

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

SENIOR SECONDARY COURSE

PRACTICUM MANUAL



विद्याधनम् सर्वधनं प्रधानम्

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF OPEN SCHOOLING

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A Word with You

Dear Learner,

Welcome to the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) course for the senior secondary level. Globally, it is undisputed that the foundation to lifelong development, learning and imbibing of attitudes and values is dependent on a responsive environment in the early years. The nation's commitment to provide quality care and education to young children requires that we create awareness about the significance and other aspects of ECCE. National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) plans to do this at the school stage.

The curriculum for ECCE for the senior secondary level course has been designed in pursuance of the above. The self-learning material of the course has been divided for your convenience into two volumes. The first volume has two modules and nine lessons. The second volume consists of three modules and 13 lessons. The total course comprises of five modules and 22 lessons. Each lesson includes activities to help you master the concepts, gain practical experiences and help make learning meaningful. Intext questions and terminal exercises have been incorporated to help you assess your own learning and get feedback as you go along.

The course also includes practicum exercises through which you will gain a better understanding of young children. For this, the curriculum for practicals in ECCE has been devised. There are a total of 22 activities divided into four categories.

While studying, you may have some doubts and queries. We hope you will share your doubts and queries with your tutors during Personal Contact Programme (PCP) sessions.

If you face any difficulty, please feel free to write us. We look forward to your feedback and suggestions.

We wish you all success and a bright future.

Course Committee

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the ECCE course is not only to acquaint learners with theoretical knowledge but also to provide them an opportunity to link it to the actual environment of ECCE. The activities included in the practicum will help learners perform some activities to appreciate the linkages between theory learnt and the actual environment of ECCE. The activities included will help learners develop an understanding of young children through practical, hands-on exercises. All practicum activities are compulsory and are to be carried out by the learners. The activities are divided into five categories. The learner will be assigned one activity each from the five categories through chits for the final practical examination.

The categories are listed below:

- 1. Observation**
- 2. Family Practices**
- 3. School Records**
- 4. Infrastructure and Facilities in an ECCE Centre**
- 5. ECCE Staff and Programme**

Practicals are in integral part of understanding and learning a subject. For this course, the practicals, include visiting a neighbourhood ECCE centre, interacting with parents and children, creative activities and writing reports. These activities have been included to help you understand the working of an ECCE Centre and understanding children, thus equipping you with the required information about ECCE.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Undertaking the practicum activities, learners will be able to:

- design appropriate tools to gather information;
- use these tools effectively to gather the required information;
- analyse the gathered information to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the tools and the appropriateness of the activities under study;
- write reports and comment on the information so gathered;
- develop the required skills for conducting observation and interview; and
- use the outcomes of the activities for a better insight into the ECCE.

A. FORMAT OF THE PRACTICUM ACTIVITY

As far as possible, all practicum activities should be presented in the format given below. The format may include the following information:

- (i) Aim: Define the scope of the activity

- (ii) Introduction: Describe the relevance of practical activity to the theoretical background
- (iii) Objectives: Relate to the outcomes of practical activity
- (iv) Materials Required: List the various materials that need to be assembled to carry out the activity successfully
- (v) Method: List the steps to be followed to complete the activity
- (vi) Observation: Record the observation in detail
- (vii) Conclusion/Discussions/Interpretations: Justify the relationship between aim of the activity and the results obtained

B. DIRECTIONS TO CONDUCT THE ACTIVITY

- (i) Formulate the objectives of the activity carefully. This will guide you to understand what is required to be done.
- (ii) List carefully and assemble required materials before starting the activity.
- (iii) Write the methodology carefully and follow the steps accurately.
- (iv) After each step, note down the observation, so that required information is available accurately, with no gaps.
- (v) Observe all prescribed precautions, or else the outcome or results will not be accurate.
- (vi) Carry and refer the manual while conducting the practicum activities.

C. MAINTENANCE OF RECORD BOOK

1. Each practical is to be recorded in the Record Book in the format below:
 - (i) Aim of the activity
 - (ii) Materials required
 - (iii) Method/Procedure
 - (iv) Observations made
 - (v) Conclusions/Interpretations
 - (vii) Precautions observed

DETAILS OF EACH CATEGORY



1. OBSERVATION

PRACTICUM 1

Aim: Designing a format for observation

Introduction: Observation is one of the popular methods of studying children. It is important that the observer is well prepared about what to look for in the specific situation, if one is to elicit the required information. A special, well-designed format for observation helps one to be focused on the objective or aim of the observation session. This implies that the observer designs a format, inclusive of space for recording/filling in all required information without much delay and distraction.

Objectives: After doing this activity, the learner will be able to:

- design appropriate and well formatted observation sheets;
- record all observations in detail by filling in the space provided against each objective;
- record information without delay and distraction; and
- ensure that no required aspect of observation has been left out.

Materials Required

- Pencil, pen, sketch pen
- Ruler, eraser, sharpener
- Chart sheet/paper

Method

(i) Write the following on the chart sheet. Provide space against each item to fill in details.

Date

Time

Duration

Activity/Situation

Age of Children

(ii) Draw up a check list of the essential aspects to be observed. A sample has been given below.

Item	Always	Sometimes	Never	Remarks
Playing together				
Playing by themselves				
Sharing toys/equipment				
Taking turns				
Friendly				
Aggressive				

(Note: The checklist will vary with the situation under observation and the age of the children being observed.)

Observation

- Put a tick mark against each item of the checklist in its appropriate column.
- Descriptive details could be added in the remarks column for more comprehensive information.
- Required information can be filled without much delay or distraction.

Analyses and Results (based on the observation made)

- To be written as soon as possible after the observation.
- All definite patterns observed to be noted and analysed for results.

Precautions

- Be unobtrusive while observing.
- Ensure a natural setting without disturbing the natural sequence of activity.
- Tick mark and fill in the appropriate columns.
- All descriptive details can be added immediately after completion of observation.

Conclusions: Draw up a conclusion based on the observation and your theoretical knowledge.

PRACTICUM 2

Observations of five-month-old infant to study the milestones achieved.

Aim: To study whether the five-month-old infant under study has achieved the expected milestones.

Objectives: After doing this practical activity, the learner will be able to:

- recall and list the expected milestones of a five-month-old infant;
- identify whether expected milestones have been achieved by the child;
- list the milestones expected but not yet achieved; and
- suggest activities to help the infant to achieve all expected milestones.

Previous Knowledge

- The learner is aware of milestones expected of a five-month-old infant.
- Can identify developmental delays and suggest to the caretaker activities to help the child achieve all expected milestones.

Materials Required

- Pencil, pen, sketch pen
- Rubber, ruler, sharpener
- Chart sheet

Method

(i) Write the following on a chart paper and provide space to fill in the specific details:

Name of child:

Date of birth:

Place of observation:

(ii) List of expected milestones of case:

	Expected Milestones	Yes	No	Remarks
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

Observation

- Fill in the details of the case under study.
- Study the expected milestones of the case being observed.
- Tick mark the correct column immediately.
- Write the details of any other observation made.

Analysis and Results

- Analyse all delays observed and possible factors leading to these delays.
- Assess for sharp deviations or absence of milestones.
- Discount for some normally delayed development.
- Discuss possible reasons for these delays with concerned caretakers.

Precautions

- Observe the infant in the presence of the caretaker.

- Do not make the infant or the caretaker conscious in any way.
- Observe the infant in natural surroundings and environment.
- Do not discuss the delay or absence of any milestone with the caretaker during the observation.

Conclusion: Draw up a conclusion, based on the observation and your theoretical knowledge.

PRACTICUM 3

Observations of a toddler at outdoor play

(Same as Practical 2, but checklist to be made matching the aim of this practical)

PRACTICUM 4

Observation of a five-year-old child at indoor play

(Same as Practical 2, but checklist to be make matching to the aim of this practical)

2. FAMILY PRACTICES



PRACTICUM 5

Design a questionnaire to be used to interview parents/caregiver of a toddler regarding development in any one domain.

Aim: Questionnaire is an important tool to elicit information being sought in an easy and quick manner. Well-planned questions are essential to get precise and accurate information. Both open-ended and close-ended questions can be combined in a questionnaire.

Objectives: After doing this exercise, learners will be able to:

- frame appropriate questions to help elicit the desired information;
- use correct and simple language to help the person to answer them easily; and
- draw up a good combination of open-ended and close-ended questions.

Materials Required

- Pencil, pen, sketch pen
- Rubber, ruler, sharpener
- Chart paper sheet

Method

Write the details of the person to be interviewed on the chart paper sheet.

Name:

Date:

Address:

Note: Before framing the questions, note down the areas where information is required. As this questionnaire is designed for parents, use language appropriate for their educational background. All questions must aim to get as much information as possible about the toddler. Avoid sensitive issues.

Questions should help gather the following information:

- Date of birth of the child
- Normal or caesarian birth
- Any early illness
- Number of siblings
- When did the toddler learn to sit, stand, walk and talk
- Whether attended/attending any ECCE centre
- Child's special area of interest and strength
- Child's development/developmental delays in different domains etc.

Note: You may also draw up a checklist to assess behavioral problems of the child and ask the caretakers to tick mark in the appropriate column. (Sample given below)

Areas	Never	Sometimes	Always	Remarks
Fight with sibling				
Fussy eater				
Wets bed				
Temper tantrums				

Observations

- Write down answers to each question or make small notes against each and fill in later.
- Add descriptive details wherever required.
- If possible, observe the child with the caregiver.
- Observe the words used to describe the behaviour of the child.
- Observe the body language of the caregiver while answering the questions.

Analysis and Results

- Write all details against each question and analyse them for any special details of the child. Note any discrepancies in information provided.

- Try to match your own observation of the child against information provided by the family.
- Link all pieces of information to complete the picture.

Precautions

- Some precautions to be kept in mind while designing a questionnaire are:
 - Be brief and use limited questions
 - Questions should be simple and clear
 - Avoid personal questions
 - Sequence them well so that one related information leads to the other (logical sequence)
 - The questions should be goal-related
 - Design a questionnaire that is not too long and boring for the concerned person
- Before beginning the session, try to put the caregiver at ease.
- Assure the caregiver that information will be used to help the child and privacy of the caregiver will be preserved.
- Avoid asking personal questions.
- Do not interrupt the person answering the questions.
- Do not take too much time. If required,organise two small sessions instead of one long one.

Conclusions: Describe the childbased on the information received. Do not judge or label the child or the parent/caregiver.

PRACTICUM 6

Prepare a questionnaire with eight to 10 questions to gather information about feeding practices of infants and toddlers.

Aim: To study the feeding practices of infants and toddlers of a specific area/culture.

Objectives

After doing this exercise, the learner will be able to:

İ% describe the feeding practices of infants and toddlers specific to own family or their neighbourhood; and

İ% compare the feeding practices of these with other families.

PRACTICUM 7

Prepare a questionnaire with eight to 10 questions to gather information about childcare routines and practices of children in the age group of four to five years.

(Same as Practical 8, but questionnaire to be made matching to the aim of this practical)

PRACTICUM 8

Prepare a list of innovative play activities and materials used by children in your neighbourhood/family.

Interact and discuss with members of your neighbourhood about the following:

- (i) Innovative play activities
- (ii) Innovative play materials

3. SCHOOL RECORDS



PRACTICUM 9

Visit the neighbourhood ECCE centre and study the children's and teacher's records maintained by them. Write a report of 150 words of your observation.

Method

- (i) Prepare a list of the records they are expected to keep and tick those that are being maintained. Put an X mark against those not being maintained by them.
- (ii) Study the design and format of the records being maintained by them and comment.
- (iii) Study the point of storage/placement of the records, and how one can access and fill them.
- (iv) Study whether any higher authority signs and validates them.
- (v) Check the records which are available for the parents to see.

PRACTICUM 10

Design a child's cumulative record/child's profile record based on your observation during the visit to an ECCE centre.

On the basis of records seen, design a child's cumulative record/child's profile record, improvising on the shortcomings observed during the visit.

PRACTICUM 11

Design a child's admission record based on your observation during the visit to an ECCE centre.

On the basis of records seen, design a child's admission record improvising on the shortcomings observed by you during the visit.

PRACTICUM 12

Design a child's portfolio based on your observation during the visit to an ECCE centre.

On the basis of records seen, design a child’s portfolio improvising on the shortcomings observed by you during the visit.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES OF AN ECCE CENTRE



PRACTICUM 13

Design an assessment sheet for easy and quick assessment of requisite infrastructure of an ECCE Centre.

Basics of designing a checklist

- (i) Put on paper what you plan to assess
- (ii) List the characteristics of a good ECCE Centre and design a rating scale for each criteria for easy and quick assessment

A rating scale is a tool used for assessing the performance of tasks, procedures, process, quality or quantity etc. It is a close-ended survey question used to study the feedback in a comparative form to study specific and particular features. It is a variant of a multiple choice question. It helps assess the qualitative aspect of a product or feature. It can be numerical or descriptive.

Procedure

- (i) Select the topic/issue to be assessed
- (ii) Select the number of levels you want to assess it
- (iii) Write a short description of each level
- (iv) Select the numerical value of the level

PRACTICUM 14

Assessment of Space Management of an ECCE Centre

Draw up a list of the criteria to assess using this format.

The sample is given below.

Assessment of Space Management

S. No.	Issue	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Space for indoor play					
	(i) Area sufficient in relation to number of children					
	(ii) Location					
	(iii) Safety					
	(iv) Ventilation/Hygiene					

S. No.	Issue	1	2	3	4	5
	(v) Play material					
	(vi) Furniture/equipment in relation to age group					

1 = Excellent

2 = Good

3 = Average

4 = Below Average

5 = Poor

The list could be long and exhaustive to help get a clear and comprehensive picture. The outcomes could be assessed on the basis of description of each scale level.

Write a report on the resultant inferences and compare it to ideal recommended. Comment on where there is need for improvement.

PRACTICUM 15

Assessment of outdoor play equipment of an ECCE Centre

- (i) Draw up a list of the criteria to be assessed.
- (ii) Describe the different levels of assessment.
- (iii) Analyse available data and draw references.
- (iv) Write a report on the data and reference drawn.

The sample is given below.

Assessment of Play Equipment

S. No.	Criteria	1	2	3
1.	Swings/ Sliding board, Seesaw			
2.	Balls			
3.	Space to run and play			
4.	Gym equipment			
5.	Gardening equipment			
6.	Sand pit			
7.	Cycles/tricycles, (add others)			

1. Ideal
2. Sufficient
3. Lacking

PRACTICUM 16

Assessment of indoor play equipment of an ECCE Centre

(Observe the same procedure as shown above. Design criteria of assessment in relation to the objective)

PRACTICUM 17

Assessment of water and toilet facilities of an ECCE Centre

(Observe the same procedure as shown above. Design criteria of assessment in relation to the objective)

PRACTICUM 18

Assessment of air, light and ventilation facilities of an ECCE Centre

(Observe the same procedure as shown above. Design criteria of assessment in relation to the objective)

5. ECCE STAFF AND PROGRAMME



PRACTICUM 19

Draw up a set of questions to be asked during the selection interview of the teacher.

The questions framed should be able to elicit all information in relation to the job profile of the teacher.

Method

- (i) Design a job profile of the staff to be appointed.
- (ii) List all the activities the particular staff will be expected to undertake.
- (iii) List the responsibilities the particular staff will be expected to shoulder.
- (iv) The technical qualification expected of the particular staff.
- (v) Work experience in the same field.
- (vi) Remuneration expected.

PRACTICUM 20

Draw up a set of questions to be asked during the selection interview of the Centre In-charge.
Frame the questions keeping the job profile in mind.

PRACTICUM 21

Draw up a set of questions to be asked during the selection interview of the Centre Helper.
Frame the questions keeping the job profile in mind.

PRACTICUM 22

Visit the neighborhood ECCE Centre and note the programme being followed. Design a three-hour ECCE programme to be followed in a preschool.

Basis requirement of an ECCE Programme

To ensure holistic development of children, include activities and time for:

- (i) Physical-motor development
- (ii) Cognitive development
- (ii) Language development
- (iii) Socio-emotional development

The activities to be included are:

- (i) Free play
- (ii) Guided/Supervised play
- (iii) Outdoor play/activities
- (iv) Indoor play/activities
- (v) Storytelling
- (vi) Rhymes and recitation
- (vii) Art and craft
- (viii) Free and guided conversation
- (ix) Rest
- (x) Meal/snack time

Note: The attention span of children is short, hence the duration for various activities should not be more than 15-20 minutes.

CURRICULUM

PRACTICUM

The purpose of the ECCE course is not only to acquaint learners with theoretical knowledge but also to provide them an opportunity to link it to the actual environment of ECCE. The activities included in the practicum will help the learner to perform some activities to appreciate the linkages between theory learnt and the actual environment of ECCE. The activities included will help learners to develop an understanding of young children through practical hands-on exercises. All the practicum activities are compulsory and are to be carried out by the learners. The activities are divided into five categories. The learner will be assigned one activity each from the five categories through chits for the final practical examination.

The activities are listed below.

A. OBSERVATION

- 1) Design a format to record the observations of children. Observe a child/children in your neighborhood/family for 20 minutes in the settings listed below. Prepare a report of each your observations in 150 words.
 - Infant of five months: Observe the milestones achieved.
 - Toddlers at outdoor play: Comment on the interaction of the toddler with other children and the type of play indulged in.
 - Five year old child at indoor play: Comment on the interaction and type of play indulged in.

(3 Marks)

B. FAMILY PRACTICES

- 1) Design a questionnaire to be used to interview parents of a toddler regarding development in any one domain.
- 2) Prepare a list of eight to 10 questions to gather information of family practices with regard to:
 - (a) Feeding practices of infants and toddlers
 - (b) Childcare routines and practices of children in the age group of four to five years
- (3) List of innovative play activities and materials used by children in your neighbourhood/family.

(3 Marks)

C. SCHOOL RECORDS

- (1) Visit the neighbourhood ECCE centre and study the children's and teacher's records maintained by them. Write a report of 150 words on your observation.

- (2) Design the following records based on your observation during the above visit:
- Child’s cumulative record/Child’s profile record
 - Child’s admission record
 - Child’s portfolio
- (3 Marks)

D. INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES IN AN ECCE CENTRE

- (1) Design an assessment sheet for easy and quick assessment of requisite infrastructure of an ECCE Centre. Using this format, visit the neighbourhood ECCE centre and assess the following:
- Space Management
 - Outdoor play equipment
 - Indoor play equipment
 - Water and toilet facilities
 - Air, light and ventilation
- (3 Marks)

E. ECCE STAFF AND PROGRAMME

- (1) Draw up a set of questions to be asked during the selection interview of the following staff:
- Teacher
 - Centre In-charge
 - Centre Helper
- (2) Design a three hour ECCE programme to be followed in a preschool after visiting and studying the same in the neighbourhood preschool.
- (3 Marks)

PRACTICUM EXAMINATION

There will be a practical examination of three (03) hours duration. It will carry 20 marks. The distribution of marks is as follows:

		Marks
1.	Observation	03
2.	Family Practices	03
3.	School Records	03
4.	Infrastructure and Facilities in an ECCE Centre	03
5.	ECCE Staff and Programme	03
6.	Portfolio and <i>viva voce</i>	05 (3+2)
	Total	20