



CHILDCARE MANAGER – MQF/EQF LEVEL 5 INFORMATION HANDBOOK

ON

**The process of validation of informal and non-
formal learning for Childcare Managers in
Childcare Centres**

The Assessment Board

The Assessment Board is appointed by the Minister responsible for Jobsplus by means of Article 26 of the Employment and Training Services Act 2018 to ascertain proficiency or competency in a particular occupation.

This handbook describes the process that the Assessment Board adopts to assess applicants in Childcare at MQF level 5. Successful candidates are awarded a Certificate of Competence pegged at Level 5 within the Malta Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework and which is endorsed by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

Eligibility:

Candidates who are interested in acquiring the *Award as Childcare Manager* can apply for their knowledge, skills, and competences to be assessed, recognised, and validated if they possess the necessary competences and skills as defined in the Assessment Criteria included in this handbook.

The prospective candidates need to have 3 years' experience with children in a childcare facility catering for children from 0–3 years. This is in line with the S.L. 607.02 of 2012 which regulates the Validation of Informal and Non-formal Learning.

These candidates will also need to present a reference letter by previous employer, confirming the number of hours of this experience to the Assessment Board, prior to the Assessment.

The candidates will need to present a portfolio to the Assessment Board including a description of the responsibilities of a childcare educator, a description of the contributions the candidate made at the childcare centre where s/he is employed, testimonials of any formal and/or informal training that the candidates would have undertaken and any certificates that they might possess in relation to childcare.

These testimonials are to be authenticated by signature and possibly a stamp of the institute/referee. These testimonials may be in the form of authenticated work activities, which candidates would have carried out during their studies and/or experiences (photos of activities and resources created by the candidates themselves may be included). Attached to the portfolio a candidate needs to present also a CV.

The Assessment Board is free to contact the institution and/or referee at will to confirm experiences and training claimed by the candidate.

All candidates will need to sit for a written test and an interview.

Initial Assessment Plan:

The Assessment Board will conduct an induction session for candidates interested in acquiring the *Award as Childcare Manager* and review the portfolio and the experience presented to plan the appropriate assessments according to the individual's experience and needs. During the induction session, the candidate is also instructed on how to collect evidence used as a proof of their practical experience.

Evidence sources may include:

- Work Activity
- Witness Testimony
- Health & Safety Documents/ Reports/ Procedures
- Photographic Evidence / Risk Assessments / Instructions
- Work-based confirmation of evidence not observed by assessor.

Assessment Criteria

The Assessment Criteria for the validation process are based on the National Occupational Standards. Following is an abstract of the list of competences that the candidate must possess prior to applying for the validation process. For further information you can download the National Occupational Standards from the following link:

<https://qualifications.mfhea.gov.mt/#/more-database/06e1676f-8b9a-46b5-8f3c-ca6ac1352844>

CCM501: Understanding Child Development

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. manage and administer their workplace.
2. support Childcare Educators and families in responding to the developmental needs of every child (including physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic).
3. provide constructive feedback to Childcare Educators on their observation, planning, and assessment of pedagogical processes to support the holistic development of all children.
4. ensure that the service provision provided by the centre is underpinned by a holistic learning programme that incorporates all areas of child development.
5. recognise development as a continuing process of interaction between the individual child, adults, and the world around them, resulting in evolving capacities.

CCM502: Protecting and Promoting Children's Rights

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. manage and administer their workplace.
2. respect children as persons in their own rights, ensuring equality of access and removing any barriers to participation.
3. actively support children's rights through the centre's policy, programme, and practice.
4. establish a shared vision among Childcare Educators and families to ensure that the concept of the child as rights-holder is anchored during the child's stay at the centre.
5. encourage recognition of young children as social actors, with interests, capacities, and vulnerabilities with Childcare Educators and families.
6. adhere to national and international legislation, regulations, and the centre's policies and procedures regarding children's rights and protection.
7. meet the requirements and adhere to codes of conduct posed by the aforesaid legislation, regulations, policies, and procedures.

CCM503: Developing and Maintaining a Safe, Secure, and Healthy Environment

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. manage and administer their workplace.
2. develop, together with staff members, policies, procedures and practices that minimise risks, and communicate these with different stakeholders.
3. identify and minimise risks to ensure that the premises and equipment are safe for children, members of staff and visitors.
4. assess, monitor, and report risks to the Legally Responsible Person and proceed with the necessary action.
5. ensure that all members of staff have valid certification in Paediatric First Aid and Food Handling.
6. draw and implement a plan of action that addresses individual dietary or medical needs, or any risks identified by the Health and Safety Officer and/or External Review team.
7. ensure that one's own health and hygiene do not pose a threat to others.
8. ensure that all members of staff have valid certification in Paediatric First Aid and Food Handling.

CCM504: Collaborating with All Stakeholders

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. manage and administer their workplace.
2. build an inclusive model of collaboration where everyone is valued as a professional.
3. focus on strengthening the skills that collaborative leadership requires.
4. focus everyone on the vision and goals of the centre.
5. guide and support each team in strengthening their work together.
6. collaborate professionally with all stakeholders.
7. build and maintain meaningful positive relationships with all stakeholders.
8. collaborate with all children and value them as active protagonists in constructing change.
9. develop conditions that help Childcare Educators feel valued and safe to actively share their strengths and talents with each other.
10. respect the uniqueness of each individual.
11. strengthen relationships and sustain genuine partnership and trust with parents.
12. seek the support from various external professionals/agencies regarding issues arising at the centre.
13. liaise and collaborate with the External Review Team during the External Review process.
14. deepen the commitment of all stakeholders to provide better outcomes for children and families.

CCM505: Working in Partnership with Parents

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. manage and administer their workplace.
2. ensure that the parent's right to be involved and engaged in their child's life at the childcare centre is supported and respected.

3. ensure that partnership with parents is embedded in the ongoing day-to-day exchanges that take place between parents, educators, and children.
4. ensure that parents are central in decision-making about their child.
5. ensure that all staff members are building respectful and trusting relationships with parents.
6. develop honest and regular two-way clear communication with parents.
7. utilise the knowledge of each child's family and encourage staff members to do so.
8. ensure that all staff members connect and engage with parents on a regular basis.
9. ensure that the progress in learning and development of each child is documented and shared with parents.
10. ensure that parents are being supported and provided with opportunities to contribute to their child's learning and development, both in the childcare centre and at home.
11. respect the family's religious and cultural backgrounds and beliefs.

CCM506: Leading to Enhance the Quality of Learning and Care

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. manage and administer their workplace.
2. foster belief in the idea that children are not passive recipients but competent and able active participants.
3. recognise children of all ages and families as key contributors in a democratic pedagogical approach to learning.
4. be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others.
5. establish and implement - in partnership with all stakeholders - a philosophy underpinned by the principles of quality Early Childhood Education and Care.
6. provide a direction to the learning programme through a compelling vision statement.
7. inspire and guide staff to bring quality-enhancing practices to their daily work.
8. lead and manage provision that promotes care, learning, and development through engagement, relationships, responsive caregiving, and child-centred, inquiry, and play-based learning.
9. monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the service provision and determine strategies for improvement.
10. ensure that staff at the centre are aware of, and are provided with, relevant knowledge and information on the care, learning, and development of young children.
11. fully commit themselves to helping every educator reach their full potential to enhance the quality of the education and care provided.
12. support parent and community engagement to enrich the learning experience for all children.
13. support multi-agency work to ensure that the diverse developmental and learning needs and outcomes of all children are met.
14. engage in an ongoing process of self-reflection and critical evaluation of the centre's policy, programme and practice that support the well-being, learning, and development of all children.

CCM507: Promoting the Centre's Inclusiveness in the Social, Physical, and Learning Environment

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. manage and administer their workplace.

2. adhere to international and national legislation and policy that promotes a rights-based approach to supporting the active participation of all children.
3. promote inclusive culture, practice, and pedagogy in the childcare centre.
4. establish and sustain inclusive social, physical, and learning environments.
5. secure the active engagement and inclusion of children with disabilities through the curriculum.
6. recognise the significant role of play in the curriculum for all children.
7. monitor the development, implementation, and regular review of learning experiences aimed to address the needs of all children.
8. liaise with the Legally Responsible Person to modify the physical environment.
9. identify and provide resources that will allow children with disabilities to access and be fully included in the learning experiences offered.
10. ensure that relevant background information about children with disabilities is collected, recorded, and updated.
11. liaise regularly with staff members and parents of children with disabilities to ensure that both the needs of the children and their parents are met.
12. collaborate with external professionals and/or agencies where appropriate, to optimise support for children with disabilities.
13. provide opportunities for all staff members to reflect on the centre's inclusiveness in the physical, social, and learning environment.

CCM508: Establishing Ongoing Professional Growth

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. manage and administer their workplace.
2. be intentional and focused to influence change in practice.
3. take responsibility for one's continuing professional development and contribute to the professional development of staff members.
4. build a connection between the professional development that they are offering and the vision, goals, and core values of the centre's programme.
5. adopt a strength-based view of every Childcare Educator - as capable and eager to learn.
6. establish protocols that hold every individual accountable for their attitude, behaviour, and choice of actions in relation to their own professional growth.
7. take on the role of a pedagogical leader to support the team in the development of their professional competences.
8. encourage collaboration, sharing, and joint activities that engage Childcare Educators in new and meaningful ways.
9. encourage and support centre-based professional development initiatives.

CCM509: Implementing and Monitoring an Internal Review Process

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. manage and administer their workplace.
2. ensure that ongoing internal review is a continuous process at the centre.
3. engage in evaluation for improvement motivated by the need to make changes that will have a positive impact on the learning and well-being of children.

4. engage with staff members in evaluative thinking, an ongoing process of questioning, reflecting, learning, and modifying.
5. ensure that the centre has a strategic plan to engage in strategic internal evaluation.
6. communicate with stakeholders the purpose and benefit of the internal review process.
7. convince staff members of the merits of using data for productive change.
8. create the conditions in which data can become an integral part of the centre's decision making.
9. use a range of research tools to engage with and consult the views of different stakeholders.
10. ensure all plans and actions are directed at improving children's care and educational experiences at the centre.
11. ensure that the internal and external review processes are providing an opportunity for all involved to implement new practices, learn from challenges, and consider where they are, where they want to be, what went right and went wrong.

CCM510: Meeting Regulatory Requirements

The candidate must have the necessary knowledge and skills to:

1. manage and administer their workplace.
2. reflect on daily practice to ensure they are meeting the regulatory standards to which the centre is expected to adhere to.
3. ensure that the requirements set out in the National Standards for Early Childhood and Care Services (0-3 years) and other relevant legislation, frameworks, and standards concerning the care and education of children aged zero to three are met.
4. develop, implement, and review the centre's policies and procedures with all staff members to ensure these meet the regulatory requirements.
5. guide staff members to reflect on the purpose and expectation of an external review.
6. plan for and actively participate in addressing the required actions and recommendations put forward in the External Review reports.

Mode of Assessment:

A candidate will be assessed on all the above listed competences. Assessment will be made up from different components, namely:

A. Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates will be assessed on knowledge and understanding orally during an interview and in writing through a theory test paper.

Candidates need to sit for a 2-hour written test. The paper will contain eight questions, two in each of the four sections. The questions will focus on Childcare development and responsibilities and Health and Safety issues in the workplace (childcare centre). The candidate is requested to answer four questions, one from each section. To pass from the written test, the candidate needs to obtain 50% out of a total mark of 100.

B. Interview to verify product evidence and supplementary evidence

The candidates will be required to sit for an interview that will last approximately 30 minutes. The interview process will assess the candidates on both their academic and practical knowledge. The marking scheme would be out of 100 and the pass mark is 50.

During the interview the Board will continue assessing candidates in relation to their knowledge, skills, and competences in the respective occupation. Candidates are encouraged to present photographic evidence, workbooks, or logbooks to illustrate their work.

To successfully pass from the assessment, candidates need to proof their competences in all enlisted criteria as defined in the National Occupational Standards. Following assessment candidates will receive a formal result slip issued by Jobsplus in collaboration with MFHEA. The result slip will indicate whether the candidate has obtained a Pass or a Fail in all criteria. Nonetheless persons who fail any of these criteria will have the possibility to sit for a re-sit.

C. Portfolio

Candidates will be requested to present their portfolio during the interview. The portfolio should reflect the knowledge and skills acquired by the candidates during their past work experience. The portfolio will be assessed by the Assessment Board, and it will be further discussed during the interview. To pass from the portfolio the candidate needs to obtain 50 marks out of 100.

Resits:

Candidates who do not pass from any of the enlisted criteria will be guided for further development in the failed criterion/criteria.

The areas of further development may include:

- Health & Safety Course (Safety Card)
- MCAST / Jobsplus Training Programmes
- On-Site Training
- Evidence of Training

The failed criterion/criteria will be communicated in the result slip issued by Jobsplus. Date, time and venue of re-sit would be communicated to the candidate by Jobsplus. The candidate will be guided by the Assessment Board with respect to the areas for improvement prior to the re-sit.

Appeals:

Candidates who fail the assessment and wish to contest the decision taken by the Assessment Board can submit a formal request for further feedback to Jobsplus. An appeal can be lodged within 10 working days from the result slip issued by Jobsplus. In the eventuality that the candidate's final result is changed following the appeal, a new result will supersede the previous one.