



montessori partnership

**Montessori Partnership Level 3 Diploma
in Montessori Classroom Practice
incorporating Innovate Awarding (IAO)
Level 3 Diploma in Early Learning and
Childcare (EYE)**



Full Course Information

Delivered by:

distance learning, workshop and setting based practice

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INTRODUCTION

The Montessori approach to education is more than just a teaching method. It is a way of being in harmony with ourselves, with others and with our surroundings, and is based on empowering the individual learner to reach his or her full potential.

For you as an adult learner our approach is based on individual progress and enabling you to develop in the direction you feel you want to go. The responsibility for doing the learning lies with you. As course providers following Montessori principles we prepare the learning environment, supply appropriate resources and give help where necessary. So that basic standards are adhered to, a structured course presentation is necessary, as is assessment at regular intervals, and both internal and external quality assurance processes.

The Montessori approach to working with children in the early years is based on a deep understanding of child development underpinned by the theories of Maria Montessori and other educators, and borne out by observation. Montessori education for the pre-school age group takes place in an environment enriched with carefully sequenced materials designed to meet the holistic needs of the children, whatever their stage of development. Well-trained Montessori teachers guide children to reach their full potential by preparing the environment thoroughly and by intervening in the children's activity only when necessary. The approach is based on three ideas or principles: children are born with a desire to learn, they each learn at their own pace, and their goal is to become masters of themselves and of their environment.

VALUES AND UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

The Montessori Partnership is committed to observing and helping to promote the provisions of the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and shares the values and underlying principles promoted by practitioners of early years and childcare worldwide by placing the child at the centre of our work. Our commitment can be summarised by 'CHILD':

C ontribute actively to promoting the rights of the child
H armonise Montessori nationally and internationally
I nspire and stimulate educational debate
L ink and communicate with early years professionals to build partnerships
D emonstrate and participate in best practice in early education.

WHY QUALITY EARLY YEARS EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE IS IMPORTANT

Research supports the conviction that high quality early years care and education lays an invaluable foundation for children's future development. Positive experiences before the age of six promote self-esteem and confidence, and enable children to be independent, effective learners. Knowing that their children are secure and well cared-for enables parents to expand their own horizons also, to venture into work, or to access training opportunities that previously would have seemed beyond their reach. But, with our Montessori approach our focus is not restricted to care and education: we have a larger vision. We consider that the work we do with the youngest children is laying foundations for the whole of their future – we are educating for life. And we share Maria Montessori's conviction that improvements to human existence and future world peace can only come about through changed education for future generations.

AIMS OF THE MONTESSORI PARTNERSHIP

We believe that the task of the Montessori Partnership is to ensure that each of our students fully understands and can implement the Montessori philosophy, which will equip them to manage a successful and stimulating Montessori class. To this end we provide our students with the opportunities and resources they need to gain the understanding, knowledge and practical experience to pursue a career as a Montessori teacher, while facilitating as far as possible a flexible and personalised study programme.

Our students learn the skills needed to help children develop into independent individuals with strong self-esteem. Our courses explore Montessori's thinking within the context of contemporary understanding of working with the relevant age group, and theoretical study is consolidated by directed observations of children and practical experience.

AIMS OF THE MONTESSORI PARTNERSHIP'S INTRODUCTON TO MONTESSORI CLASSROOM PRACTICE WITH INNOVATE AWARDING LEVEL 3 DIPLOMA IN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE (EARLY YEARS EDUCATOR)

In offering this unique combination of two separate qualifications we aim:

- to meet the needs of our students
- to keep Montessori philosophy and respect for children central to our purpose
- to provide our students with skills and knowledge which is relevant to the needs of the child in the 21st century and which will make our students eligible for employment in the early years sector in England and Wales

As a student your unique and individual needs are met in a supportive fashion through the opportunities for direct dialogue with a personal assessor that electronic communication affords. A series of short, practical workshops is an essential part of the Montessori course, offering the opportunity for face-to-face contact with experienced tutors and lecturers who have a wide range of practical experience in applying the Montessori approach in a variety of settings. They are well versed in current educational and developmental theories and knowledgeable about current issues in the early years field. Opportunities are provided for you to discuss and evaluate both your own progress and the effectiveness of the course with your tutor. The Montessori Partnership is committed to meeting your individual needs as a student, while providing a high quality preparation for becoming a Montessori teacher.

I wish you well in their studies and hope that this course will open the doors to the world of the child for you.

Helen Prochazka
Director

INFORMATION ABOUT THE MONTESSORI PARTNERSHIP

The Montessori Partnership was founded in 1998 by Helen Wheatley and Helen Prochazka. Helen Wheatley trained as a Montessori teacher under Miss Phoebe Child and Miss Margaret Homfray who founded the St Nicholas Montessori Centre under the aegis of Dr Maria Montessori in 1947. Helen is a past principal of St Nicholas, and although she has now ceased to be an active partner in the Partnership she still gives valuable input as a consultant.

Helen Prochazka, Senior Partner and Director of the Montessori Partnership, is a linguist who came into Montessori from a general teaching background. She was formerly Director of Studies at St Nicholas, and is a Council Member and past chairman of Montessori Education (UK). She owns Seedlings Montessori in Southampton and so has current and active experience of working directly in the field.

Partner Miranda Robarts-Arnold is the Assessment Co-ordinator and directly supports the dedicated team of tutors, examiners and assessors who in turn support the Montessori Partnership's student body in their studies.

WHY THE ORGANISATION IS CALLED A 'PARTNERSHIP'

The name was carefully chosen to reflect the modern relationship between a training provider and its adult learners. Learning is most effective, and progress most satisfactory where tutors, assessors and students are working and learning constructively together, in partnership, to maximise the learner's potential to develop and grow, while achieving the goal of gaining a recognised and respected qualification.

QUALIFICATIONS AWARDED

This course combines two separate qualifications:

1. *The Level 3 Diploma in Early Learning and Childcare (Early Years Educator), awarded by Innovate Awarding.*

This qualification is recognised in England and Wales as enabling the holder to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

2. *Montessori Partnership Level 3 Diploma in Montessori Classroom Practice*

This qualification gives a solid grounding in the practical knowledge and skills needed to support the work going on in a Montessori prepared environment.

Together these two qualifications form Stage 1 of the Montessori Partnership Montessori Teaching Diploma in Early Years Education. Having completed Stage 1 by gaining both these qualifications you will then be able to progress on to Stage 2 to undertake a further course of Montessori study. On successful completion of this you will be awarded your full Montessori Teaching Diploma, a level 5 qualification.

ADMISSIONS

The course is open to students over 18 years old, educated at least to GCSE pass standard, but preferably to level 3 or A-level or beyond. Applications from mature people with experience, or individuals from overseas with different qualifications will be considered on their merits.

Important Note: *If you are intending to work in the early years sector in England and Wales and have your qualification recognised to do so, you must also have GCSE Maths and English at grades A-C. If you are applying for public funding to take this course these GCSEs are an entry requirement. If you are self-funding you can take this course first, and then get your GCSEs afterwards.*

If you have no intention of working in England and Wales, and don't want to take the EYE Diploma you can enrol on our level 4 International Montessori Diploma in Early Years Education course which focuses almost entirely on the Montessori approach.

Students are asked to write a short account of their educational background and experience, and give the reasons for their interest in Montessori before being admitted on to the course. The Montessori Partnership reserves the right to refuse a prospective student admission on to the course on the grounds that their educational background seems inadequate to enable them successfully to complete the course. The Montessori Partnership also reserves the right to ask a student to leave the course.

PAYMENT OF FEES

The fees for the whole course, including theory units, practical workshops, examination fees and teaching practice fees are paid online, via PayPal at the outset. You do not need a PayPal account. If you decide to enrol on the course you commit to paying the full fee, either in full at the outset, or in the form of a deposit and the balance in 16 monthly instalments. For full information on cancellations and refunds see our *Policy on Refunds and Cancellations* at the end of this handbook.

Option 1	Payment in full before course start date	£3250.00
Option 2	Payment of deposit of £500.00 + 16 instalments of £181.25	£3400.00

You should budget for the following additional expenses: books, stationery, craft supplies for material making, travel and /accommodation for attending workshops, travel to the work placement, internet costs, etc.

COURSE STRUCTURE

The EYE Diploma part of the course consists of 16 mandatory units of study, which should be completed in the order set. You need to be working or volunteering in an early years and/or Montessori early years Setting (Children's House) in order to be able to fulfil the practice-based requirements.

The Montessori part of the course involves attendance at 10 day-long workshops where you learn how to support children's learning using the special Montessori learning materials.

How much time will it take?

Overall the course consists of 310 guided learning hours (GLH). Typically you will need to support each GLH with about three hours of independent work, research, thinking, writing and reflecting, giving a total of approximately 1000 notional learning hours (NLH).

Work placement/ teaching practice

The teaching practice requirement for Stage 1 of this course is 240 hours. If you are not already working in a Montessori early years setting you will need to arrange to do so, to start as soon as possible. Unit 1 of the course is research and knowledge based, but you will have to be settled into your work placement in order to work on Unit 2. If you are already working in an early years setting that is not a Montessori setting you will need to arrange to spend a minimum of 100 hours working in a Montessori setting, although many of the setting based assignments can be carried out in your own workplace and you can count 150 hours there towards the 240 hour requirement.

The teaching practice is of flexible duration depending on the arrangements you make with the setting where you're going to carry it out. The 240 hours can be achieved in as little as 7 weeks if you're attending the setting full time for example, or as long as 48 weeks if you're attending for just one session a week (typically 5 hours per session). During your teaching practice you will be working on your setting-based assignments and will be visited at intervals by a Montessori Partnership assessor to carry out direct observation of your practice in the setting.

Anyone working in an early years setting needs to obtain a DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/dbs. You will need to get your setting to organise this as soon as possible before you begin your teaching practice.

PACE OF PROGRESSION

You can take a maximum of three years from the date you enrol to complete Stage 1, giving you the flexibility to proceed at your own pace, unless you have got a Professional and Career Development Loan (PCDL), in which case you have 28 months to complete. You do need to keep in contact with us though because if we have not heard from you for a year, and if you don't respond to our requests for an update from you on how you're doing, we will delete your records from our system.

ATTENDANCE AND COURSE COMPLETION

You are required to complete and submit all the assignments set and submit them for assessment as instructed. The assignments are set in a way that makes clear what is expected for each. Your assessor will give you feedback, and if necessary you can amend or add to what you've already submitted until you have fulfilled all the set requirements. Full details of how to do this are given in the very important ***Instructions on how to do your Course***, which are **ESSENTIAL READING** before you start working, and an on-going point of reference thereafter.

There is a 90% attendance requirement at the workshop sessions and all absences must be documented and explained. If you miss a session you will have to complete an absence sheet and hand it to the workshop tutor. These sheets are kept in your file. All sessions start promptly.

With regard to the work placement, you will need to get your supervising teacher to sign your weekly attendance record. You must complete as a minimum one 3½ hour session per week, but ideally more than this. It is not possible to get the necessary experience of Montessori practice without attending full sessions at a nursery.

Coursework assignments for the EYE Diploma are assessed in line with the prescribed assessment requirements applicable to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) outlined in Innovate Awarding's *Specification for IAO Level 3 Diploma in Early Learning and Childcare (Early Years Educator)*.

Practical tests and written examinations form part of the Montessori Partnership Level 3 Diploma in Montessori Classroom Practice, Stage 1, and of the Stage 2 Montessori Teaching Diploma in Early Years Education. See section on Assessment below.

FIRST AID TRAINING

First aid training does not form part of this course, but it is recommended that you take a recognised and certificated course of paediatric first aid training so you are competent to provide first aid in a childcare environment.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By taking this course you will:

- develop a sound understanding of the theoretical principles underpinning the Montessori approach to education
- develop skills and confidence in handling the Montessori materials
- be able to apply the theoretical principles effectively to classroom practice.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course you will have:

- fulfilled all the Early Years Educator requirements, including those relating current theories about child development, child care and health, safeguarding, transitions and inclusion
- absorbed the fundamentals of Montessori philosophy and understand how they apply to working in a Montessori early years setting
- become proficient in the use of a standard range of Montessori learning materials across the five Montessori early years curriculum areas
- reflected on your own practice in the context of your daily work in the prepared environment
- become knowledgeable about the impact of legislation and guidance on your practice

- supported your growing knowledge of the Montessori approach through reading and reflecting on Dr Montessori's own writings.

READING LIST

Books you need to buy:

- | | | |
|-------------------|------|--|
| Montessori, Maria | 1988 | <i>The Absorbent Mind</i> , Clio Press, Oxford, ISBN 1 85109 087 8 |
| Montessori, Maria | 1988 | <i>The Discovery of the Child</i> , Clio Press, Oxford, ISBN 1 85109 066 X |
| Montessori, Maria | 1966 | <i>The Secret of Childhood</i> , Ballantine Books, New York ISBN 0 345 30583 3 |

Other books and articles you'll find useful:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------|---|
| Allen, G | 2011 | <i>Early Intervention: The Next Steps: An Independent Report to HM Government</i> , HM Government.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284086/early-intervention-next-steps2.pdf |
| Butler, D | 1995 | <i>Babies Need Books: Sharing the Joy of Books with Your Child from Birth to Six</i> , Penguin, London ISBN 0-14-015679-8 |
| Crowley, M & Wheeler, H | 2013 | 'Working with Parents in the Early Years', in G Pugh and B Duffy, <i>Contemporary Issues in the Early Years</i> , 6 th edn, Sage Publications, London |
| Crystal, D | 1986 | <i>Listen to Your Child: A Parent's Guide to Children's Language</i> , Penguin, London ISBN 0-14-011015-1 |
| Curtis, A & O'Hagan, M | 2009 | <i>Care and Education in Early Childhood: A Student's Guide to Theory and Practice</i> , 2 nd edn, Routledge, Abingdon. |
| Davenport, G.C. | 1994 | <i>Introduction to Child Development</i> , 2 nd edn, CollinsEducational, London ISBN0-00-322355-8 |
| DfE | | <i>Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: Setting the Standards for Learning, Development and Care for Children from Birth to Five</i> , 2014,
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2 |
| DfE | 2014 | <i>Special educational needs and disability: a guide for parents and carers</i>
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers |
| DfE & DoH | 2014 | <i>Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years: Statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs</i>
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25 . |

Early Learning Partnership

Parental Engagement Group, NQIN 2010 *Principles for Engaging with Families: A Framework for Local Authorities and National Organisations to Evaluate and Improve Engagement with Families*, NCB, London
http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/236258/engaging_with_families.pdf

Equality and Human Rights Commission 2011 *Equality Act 2010 Code of Practice: Services, Public Functions and Associations: Statutory Code of Practice*
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/publication_pdf/servicescode_0.pdf

Goleman, D 1996 *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, Bloomsbury ISBN0-7475-2830-6

Government Equalities Office and Department for Culture, Media & Sport 2013 *Equality Act 2010: Guidance*
<https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance - guidance-on-the-equality-act>

Health Protection Scotland 2011 *Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Daycare and Childminding Settings)*.
<http://www.documents.hps.scot.nhs.uk/hai/infection-control/guidelines/infection-prevention-control-childcare.pdf>

H M Government 2015 *Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers*.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf

H M Government 2015 *What to Do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused*
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

H M Government 2015 *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of*
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf

Hobart C. & Frankel, J. 1994 *A Practical Guide to Child Observation* Stanley Thornes (Publishers) Ltd ISBN 0 74871742 0

Kramer, R 1988 *Maria Montessori: A Biography*, Addison Wesley ISBN 0 201 09227 1

Lawrence, L. 1998 *Read and Write*, Ebury Press ISBN 0 09 186351 1

Lester, S & Maudsley, M 2007 *Play, Naturally: A Review of Children's Natural Play*, Play England and National Children's Bureau, London.
<http://www.playengland.org.uk/media/130593/play-naturally.pdf>

Meggitt, C & Bruce, T 2014 *Early Years Educator for the Classroom-Based Learner*, Hodder Education ISBN 978-1-4718-0802-9

- Montanaro, S.Q. 1991 *Understanding the Human Being*, Nienhuis Montessori USA
ISBN 1 879341 00 X
- Montessori, Maria 1966 *Dr Montessori's Own Handbook*, Robert Bentley Inc, Cambridge, Mass.
- Montessori, Maria 1992 *Education and Peace*, Clio Press, Oxford
ISBN 1-85109-168-8
- Montessori, Maria 1965 *Spontaneous Activity in Education*, Schocken Books Inc, New York
ISBN 0-8052-0097-5
- Montessori, Maria 1989 *To Educate the Human Potential*, Clio Press, Oxford
ISBN 1-85109-0940
- Montessori, Maria 1964 *The Montessori Method*, Schocken Books Inc, New York,
ISBN 0 8052 0922 0
- Public Health England 2014 *Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Childcare Settings*
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/353953/Guidance_on_infection_control_in_schools_11_Sept.pdf
- Sheridan, M D 1975 *From Birth to Five Years: Children's Developmental Progress*, 3rd edn,
Routledge 1975.
- Smith, P, Cowie, H
Blades, M 1998 *Understanding Children's Development*, 3rd edn, Blackwell, Oxford,
ISBN 0-631-19412-6
- Standing, E M 1984 *Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work*, New American
Library.
ISBN 0 452 25624 0
- Vogler, Crivello &
Woodhead 2008 *Early childhood transitions research: A review of concepts, theory and
practice*, Bernard van Leer Foundation, The Hague
www.bernardvanleer.org/Early_childhood_transitions_research_A_review_of_concepts_theory_and_practice.
- Whalley, M 2007 *Involving Parents in their Children's Learning*, 2nd edn, Sage Publications,
London.

Web-based information on:

Children and Families Act 2014: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landmark-children-and-families-act-2014-gains-royal-assent>

Data Protection Act 1998: Information Commissioner's Office website: <http://www.ico.org.uk>

Government policy (England) on improving the quality and range of education and childcare from birth to 5 years:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/improving-the-quality-and-range-of-education-and-childcare-from-birth-to-5-years>

Health and Safety: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm>.

For the Ofsted common inspection framework see:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/461767/The_common_inspection_framework_education_skills_and_early_years.pdf

On the registration of early years provision, see:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/491891/EY_and_childcare_reg_handbook.pdf

And on the inspection by Ofsted of early years provision, see:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/458588/Early_years_inspection_handbook.pdf

Role and remit of Ofsted: <http://www.politics.co.uk/reference/ofsted>

ASSESSMENT

Assessment for the IAO Level 3 Diploma in Early Learning and Childcare (Early Years Educator) is undertaken by the Montessori Partnership with external quality assurance (EQA) provided by Innovate Awarding as the awarding body for the diploma. The basis for the assessment is whether you have met the criteria set for the qualification or not yet met them.

Assessment for the Montessori Partnership Level 3 Diploma in Montessori Classroom Practice is undertaken by the Montessori Partnership as the awarding body, with EQA provided by the External Examiner and the Montessori Partnership Assessment Board. For this part of the course you need to complete all your coursework and examinations to pass standard (50%).

MONTESSORI EXAMINATIONS

Short practical examinations are held at the end of each workshop session when you are examined on the materials that have been presented during the workshop.

MODERATION PROCEDURES

You should expect that some of your assignments will be moderated as part of both IQA and EQA processes.

STUDENT ACCESS TO RECORDS

You may, on payment of the relevant fee, receive a copy of all the records held on you by the Montessori Partnership, with the exception of examination scripts and all marking records relating to final written and practical examinations. These remain the exclusive property of the Montessori Partnership.

Records held by the Montessori Partnership consist of:

- Your name, address and e-mail details
- Copies of correspondence
- Any personal information you've supplied to us and to your assessor

- Assignments and related marking records
- Copies of your completed coursework assignments submitted for marking, your marked work and assessors' comments on your work may also be held.

KEEPING COPIES OF WORK

You should always keep a back-up copy, either on disk or a hard copy of work you submit, as the Montessori Partnership, while taking all reasonable precautions to keep work safe, accepts no responsibility for the loss of any of your work, however caused.

CAREER PROSPECTS

Teaching in a Montessori setting

A Montessori teaching diploma is a passport to opportunities both at home and overseas. Qualified Montessori teachers are much in demand, even in countries where the Method is less well recognised.

Generally, Montessori schools operate in the private sector, but in the Netherlands and Sweden, and in some areas of North America, the Montessori approach is integrated into the state system of education.

The IAO level 3 EYE Diploma is recognised in England and Wales as a qualification enabling you to manage early years provision, but any prospective employer will look at your relevant experience and on-going professional development as well as other qualities before making a decision to appoint. Authentic Montessori settings expect you to have a full Montessori Diploma to be qualified to take the role of a Montessori class teacher, so you should think about continuing on to take Stage 2 at Level 5.

Other opportunities

Montessori Partnership diploma holders also go on to work in other associated fields, using their Montessori Diploma as a starting point for further qualifications. Some, for example, work as nannies or childminders; some go into healthcare, teaching in the state system, or social work. These people find that the Montessori ethos plays a key part in defining how they relate to the people they work with, and that even though they are not working directly in a Montessori setting, that their training in the field was hugely relevant to the work they are now doing.

Salaries

In the UK work in the childcare / early education sector is not recognised by a high professional rate of pay as it is elsewhere, and even salaries for Montessori teachers are never as high as they should be for the dedication and enthusiasm that Montessori teachers bring to their jobs. There is no national Montessori pay scale, and there is a significant differential between salaries in London and elsewhere in the UK.

Further career advice

Students requiring further guidance or information on careers in early years childcare and education should consult their tutor/assessor in the first instance.

TERMINATION OF STUDIES

Your course of study may be terminated

- if your behaviour or attitude is considered to be unprofessional or lacking in respect to fellow students, tutors or children
- if you resort to plagiarism
- if you infringe the Montessori Partnership's copyright on its materials
- if you disseminate course materials to others
- if you fail to attend
- if you consistently fail to complete work

The Montessori Partnership reserves the right to terminate your course of study at any time, but generally a meeting is held with you to discuss the particular issue, a warning is issued and / a probationary period set in place. Failure to complete work will result in the first instance in close monitoring with tutorial support, but if there is no improvement after written warnings, in termination of the course. If a course is terminated in this way no fee paid will be refunded.

OUR POLICIES

POLICY STATEMENT RELATING TO EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Equality

The Montessori Partnership respects and actively promotes the right of all individuals to develop their full potential irrespective of their ethnic origin, religion, cultural traditions, linguistic background, life experience, sexual orientation or disability. We are committed to supporting all our students to attain their own learning goals and to realise their potential in the field of Montessori education.

Diversity

The Montessori Partnership values the richness that the varied backgrounds, cultural traditions and life experiences of our students bring to all our training. We are also very aware of how these can impact both directly and indirectly on an individual's ability to realise his or her learning potential. In line with our Montessori principles we recognise that all our learners are individuals, with unique learning styles and needs which we aim to meet through personalised support.

POLICY ON ACCESS AND FAIR ASSESSMENT

Access

As an organisation we understand that people are all at different points on their learning journey and in the spirit of our Montessori approach we see it as our responsibility to work to remove or mitigate obstacles and barriers that may be preventing a learner from achieving his or her learning goals. As far as it lies within our power we give help and guidance that is individually tailored to enabling learners to decide whether or not to embark on a course of training, and then, once they've started, to support them as they

progress through it until they complete it successfully. One major aspect of this is to be flexible with regard to time factors and entry requirements wherever this lies within our power, and provided due cause is established.

Fair Assessment

It is our policy that assessment conducted by us is fair, transparent, reliable and current. It also needs to be fit for purpose and rigorous in its processes to ensure that what is being assessed is the candidate's own work, and that the candidate is who they say they are.

For assessment to be **fair**, all candidates have to demonstrate the same standard of knowledge and understanding, but the way in which they do so can be adjusted to take account of individual needs and circumstances. See our *Policy Statement on Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations*.

Assessment processes must be **transparent**, and to this end we ensure that all students and assessors have copies of information relating to the criteria for assessment and the *Examination Regulations*. Any adjustments or variations put in place to support an individual candidate are fully documented so that they can be monitored and reviewed.

Assessment processes must be **reliable**, with reliability being established through continuity and standardisation of systems, processes and evaluation. Our internal and external quality assurance processes are implemented to ensure reliability and integrity.

So that assessment carried out by us is **current** we ensure that the most up to date criteria are those against which candidates are assessed. Where we have made adjustments to meet the needs of an individual candidate the currency of those needs is kept under review.

Verifying the ID of each of our learners and having them sign to the effect that the work they are submitting for assessment is their own contributes to the **rigour** of our assessment processes, and our internal and external quality assurance procedures ensure that the assessment we carry out overall is robust and rigorous.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Montessori Partnership is committed to ensuring that wherever colleagues and students gather together to study that they should do so in an environment that is safe and healthy, and takes all reasonable steps to ensure that this is so, by:

- inspecting the health and safety policies and insurance certificates of the organisations providing the venues it uses
- alerting colleagues and students to emergency exits and procedures
- conducting checks on ventilation, temperature, lighting, noise and seating
- implementing a non-smoking policy
- carrying out risk assessments

Students and colleagues are reminded that as adults they are responsible for their own safety, for acting responsibly, for alerting the Montessori Partnership's representative to perceived risks and hazards, and for adopting and following routine procedures to maintain the learning environment in a clean and healthy state. During workshops and seminars, care of the environment is carried out by the students as part of their training. Students are monitored and assessed on their attitude to this task and attention to detail.

The Montessori Partnership accepts no liability for accidents or incidents befalling adult colleagues or students, whatever their cause.

POLICY ON PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism, the attributing of other people's work to oneself, is not tolerated. All quotations from the work of another person or persons, or use of someone else's ideas must be clearly sourced, with proper referencing. If, following investigation, a student is found to have plagiarised someone else's work, that student's course will be terminated.

POLICY ON SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on any premises being used by the Montessori Partnership.

POLICY ON CONFIDENTIALITY, DATA PROTECTION AND WHISTLEBLOWING

Confidentiality

1. **Confidentiality** relating to everyone connected with the Montessori Partnership, its partner organisations, its associates and its learners, must be preserved at all times. The Montessori Partnership makes information available only on a 'need to know' basis and both electronic and paper-based records are kept securely, and destroyed securely when no longer needed.
2. **A confidentiality clause** forms part of formal agreements with partners and associates.
3. **Students are asked to read this policy** as part of their learning agreement with the Montessori Partnership and sign to show their acceptance of it.
4. **The Montessori Partnership's summative assessments** leading to the award of qualifications are conducted under conditions of strict confidentiality, as outlined in its *Examination and Assessment Regulations* and *Policy Statement on Written Examinations*.
5. **Social networking:** Partners, associates and learners must on no account refer to colleagues, associates or learners, confidential aspects of the Montessori Partnership's business or any other issue related to the organisation in a way that breaches the organisation's confidentiality when communicating on social networking sites, such as Facebook or Twitter, or in public places. Partners and associates must not either become, or invite learners to become social networking friends while the learners are pursuing their course of study or undergoing assessment.
6. **Where students are carrying out observations** of early years settings in furtherance of their studies the children observed and the adults working with them must not be identified by name, and only matters relating directly to the teaching practice should be divulged to the teaching practice assessor.
7. **Where a breach of confidentiality is suspected or alleged** and there appear to be reasonable grounds for the allegation or suspicion, the Montessori Partnership will institute a rigorous investigation by a person or persons who are professionally competent to carry out the investigation, and who have no personal interest in its outcome.

Data Protection

The Montessori Partnership is a registered data controller under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. We use personal and sensitive data only in connection with our activities as a training provider and as an awarding body, and only to the extent that it is relevant, sufficient and for the stated purpose communicated to the person in question. As the training provider for a qualification awarded by Innovate Awarding we are the 'agent' of Innovate Awarding and are required to provide them with students' personal

details, including name, date of birth, gender, ethnicity, address, postcode and telephone number in connection so that the processes for the award of the qualification are properly completed. We ensure that the information we hold is accurate and current.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is when someone in an organisation is unable to follow specified channels of procedure to draw attention to a serious situation or cause for concern in any area of the organisation.

As an organisation the Montessori Partnership is committed to openness and transparency in all its activities and operational decisions. It has detailed and carefully thought through policies, supported by clearly defined procedures. There are grievance procedures in place to be followed in order to resolve disputes and we welcome open and frank discussion of any issues that may arise.

However, if a partner, an associate or a learner feels that something is so seriously wrong that the only course of action is to refer their concerns to a higher authority, they can get advice from the independent whistleblowing charity Public Concern at Work, which they can phone on 020 7404 6609 or email helpline@pcaw.co.uk.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURES

The Montessori Partnership wants all its students to have an enjoyable and successful learning experience, but sometimes difficulties arise which need to be resolved. We undertake to listen carefully to the issues raised, and to deal with them promptly and fairly.

Should a problem arise between student and tutor or assessor, the following procedure should be followed:

- the student should communicate with the tutor or assessor to discuss the issue
- should it remain unresolved, or in the case of any other complaint against the Montessori Partnership, the complainant should address the problem by writing to the Director of the Montessori Partnership, who will respond in writing.
- should the issue still remain unresolved the student should appeal to the Montessori Partnership Appeal Panel consisting of the external examiner, a member of the Assessment Board, and one other early years professional unconnected with the Montessori Partnership. The appeal will be scrutinised by the Panel, and when all the circumstances have been considered a decision will be made which is binding. The complainant will be informed of the decision in writing.

The Appeal Panel's decision is final.

Please note: There is no appeal against an academic decision by the Montessori Partnership, but appeal is possible on the grounds of material irregularity. If you wish to appeal against a particular examination or assessment procedure or procedures you should proceed as described above.

If your complaint relates to the IAO Level 3 Diploma in Early Learning and Childcare and you remain dissatisfied after having exhausted the complaints and appeals procedure outlined above you can appeal directly to Innovate Awarding.

POLICY STATEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

The Montessori Partnership is committed to enabling its students to gain recognition for previous learning and/ relevant attested experience where this could contribute to fulfilling the requirements for a qualification or a unit. Generally this will apply to some, rather than all of the units making up a qualification.

Recognition of prior learning can only be given for work done or experience gained within three years of the date of application, because knowledge and experience has to be current. Where a learner can demonstrate sound knowledge or experience gained more than three years previously a special assignment or assignments will be set to establish currency of knowledge and/or practice. Such an assignment must be completed to the pass standard and in accordance with any conditions set by the Montessori Partnership.

Recognition of prior learning does not exempt a student from any part of a final examination, whether written or practical.

The Montessori Partnership reserves the right to refuse to recognise prior learning.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW TO GAIN RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

A learner who wishes to gain recognition of prior learning needs to take the following steps:

1. *Getting information and guidance:* The learner should contact the Montessori Partnership to obtain specific information, advice and guidance in relation to the claim for recognition he or she is thinking of submitting. The information the Montessori Partnership will give will cover what is involved, how much it will cost, what the time-frame will be, and what support will be available.
2. *Decide whether to proceed:* The learner will be supported to reach a decision as to whether the claim he or she proposes to make seems viable and whether the evidence he or she proposes to bring forward is likely to fulfil the assessment criteria. The student is responsible for collecting and submitting the necessary evidence for assessment.
3. *Assessment and/or documentation of evidence:* The Montessori Partnership will use the same processes and criteria to reach a judgement about whether or not the learner's submitted evidence fulfils the criteria as when reaching a decision about any other learner following the standard assessment route.
4. *Feedback:* The learner will be given feedback regarding the assessment decision(s) in the same way as feedback is given to learners following the standard assessment route.
5. *Certification:* If the prior learning that has been recognised relates to the EYE Diploma awarded by Innovate Awarding, all credits achieved through RPL are certificated in exactly the same way as all other credits. If it contributes to a qualification awarded by the Montessori Partnership it is counted towards the award of the qualification in question in the same way as the corresponding coursework or assessment would count.
6. *Appeal:* In the event of the learner being dissatisfied with the result of the process he or she may follow the appeals process to lodge an appeal.

POLICY STATEMENT ON THE IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT OF ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH THEM

1. Definition

A conflict of interest exists, or may arise, where specific interests of the Montessori Partnership, its partner organisations, or individuals working in association with it have the potential adversely to influence the way it develops, delivers and/or awards qualifications.

2. Scope

This policy applies in respect of qualifications awarded directly and/ courses delivered by the Montessori Partnership. Where the Montessori Partnership is acting as a Centre delivering qualifications awarded by a

separate Awarding Body, the Montessori Partnership additionally has regard to that organisation's policy and procedures for identifying and managing actual and potential conflicts of interest and ensures that the policies of both organisations complement each other effectively.

3. Identification

In order to prevent conflicts of interest arising, the Montessori Partnership:

- routinely reviews its current operations to see if there are any unidentified actual or potential conflicts of interest;
- scrutinises all planned development to check whether the potential for conflict of interest can be identified, scrutiny which forms part of the business plan;
- requires its partner organisations and individuals to do likewise and inform them if the potential for conflict of interest is identified.

4. Evaluation and management

When a conflict of interest is identified it must be evaluated, to determine how significant an impact it might have, and what reasonable steps can be put in place to mitigate its adverse effects or potentially adverse effects. This evaluation and decision about steps to be taken are the responsibility of the director, who will report to the Assessment Board and follow any recommendations the Board may make.

5. Conflicts of interest in assessment

In relation to qualifications for which the Montessori Partnership is the awarding body, a distinction is made between formative assessment, where the involvement of a course tutor who knows the student is not unusual, and summative assessment, where the assessment is always undertaken by an assessor or examiner who is unconnected with the delivery of the course, and who is not known to the student or students in any capacity other than a professional one.

This policy is kept under annual review.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON MALPRACTICE AND MALADMINISTRATION

1. Scope of the policy

This policy and its associated procedures apply to the delivery of training and the award of qualifications by the Montessori Partnership as an awarding body. Where it is delivering training leading to the award of the Level 3 Diploma in Early Learning and Childcare (Early Years Educator) by Innovate Awarding the Montessori Partnership will report any suspected or actual malpractice or administration to Innovate Awarding and will comply with and follow Innovate Awarding's policy and procedures.

Definitions

Malpractice is considered to be a deliberate action or consistent practice which threatens the integrity and undermines the standing of the Montessori Partnership's processes and awards.

Maladministration is considered to be when the organisation's administrative processes, or those of its associates, are operating incorrectly, inefficiently or with unacceptable delay. Maladministration can be either deliberate or accidental, but also undermines the integrity and standing of the Montessori Partnership's awards and activities.

2. Policy statement

In line with its commitment to conduct all its dealings honestly and transparently, the Montessori Partnership endeavours to prevent malpractice and maladministration from occurring at any stage in the development, delivery or assessment of any of its qualifications, or in any of its other activities. If instances of malpractice or maladministration are suspected by the organisation, or alleged by others to have occurred, such allegations will be robustly and fairly investigated. Where sanctions or penalties are imposed these will be reasonable, proportionate and justifiable. Suitable steps will be taken to prevent a recurrence of the situation.

3. Procedures

3.a. Prevention of the occurrence of malpractice and maladministration during:

a. Development

- The Montessori Partnership is committed to developing qualifications that endorse professional training undertaken in line with the principles and practice of the Montessori approach to education, including teacher education, and so undertakes all development work in compliance with its values and underlying principles and its commitment to its learners. The organisation expects that all its partners and associates share this commitment and requires them to commit to this understanding.
- The Montessori Partnership aims to ensure that its awards and qualifications are developed to comply with current relevant legislation, regulation and good practice.
- The Montessori Partnership remains committed to the idea that by striving for excellence in its own procedures and practices relating to the qualifications it awards, its award holders will be inspired to work similarly with children in their chosen professional roles.

b. Delivery

- The Montessori Partnership ensures that its associated centres adhere to the requirements on malpractice and maladministration outlined in their letter of agreement. This is monitored by verification visits.
- The Montessori Partnership provides its associates with guidance on issues relating to malpractice and maladministration when requested to do so.
- The Montessori Partnership ensures that tutors, lecturers and assessors fulfil the descriptions of their roles in their work, and comply with the relevant guidelines it issues from time to time to assist them in this. This is monitored by close scrutiny of their reports, and by observation of their practice.
- The Montessori Partnership ensures that Student Handbooks are up to date, so that students are fully aware of the obligations the Montessori Partnership and its associates must fulfil towards them, and the obligations they themselves must fulfil in relation to their course provider and the awarding body.
- The Montessori Partnership ensures that its associated centres have in place their own policies and procedures on malpractice and maladministration. This is a requirement outlined in the letter of agreement.
- The Montessori Partnership provides training and CPD for its partners and associates to support them in fulfilling their roles to achieve the best outcomes for the students.

c. Assessment

- The Montessori Partnership has in place criteria for each category of assessment and moderation processes to ensure that the criteria are being adhered to in the award of marks. Students are informed what the assessment criteria are, so they have the information they need if they wish to contest the validity of an assessment on the grounds of material irregularity.

- The Montessori Partnership's *Examination and Assessment Regulations* are the basis on which all summative assessment leading to a qualification awarded by the Montessori Partnership is conducted. This is a robust and comprehensive document, outlining the processes and procedures of the organisation's assessment and examinations, and specifying the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved.

3.b. Investigation

- When an allegation of malpractice or maladministration is suspected by, or reported to the Montessori Partnership relating to the Level 3 Diploma in Early Learning and Childcare (Early Years Educator) awarded by Innovate Awarding the matter is reported directly to Innovate Awarding.
- When an allegation of malpractice or maladministration is suspected by, or reported to the Montessori Partnership relating to a qualification for which it is the awarding body it is passed for investigation to the external examiner, who is unconnected with the delivery or assessment any of the courses and has no personal interest in their outcome. Allegations must be reported in writing or in electronic format, and anonymous allegations will not be addressed.
- The external examiner:
 - establishes as full a picture of the circumstances as possible to establish the veracity and reliability of the allegation;
 - where the external examiner judges the alleged event did take place s/he makes a judgement as to the seriousness of the allegation;
 - *if the allegation relates to an action or event which had no effect on the candidates' ability to complete their course in line with their predicted achievement or within the agreed time frame, or on their performance in their summative assessment:*
 - the external examiner makes recommendations for measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the action or event;
 - the external examiner makes recommendations on how to mitigate the effects of the event;
 - the external examiner passes these recommendations to the director for immediate implementation;
 - the external examiner presents a full report to the next meeting of the Assessment Board;
 - the Assessment Board reviews the evidence and decision reached and may make recommendations;
 - the director implements any recommendations from the Assessment Board forthwith.
 - *if the allegation relates to an action or event which resulted in a candidate or candidates failing to complete their course in line with their predicted achievement or within the agreed time frame, or substantially affected their performance in their summative assessment:*
 - the external examiner will request written statements from all parties concerned and notify them of the time frame of the investigation.
 - If the allegation is of an associate centre's malpractice or maladministration, the Montessori Partnership-related activities of the centre will be suspended until the issue is resolved.
 - If the allegation is of an associate's malpractice or maladministration, that individual will be suspended from working with the Montessori Partnership until the issue is resolved.
 - If the allegation is about the conduct or actions of a registered student, no further results will be issued to that student until the issue is resolved.

- the external examiner will call an extraordinary meeting of a panel of 2 members from the Assessment Board who have no connection or any personal interest in the issue under consideration with whom to review the evidence and reach a conclusion about what action to take and what penalties to impose;
- the panel will communicate their decision in writing, or in electronic format to all interested parties;
- where a penalty is imposed or action taken it must be reasonable, proportionate and justifiable;
- parties involved may appeal against the panel's decision. In the event of an appeal a different member of the Assessment Board, or a suitable professional person with no connection with the appellant, is nominated to review all the evidence in the case and arrive at a judgement, which is final.

3.c. Dealing with malpractice and maladministration

- The director ensures that all parties are appropriately notified in writing or by electronic means of the progress and outcome of the investigations, and, where relevant, of the Assessment Board's decision. They are also notified of any adverse ramifications that may ensue, following the allegation.
- The director ensures that all documentation relating to all stages of the process are kept on file.
- The director ensures that any penalties imposed are implemented.
- The director ensures that action plans are put in place where necessary to prevent a recurrence of the circumstances surrounding the allegation.
- The Assessment Board reviews the relevant sections of the assessment criteria and regulations as necessary, to make improvements and ensure clarity.

POLICY ON THE USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT DURING TAUGHT SESSIONS

Students using technological devices in class is distracting for the course tutor, and annoying for the rest of the class because invariably students who are typing on tablets or taking photos miss parts of what's going on and have to have things repeated, which slows everything down and breaks the flow.

Therefore, in order to promote full engagement during class, the use of phones, tablets, laptops and other such devices is not permitted. Students may take photos during practice sessions when they have set the materials up themselves, and are then confident about what their photos represent.

Making notes and drawing diagrams by hand helps students to internalise the knowledge of what is being presented, and working over these notes after the session is over and typing them up helps to consolidate everything and to alert students to anything they may subsequently want to have clarified.

POLICY ON REFUNDS AND CANCELLATIONS

A student's registration for the course on which they have chosen to enrol runs from the date their completed learning agreement is countersigned by a representative of the Montessori Partnership. Once the learning agreement has been signed by both the student and the Montessori Partnership representative it becomes the contract between them.

The student has a 14 day cooling off period from the registration start date, during which time, if they change their mind and decide to withdraw, any money paid in respect of the course will be refunded on

request, less an administration fee of £50.00. Once the cooling off period has expired, a student may cancel his or her registration and withdraw from the course, but no refunds of any payments made are normally given. However, if the student completes a 'withdrawal from course form' we release him or her from any obligations to pay any remaining instalments.

Where a student has paid his or her full course fee at the outset, an amount corresponding to the deposit and the instalments which would have been due up to the date of withdrawal had the student been paying by instalments, will be retained, but the rest of the money is refunded once the student has completed the 'Withdrawal from Course' form.

POLICY ON TRANSFERS

Students registered on a Montessori Partnership course may not transfer their course registration to another person.

They may, however, transfer their unexpired registration time to another Montessori Partnership course for themselves. If the new course costs more than the original one they will be required to pay the difference. No refund will be made if the original course cost more than the new one. In both situations an administrative fee of £50.00 is charged.

If students have not completed their new course by the time their original registration period expires they will have to pay the appropriate re-registration fee to re-register for a further three years. Where possible and relevant they will be given credit for any work they completed on their original course.

POLICY ON RE-REGISTRATION

Montessori Partnership courses run for three years unless described otherwise*. Students who have not completed all the course requirements within the specified time frame, but who wish to continue and complete their studies may do so on payment of a re-registration fee. This is set at 15% of the full course fee currently charged for the course on which they have been registered. They also need to complete a new re-registration learning agreement.

**Note: students who are using a Professional and Career Development Loan to pay for their course must complete all the course requirements within the timeframe mandated by the Skills Funding Agency in respect of the PCDL for the course in question. In the case of any of the three Montessori Partnership courses listed on our PCDL registration as a learning provider, the maximum length of time for which the Skills Funding Agency will pay the interest on a loan is 28 months.*