

THE STORY BEHIND THE DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN OF THE COURSE

The Skillseekers programme ended in March of this year and all sector skills councils were given the opportunity to replace the funding through agreeing a modern apprenticeship framework for qualifications where this did not exist already. This situation applied to Children's Care, Learning and Development SVQ 2, and SSSC's decision not to support a framework, made on your behalf in its Skills for Care and Development capacity, means that there is no longer any national training programme funding for this work-based route to an entry level childcare qualification.

Skills Development Scotland responded to this loss of opportunity by restructuring the funding for the Level 3 Modern Apprenticeship to allow more time to prepare new entrants for assessment at practitioner/level 3 standard. While this does not address the marginalisation of those young people who may have been able to achieve Level 2 but not to progress to Level 3 (but which is also part of the wider debate about the role of the support worker in childcare), it has enabled us to continue to provide a qualification route for inexperienced entrants whom we expect to be able to achieve Level 3 and we are very grateful to SDS for its support.

Our thinking behind the design of the course has been to use the additional time made available through the restructuring of the funding to create a foundation programme which in effect replaces and augments previous Level 2 learning and assessment. This foundation period will be a high quality, high input model focusing on good practice, recent childcare research, practical skills and current government guidelines. Also included will be a focus on the Modern Apprenticeship core skills of numeracy, communication, working with others and I.T. It will offer students an exciting and challenging opportunity and will enable employers to have confidence in developing a new member of the staff team. Students will then progress to Level 3 assessment and knowledge development, but with additional support in comparison to our Level 3 programmes for experienced entrants.