



Level 3: Forest School Practitioner Training Course Guidance

QCF Level 3 Descriptors:

Students must demonstrate through their work that they:

- 1. have factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge***
- 2. can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas***
- 3. are aware of the nature of the area of study***
- 4. are aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study.***

This is a 12 month course. The 10 training days are the start of your journey to becoming a Forest School leader. We will be spending all day outdoors in all weathers based in the heart of the Kent Weald at the renowned National Pinetum at Bedgebury. It consists of 9 training days run once a week for consecutive weeks with an additional skills assessment & portfolio review day a few months after the last day of the training. You must be able to attend all the days.

During your time with us you will be learning about the Forest School ethos that aids learning and development in children; practical steps for managing behaviour and supporting emotional development.

You will also learn how to plan, deliver and evaluate Forest School sessions and develop appropriate policies and procedures.

We will be putting theory into practice and spending time participating in Forest School activities, learning how to use and demonstrate the use of a variety of hand tools including knives and axes. You will become proficient at fire lighting, knot tying and outdoor cooking. You will also learn about UK woodland ecology.

All of this delivered by our professional and supportive trainers in a fun and relaxed environment. Our communal campfire banquets have become legendary!

The course is made up of five units

- Unit 1: Forest School and the Woodland Environment**
- Unit 2: Learning and Development as a Forest School Programme**
- Unit 3: Practical Skills for a Forest School Programme**
- Unit 4: Planning a Forest School Programme**
- Unit 5: Delivery of a Forest School Programme**

Guidance provided by our certificating body states that this qualification should take around 200 hours to complete with a minimum of 75 hours of contact teaching time and 125 hours of self-directed study.

In addition to attending the training days you will need to:

1. Complete a portfolio of written work with 12 months of the course end date. This is a significant body of work and would be at least 25,000 words. As part of the portfolio students will also need to produce a policies and procedures document which would be an additional 10,000 words.
2. Plan, deliver and evaluate a 6 session Forest School pilot programme.
3. Undertake either of these first aid options:
 - a. A 16-hour ITC outdoor first aid certificate or equivalent.
 - b. A tailored two-day First Aid in the Outdoors, delivered and certified by a provider registered with the HSE
4. If you wish to cook on your pilot programme we recommend doing a Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate

The training and course notes are meant to be a starting point for your Forest School journey. You will be expected to undertake research, develop your practical skills and gain further experience under your own initiative.

Pre-requisites for prospective students:

Students must be 21 years or over and be able to show a current DBS check.

As part of the course students are expected to run their own six session Forest School pilot programme. Before being accepted on to the course you must demonstrate that you have access to a suitable group of children or young people and have gained land owner permission for appropriate woodland or green space in which to run your programme.

This level 3 training is suitable for people who have experience and or qualifications in working with children and young people, or individuals with a background and qualifications in conservation.

This training is recommended for people with a qualification in

- Teaching / teaching assistant
- Youth work
- Conservation/ countryside management
- Play work
- Forest School level 2

If you are unqualified but have regularly volunteered in any of the above roles we will also consider your application.

This list is by no means definitive and if you feel that you have relevant qualifications and experience, please get in touch.