



BCONSULT

Occupational Certificate

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONER

NQF Level 4 | SAQA ID 97542 | 131 Points | 12 Months

Early Childhood Development Practitioner – NQF Level 4

SAQA ID: 97542 | Credits: 131 | Duration: 12-month | QCTO Learnership

1. Course Overview

The **Occupational Certificate: Early Childhood Development Practitioner** equips learners with the knowledge, practical skills, and workplace experience required to provide high-quality care and education for young children from birth to school-going age.

This qualification prepares practitioners to plan and deliver inclusive, play-based learning experiences; observe and assess children's development; promote their health, safety, and well-being; and engage with families and communities to support holistic growth.

It responds to South Africa's need for competent professionals in early learning and care across centre-based and non-centre-based settings, supporting national priorities for child development and education.

2. Learning Outcomes

On completion, learners will be able to:

- Plan and prepare stimulating learning environments and activities to meet the holistic needs of all children.
- Facilitate and mediate daily programmes that encourage play, exploration, and active learning.
- Observe, assess, and document children's progress according to developmental stages.
- Compile professional reports on each child's growth and learning.
- Maintain and promote children's health, safety, nutrition, protection, and overall well-being.

3. A Qualified Learner Will Be Able To:

- Implement inclusive learning programmes for children from birth to school-going age.
- Support children's physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development.
- Apply observation and assessment tools to inform learning opportunities and interventions.
- Build positive relationships with parents, guardians, and other professionals.
- Uphold standards of health, safety, and child protection in line with legislation and centre policies.
- Reflect on practice to continuously improve the quality of early childhood services.

Entry Requirements

To enrol in this qualification, learners must have:

- A **National Certificate (Vocational)** at **NQF Level 3**, OR
- Any other recognised **NQF Level 3** qualification.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):

Applicants with relevant workplace experience or prior studies may gain access or credit through RPL, in line with QCTO and provider policies.

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4. International Comparability

This qualification compares favourably with global best practices for Early Childhood Education:

- **United States of America:** Aligns with competencies for early childhood professionals across child development, curriculum design, assessment, and family engagement.
- **United Kingdom:** Comparable to the **CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Early Years Education and Care**, focusing on holistic child development, safeguarding, and professional practice.
- **Kenya:** Matches the **CACHE Level 3 Diploma for the Early Years Workforce**, delivered through blended learning and emphasising health, well-being, and school readiness.

The structure, scope, and duration of the South African qualification align with these international standards, ensuring relevance and portability of skills.

5. Occupational Trainer – NQF Level 4 Certification

- **Occupational Certificate: Early Childhood Development Practitioner (SAQA ID 97542)**
- **NQF Level 4 (131 Credits)**
- **Completion of Foundational Learning Competence (FLC) is a prerequisite for entry into the external summative assessment.**

6. Potential Career Opportunities

Graduates can pursue employment or entrepreneurial opportunities in the early childhood development sector, including roles such as:

- Early Childhood Development (ECD) Practitioner
- Nursery School or Daycare Teacher
- Playgroup or Crèche Leader
- Community-based ECD Facilitator
- ECD Centre Owner/Manager
- Support Practitioner in inclusive or special needs environments

This qualification also provides access to further learning, including:

- Higher Certificate in Early Childhood Development (NQF Level 5)
- Diploma in Grade R Teaching or related qualifications.

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7. Learning Options

Accredited skills development providers offer this programme through a blend of:

- **Classroom-based training** (theory and practical skills)
- **Workplace experience** in registered ECD centres or community-based settings
- **Formative assessments** leading to an **external integrated summative assessment** conducted by the QCTO Assessment Quality Partner.

Delivery may include face-to-face sessions, workplace mentoring, and online learning, depending on the provider.

Contact Details

Email

sales@bconsult.co.za

info@bconsult.co.za

Phone

+27 31 536 8167

+27 87 222 7137

+27 31 536 8467

Johannesburg: 32 Lucas Ln Bedfordview, Germiston, 2008

Durban: 28-32 Siphosethu Rd, Mt EdgeCombe, Kingfisher Office Park

Cape Town: Unit 63 & 64 Millenium Office Park, 19 Edison Way, Century City, Milnerton

www.bconsult.co.za