy?	
<b>Other</b>	
Are there any other policy/ies in your environment that is not listed above? Please specify.	

## APPENDIX 7: PLACEMENT SUPERVISION FORMATIVE FEEDBACK TEMPLATE

### BAHECEC2 Observation & Reflection in Practice. Placement Supervision Formative Feedback

Student's Name:
Supervision visit (1, 2, 3)
Name of ECEC setting:
Name of Placement Mentor:
Age Range of Children:
Date/ time of supervision visit:
Placement criteria assessed during this visit (1, 2, 3)

1. Children (Observing -building relationships, embracing diversity in children's needs)			
Novice/ needs support	Developing	Proficient	Accomplishing
<b>Placement Supervisor comments:</b> <i>for example, comment on how was this demonstrated, what skills were utilised, needs mentoring, guidance or extra support in this area? Identify and name good practice, Areas of excellence/ areas of improvement. Did the student request support or guidance in this area? What additional supports, if any will be put in place to support students learning in this area? Provide links to readings/ additional resources, Any other information.</i>			

2. Collaborating with staff (building relationships with staff, receiving and contributing to the setting).			
Novice/ needs support	Developing	Proficient	Accomplishing
<b>Placement Supervisor comments:</b>			

**3. Engaging in professional practice (adhering to the setting's policies and procedures, curriculum, pedagogical approach, professional behaviours such as punctuality and confidentiality).**

Novice/ needs support	Developing	Proficient	Accomplishing
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**Placement Supervisor comments:**

**Overall comments:**

Supervisor Name/date

## APPENDIX 8: DESCRIPTION OF OBSERVATIONAL METHODS

### Running Record

A running record is a very detailed observation of holistic behaviour of a child or an event, which is recorded as it happens. It has a similar approach to a sports commentator in that detail is given of exactly what happened within a particular time frame. Running records are used mainly to provide very objective information about a particular area of development or to note down a child's interest as they occur.

### Event Sample

Event samples focus on observing a child's behaviour or activity. For example, how often a child asks for help, or hits/pushes others. Using this method helps to discover if there is a trigger and how often the activity or event takes place and where it takes place within the learning environment for example indoor, outdoor, circle time, sleep time, snack time etc. Event samples provide evidence to show whether the behaviour is increasing, has slowed down or has ceased.

### Time Sample

Time samples are useful to use in conjunction with event samples in relating to examining a particular behaviour in question. They provide information on what is happening at regular intervals- for example every 10 minutes during outdoor play. Time samples are also useful to examine the overall participation of children within the learning environment by either focussing on a part of the environment or a particular child.

### Reggio Approach

The Reggio Approach to observation is designed to be as open as possible, with the observer noting children's comments, body language and actions, through the use of note taking, photos, video or audio recordings. These observations reveal traces of children's experiences, making their learning visible. An important part of this method is the early childhood educators interpretation of the child's experiences and learning using the prompts: **What do I see?, What do I think?, What do I wonder?** Using this method helps build a rich picture of the child.



## APPENDIX 9: ASSESSMENT RUBRICS

### PLANNING FOR PLACEMENT

The weighting for Planning for Placement is 10%. Please highlight appropriate score in the following grid.

CRITERIA	1=Novice (< = 40 %)	2=Developing (41-55%)	3= Proficient (56-69%)	4= Accomplishing (> = 70%)
<b>Timeliness and appropriateness of Planning for Placement for completing placement activities (80%)</b>	Planning for placement not submitted.	Planning for Placement provides a sketchy incomplete plan for completing placement activities and/ or submits after agreed deadlines.	Planning for Placement provides a plan for completing placement activities and submits according to agreed deadlines.	Planning for Placement provides a complete plan for completing placement activities and submits according to agreed deadlines providing sufficient time for feedback
<b>Structure (20%)</b>	Poorly structured and does not follow guidelines.	Overall structure is somewhat appropriate and follows guidelines.	Good structure, appropriate and meaningful. Follows suggested guidelines.	Well-structured and tailors the suggested guidelines appropriately to own placement context.

## PLACEMENT LOG

The weighting for the Placement Log is 10%. Please highlight appropriate score in the following grid.

CRITERIA	1=Novice (< = 40 %)	2=Developing (41-55%)	3= Proficient (56-69%)	4=Accomplishing (> = 70%)
<b>Timeliness (40%)</b> Submission of logs on a regular basis as per guidelines.	Does not submit logs.	Submits logs but inconsistently.	Logs are submitted consistently most of the time.	Follows guidelines and all logs submitted as per requirement.
<b>Quality of log (40%)</b> Description of activities and observations.	No clarity and succinctness.	Somewhat clear but not succinct.	Essentially clear and succinct.	Clearly relates log with ongoing placement and succinctly written.
<b>Structure (20%)</b> Structured and submitted as per guidelines.	Little or no structure.	Follows a structure, but not signposted.	Follows accepted guidelines and signposted most of the time.	All logs clearly structured, signposted and meets requirements.

## PORTFOLIO: RECORDING AND REFLECTIONS ON OBSERVATIONS

The weighting for recording and reflection on observations is 45%. Please highlight appropriate score in the following grid.

CRITERIA	1=Novice (< = 40 %)	2=Developing (41-55%)	3= Proficient (56-69%)	4= Accomplishing (> = 70%)
<b>Observation Method (30%)</b> Selects method depending on context and purpose of observation.	Limited <b>or</b> no intentionality in selecting an observation method. Does not link with purpose i.e. selects a checklist for observing how child 'A' uses materials in the home corner.	Limited understanding shown of using appropriate methods for observing. Needs help to select appropriate observation method. Limited recognition of the link between observations and informed planning development.	Demonstrates some understanding of using appropriate methods for observing i.e. using an event sample for a specific behaviour incident displays intentionality with method chosen. Recognises the link between observations and informed planning development.	Demonstrates an understanding of the need to select appropriate observational methods. Recognises that enriching and informing all aspects of practice within the setting requires cycles of observation, evaluation and planning on a regular basis.
<b>Diversity of events/context observed (20%)</b>	No focus on observing a diverse events and experiences. Observations capture only an aspect of the experience.	Limited focus on observing diverse events and experiences that capture each child's unique context. Limits observations experiences i.e. focusing on motor skills/cognitive/ literacy development.	Observes a diversity of events and experiences that capture each child's unique context and holistic learning and development.	Actively seeks to observe a diversity of events and experiences that capture each child's unique context and holistic learning and development.
<b>Recording, evaluation and recommendations (20%)</b> Appropriate recording formats for observations. Evaluate and make meaning of the observation, providing links to theoretical principles. Recommends	Incomplete <b>and/or</b> inaccurate recording format used for the observation method. Inappropriate <b>or</b> no evaluation <b>and/or</b> recommendations.	Errors with recording format used for the observation method. Needs help to make meaning of observations, with limited <b>or</b> no links to theoretical principles.	Uses appropriate recording format suited to the observation method. Attempts to evaluate and make meaning of observation with some links to theoretical principles.	Uses appropriate recording format suited to the observation method, that also ensures the voice of the child to be heard. Evaluates and clearly able to make meaning of observation, making

activities or learning opportunities to support the child further, making links to good practice and national frameworks (i.e. Aistear, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion guidelines).		Suggests some recommendations; not always appropriate to observations with limited or no links to good practice and national frameworks.	Provides recommendations for further learning, making some links to good practice and national frameworks.	relevant links to theoretical principles. Provides specific and tailored recommendations for further learning that support the child's active participation, wellbeing and sense of identity and belonging, making relevant links to good practice and national frameworks.
<b>Reflection on personal learning/ethical practice (20%):</b> Reflection on personal values & skills, observation technique, maintaining ethicality.	Limited or no evaluation of personal values & skills <b>and/or</b> poor ethical practice in observations	Limited evaluation of personal values & skills in relation to observation techniques being used <b>and/or</b> overly focussed on insights gained from the observation data rather than own technique. Maintains ethicality in observations.	Some evaluation of personal values & skills in relation to observation techniques being used. Models and maintains ethicality in observations of children.	Critically evaluates personal values & skills in relation to observation techniques being used. Highlights and models the importance of maintaining confidentiality at all times in line with the setting and procedures.
<b>Structure (10%)</b> Structured and timely submissions, submitted as per guidelines.	Little or no structure <b>and/or</b> submits after agreed deadline.	Follows a structure, but not signposted <b>and/or</b> submits after agreed deadline.	Good structure, follows accepted guidelines and agreed deadlines with some signposting.	Clearly structured, signposted and meets requirements including agreed deadlines.

## PORTFOLIO: HOLISTIC CHILD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STORY

The weighting for Holistic Child Learning and Development Story is 10%. Please highlight appropriate score in the following grid.

CRITERIA	1=Novice (< =40 %)	2=Developing (41-55%)	3=Proficient (56-69%)	4= Accomplishing (>=70%)
<b>Child Selection (30%)</b> Child selection takes into account child's uniqueness: age, gender, strengths, interests, needs, nationality etc.	Shows little or no intentionality in reason why a child was identified.	Needs help to identify and develop a rationale to select a child.	Demonstrates an understanding and sensitivity towards selecting a child with a clear rationale.	Demonstrates a clear understanding and sensitivity towards selecting a child. Selection process takes account of child's uniqueness, and the concept of promoting the voice of the child at all times.
<b>Child Background details (30%)</b> Provides child's context, including holistic information: learning, development and wellbeing. Highlights child's strengths, interests and needs.	Limited <b>or</b> no background information provided. Restricts information to only one aspect of the child. Limited <b>or</b> no awareness of the relevance of contextual information on holistic learning and development.	Limited background information provided. Restricts information only to basic aspects such as age, gender etc. No links made to previous child observations. Limited awareness of the relevance of contextual information on holistic learning and development.	Some background information provided, although not holistic. Attempts made to link to previous child observations. Demonstrates some awareness of the relevance of contextual information on holistic learning and development.	Relevant and holistic background information provided, including insights gained from previous child observations. Demonstrates a clear awareness of the relevance of contextual information on holistic learning and development.
<b>Possibilities and Implications for Learning (30%)</b> Tunes in to the child's unique context, strengths, interests	Does not see possibilities to support child's holistic learning and development. Restricts learning <b>and/or</b> misses opportunities.	Identifies some opportunities and possibilities. However, needs help to identify appropriate child-led	Identifies retrospectively possibilities and opportunities to implement child-led experiences and strength-based strategies that support the child's	Spontaneously tunes in to the child's unique characteristics and identifies and implements strength-based strategies to support

and needs and bases strategies on these. Makes links to: theoretical principles and national frameworks (e.g. Aistear, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion guidelines).	No <b>or</b> limited attempt to link to theoretical principles and/or national frameworks.	experiences and strength-based strategies. Limited attempt to link to theoretical principles <b>and/or</b> national frameworks.	holistic learning and development. Makes some links to theoretical principles <b>and/or</b> national frameworks.	the child's holistic learning and development. Makes relevant links to theoretical principle and national frameworks.
<b>Structure (10%)</b> Structured and timely submissions, submitted as per guidelines.	Little or no structure <b>and/or</b> submits after agreed deadline	Follows a structure, but not signposted <b>and/or</b> submits after agreed deadline.	Good structure, follows accepted guidelines and agreed deadlines with some signposting.	Clearly structured, signposted and meets requirements including agreed deadlines.

## FINAL REFLECTIVE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE REPORT

The weighting for the Final Reflective Professional Practice Report is 20%. Please highlight appropriate score in the following grid.

CRITERIA	1=Novice (< = 40 %)	2=Developing (41-55%)	3=Proficient (56-69%)	4= Accomplishing (> = 70%)
<b>Reflection on learning (50%)</b> Reflects on learning in relation to portfolio elements which includes planning, personal values and theoretical principles linked to year 2 modules, as well as discussions with Placement Supervisor, Placement Mentor and/or peers.	Shows little insight into learning; narrates/describes experience without an understanding of the critical elements that determine outcomes.	Shows some insight but needs encouragement to engage in deeper reflection on experience as it relates to outcomes.	Demonstrates an understanding of reflection and critical discussion with placement supervisor, placement mentor <b>and/or</b> peers. Recognises the link between experience and informed planning development.	Demonstrates with evidence an understanding of critical reflection and initiates discussion with placement supervisor, placement mentor <b>and/or</b> peers. Recognises that enriching and informing all aspects of practice within the environment requires cycles of reflective practice on a regular basis.

<b>Integrates feedback (30%)</b> Integrates feedback from Placement Supervisor, Placement Mentor and/or peers and reflects on experience.	Focus is on aspects of the experience; does not integrate feedback.	Hesitant to integrate feedback; restricts only to certain experiences.	Integrates feedback and from placement supervisor, placement mentor <b>and/or</b> peers, and reflects on experience.	Looks out for opportunities to integrate feedback from placement supervisor, placement mentor <b>and/or</b> peers, and critically reflects on experience.
<b>Documenting and reflection/ Structure (20%)</b> Reflects all the learning outcomes for the module. Structured and timely submission, submitted as per guidelines.	Does not meet the learning outcomes. Little or no structure <b>and/or</b> submits after agreed deadline.	Barely <b>or</b> mostly meets learning outcomes. Follows a structure, but not signposted <b>and/or</b> submits after agreed deadline.	Meets all learning outcomes. Follows accepted guidelines and agreed deadlines with some signposting.	Meets all learning outcomes. Clearly structured, signposted and meets requirements including agreed deadlines.

## CONTRIBUTION TO LEARNING COMMUNITY IN PRACTICE

The weighting for the Contribution of Learning Community in Practice is 5%. Please highlight appropriate score in the following grid.

CRITERIA	1=Novice (< =40 %)	2=Developing (41-55%)	3=Proficient (56-69%)	4= Accomplishing (> =70%)
<b>Shared Topic (80%)</b>	Does not participate in the online community of practice i.e. online forum	Participates with brief comments to a peer's post. No topic of their own.	Participates by posting a topic of relevance and contributes relevantly to peer posts.	Extends shared topics and draws out implications and suggestions for practice as well as engaging in peer's posts.
<b>Online Presence (20%)</b>	No presence in the online community of practice i.e. online forum.	Minimal presence on the online community of practice with no posts.	Responsive presence, relating to shared topics.	Frequent and meaningful online presence.