

Health and Social Care Single Award GCE Student Guide

By studying GCE Health and Social Care you will gain knowledge and understanding of the health, social care and early years sectors. You will also increase your awareness of the issues affecting these sectors. As this is an applied subject with a vocational perspective, you may be given the opportunity to access a health, social care or early years service such as a hospital, care home, day centre, nursery or primary school. In this way you will gain first-hand experience of the day-to-day running of a relevant setting. The optional units at A2 will give you the opportunity to broaden your knowledge.

Why study Health and Social Care?

Health and Social Care is a stimulating, relevant and interesting subject. The health, social care and early years sectors are major employers in Northern Ireland. By choosing this subject you may be given the opportunity to study a wide range of subjects including communication, social policy, health promotion, physiology, family issues and research methods. You may be interested in health and well-being or pursuing a career in the caring profession. This subject develops knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to degrees in nursing, allied health professions, social sciences, social policy, social work and early years. You will have opportunities to develop valuable skills such as research, analysis, communication, working with others, independent learning, creative thinking and problem solving.

There is a good balance between externally assessed units (examinations) and internally assessed units (portfolios) which enable you to plan work effectively and monitor your progress on a regular basis. This may also help you to work more efficiently and achieve your full potential in this subject. If you continue to third level education, by studying Health and Social Care you will be able to develop advanced study skills which will prepare you for the transition. You will also develop skills and values for employment in the health, social care and early years sectors.



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You must complete six units. AS units 1, 2 and 3 and A2 10 are compulsory. You need to achieve two additional A2 units. The other A2 units available are 8, 9, 11 and 12. Your teacher will provide guidance on the choice of units.

What will I study?

Unit	Areas of Study
AS 1: Promoting Quality Care (Compulsory)	In this unit you produce a report on a health, social care or early years setting that you have experienced. You investigate how care workers apply the values of care on a daily basis with service users. You also develop an understanding of how legislation impacts on the quality of care delivered in the setting. This unit also focuses on policies, and you will evaluate the effectiveness of policies in promoting quality care in your chosen setting. The latter part of the unit requires you to research an example of poor practice in a health, social care or early years setting and to assess its impact on service users and others.
AS 2: Communication in Health, Social Care and Early Years Settings (Compulsory)	This unit requires you to produce a report in which you examine communication skills observed in a health, social care or early years setting. You will develop your knowledge of the different types of communication used in these settings and their purpose. In the unit you also study how a range of factors may support effective communication with service users. You have the opportunity to investigate how barriers to communication with service users can be overcome. The unit also focuses on the importance of communication when working in teams. You complete a critical appraisal of the communication skills you used in an interaction in your chosen setting.
AS 3: Health and Well-Being (Compulsory)	In this examined unit you learn about key concepts of health and well-being and the impact of ill health on individuals. You also develop knowledge of the needs of a range of service users. You have the opportunity to investigate how a range of factors may affect health and well-being. In this unit you study the various approaches used in health promotion and gain an understanding of how individuals can take responsibility for their own health and well-being. A number of organisations contribute to health and well-being, and this unit provides you with the opportunity to investigate their role. Your understanding of the impact of discrimination on health and well-being will be developed, and you will develop your knowledge of how anti-discriminatory practice may be promoted in health, social care and early years settings.
A2 1: Applied Research	In this unit you produce a written report on research that you have designed and carried out on a health, social care or early years topic. You learn how to conduct a literature review and you are required to undertake primary research to collect the data required. By completing this unit you develop data-handling and analytical skills as you present and analyse the results of your research. You write a research report using the traditional research report format, which will be very beneficial if you hope to progress to third level education.

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Unit	Areas of Study
A2 2: Body Systems and Physiological Disorders	In this unit you examine the circulatory and respiratory systems. You also undertake practical activities when you monitor the circulatory and respiratory systems for two individuals and record and analyse the data collected. You research a physiological disorder and write a report in which you describe the methods used to diagnose the disorder, discuss the treatments available, the care pathways and the practitioners involved. You also analyse the possible effects of the disorder on individuals.
A2 3: Providing Services (Compulsory)	This examined unit based on pre-release material provides you with an overview of service provision in the health, social care and early years sectors. You learn about how services have developed and how they are structured, regulated and funded. The unit gives you an opportunity to examine how policy and legislation influence the provision of care services. You develop an understanding of the needs of different service user groups and how these needs may be met by a range of services and practitioners.
A2 4: Health Promotion	In this unit, you will produce an individual report on Northern Ireland health improvement priorities and a current health promotion campaign. You may work individually or as part of a group to plan and carry out a health promotion activity in a setting such as a school, residential home or nursery school. Your activity should use at least one health promotion approach, and you can make use of existing health promotion materials. This unit provides you with opportunities to work as part of a team and to develop your communication skills. You produce an individual report of the activity.
A2 5: Supporting The Family	This unit provides you with the opportunity to consider the changing family structures in today's society. You also develop an understanding of a range of factors that influence family life and investigate the services available to families and the support they provide. Assessment for this unit requires you to produce a review of family structures and a case study of a family. You are also required to produce a report focusing on the support available to families experiencing issues such as poverty, addiction, bereavement or racism.

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How will I be assessed?

Unit	Assessment Description	Weighting
AS 1 (compulsory)	Written report based on a health, social care or early years setting that you have experienced	25% of AS 10% of A level
AS 2 (compulsory)	Written report on communication in a health, social care or early years setting	25% of AS 10% of A level
AS 3 (compulsory)	2 hour external examination paper	50% of AS 20% of A level
A2 1	Research report on a health and social care topic	15% of A level
A2 2	Practical investigation of the physiological status of individuals and a written report on the diagnosis and treatment of a disorder	15% of A level
A2 3 (compulsory)	2 hour external examination based on pre-release material	30% of A level
A2 4	A report on health improvement priorities and health promotion and a health promotion activity and evaluation	15% of A level
A2 5	A review of changes to family structures, case study of a family outlining the needs of individuals and the support provided and a report on families experiencing issues	15% of A level

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What can I do with a qualification in Health and Social Care?

Studying health and social care will enable you to gain skills that are valued in further and higher education, as well as in the workplace.

Many students who complete GCE Health and Social Care continue to third level education to study a wide range of courses including childcare, nursing, midwifery, social work, occupational therapy, speech therapy, physiotherapy, teaching and similar careers. A wide range of courses including degree courses are available at colleges and universities.

You may, however, use this qualification to gain access to a course which is not related to health, social care or early years. Whilst GCE Health and Social Care is an applied subject, it has the same currency in UCAS points as other GCE subjects.

Alternatively you may progress to employment or undertake further training to enhance your career prospects.

To find out more, visit the **CCEA Website** for the latest support and updates for this subject.

