

# Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards SCQF levels 5 to 8 (modular format)



## FlexiFOLA course information

A 'blended learning' approach that makes Forest School training more sustainable, flexible and learner-centred, and easier to fit into busy lives!

It's delivered through a mix of live online seminars, self-paced online study modules and a series of immersive day-long woodland sessions.

**To book:** download booking form from [www.forestschoolltraining.co.uk](http://www.forestschoolltraining.co.uk) and email to [admin@forestschoolscotland.co.uk](mailto:admin@forestschoolscotland.co.uk)

**To make enquiries:** please email [admin@forestschoolscotland.co.uk](mailto:admin@forestschoolscotland.co.uk)

**Forest School Training Collaborative Ltd (FSTC) Course directors:**

Aline Hill (East Scotland) and Mike Brady (West Scotland)

## What equipment I need for the online Zoom sessions?\*

You need an online device of some kind with a 'send and receive' video camera and an ability to hear the audio. A microphone is also essential.

There are times during the sessions where we share documents (word or pdf) for you to download. You may also be asked to create simple text documents during a session. Therefore, we do not recommend using a mobile phone as you will not be able to join in fully with some of the sessions, and you may lack some other required functions.

You can find further information about Zoom's requirements here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-requirements-for-Windows-macOS-and-Linux>

## On this form:

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# Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards

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### About Forest School and 'Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards' (FOLA)

Forest School is an internationally recognised, empowering and creative person-centred approach to supporting the learning and development of children, young people and adults.

Forest School offers participants the opportunity, through repeated visits, to engage sustainably with the richness of our wild environments to help build confidence, curiosity, resilience, problem solving and creativity, compassion, care, sustainable dispositions, and healthy bodies and minds.

FSTC are delighted to have adopted the Scotland-specific Forest School award system, called the 'Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards' (FOLA), having worked with Newbattle Abbey College to develop and pilot them. These awards are formally recognised as Forest School qualifications by the Forest School Association, the UK-wide professional body for Forest School.

The awards support Curriculum for Excellence and the Attainment Challenge in Scotland. They also seek to support the development of skills for Learning, Life and Work to meet the complex demands of a globalised society. [Back to 'On this form'](#)

For more information see:

- Forest School Association: [www.forestschoolassociation.org/what-is-forest-school/](http://www.forestschoolassociation.org/what-is-forest-school/)
- Newbattle Abbey Forest College - [www.newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk/forest-college/](http://www.newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk/forest-college/)
- About Forest School - <http://owlscotland.org/local-options/forest-schools/>

### About the Forest School Training Collaborative (FSTC)

FSTC have been at the heart of Forest School training in the UK and Scotland since the early 2000s. We value and work towards quality and inclusion. Our training is as experiential as possible, because we know that you have to experience Forest School to understand it, and to feel Forest School to be able to work within the ethos with others.

As company directors and lead course tutors, Aline Hill and Mike Brady are passionate Forest School practitioners of many years' experience. They have been delivering highly-regarded Forest School training in Scotland for more than ten years with FSTC. They work regularly with Forestry & Land Scotland, and various councils and education settings within Scotland.

Mike and Aline work with an experienced team of co-leaders, assistants and developing tutors to deliver training. All have long-term experience of Forest School delivery and areas of specialist knowledge. For more information see: [www.forestschooltraining.co.uk/team/](http://www.forestschooltraining.co.uk/team/).

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### Estimated course commitments

#### How much work will I have to do?

See table below for a breakdown of the course contact time (taught hours) and the estimated non-contact time (self-study hours) you will need to commit to.

| SCQF level           | Online seminar hours* | Woodland sessions hours | Self-study hours | Total hours |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| Level 5              | 5.5                   | 12                      | 30.5             | 48          |
| Level 6              | 8                     | 24                      | 28               | 60          |
| Level 6 to 8 step-up | 8                     | 24                      | 88               | 120         |
| Level 8              | 13                    | 48                      | 119              | 180         |

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### What are the entry requirements?

| SCQF level | Recommended entry requirements  |
|------------|---|
| Level 5    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate Literacy SCQF Level 4 or Level 5, or Forest and Outdoor Learning Skills at Level 4.</li> <li>• Be over 16-years of age.</li> <li>• Find and have access to a Forest School programme run by a FSA recognised L3/FOLA L8 qualified Forest Leader.</li> </ul>  |
| Level 6    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate Literacy SCQF Level 5, or Forest and Outdoor Learning Award Level 5 or equivalent.</li> <li>• Be over 16-years of age.</li> <li>• Hold current, clean Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme membership by the time you are assisting with the 3 consecutive sessions of Forest School.</li> <li>• Have experience of working with children or young people.</li> <li>• Find and have access to assisting in 3 consecutive sessions of a Forest School Programme run by an FSA recognised L3/FOLA L8 qualified Forest School leader.</li> </ul>  |
| Level 8    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate Literacy SCQF level 6/7, or Forest and Outdoor Learning Award Level 6 or equivalent.</li> <li>• Be over 18-years of age</li> <li>• Be a qualified teacher, early years, play, youth or support worker (to SCQF level 6 or equivalent) OR compile a portfolio of at least 2 years' experience of working with your chosen client group in a leadership capacity.</li> <li>• Hold a current, clean Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme membership by time of leading 8-session practice block.</li> <li>• Hold a current and relevant First Aid certificate (minimum 2-day Outdoor First Aid or 2-day Paediatric First Aid) <u>by time of leading 8-sessions practice block.</u></li> <li>• Find and have access to a group with whom you will run an introductory 8-week Forest School Programme, including appropriate public and private liability insurance cover.</li> </ul> |

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**Which level of training is for me?** (See also entry requirements above)

### **SCQF Level 5: Developing the Forest School and Outdoor Learning Leader**

**Equivalent to** National 5, National Certificate, National Progression Award, Modern Apprenticeship (SVQ).

**An introduction award**, this takes place through some self-paced study, followed by one 2.5-hour seminar session online and 1.5 days in the woodland. Students also need to observe and reflect on one Forest School session run by a qualified Forest School practitioner. This is organised by the student.

The award is covered in Module 1, which introduces the core units of **Being, Knowing, Working, Making and Learning** in the woodland. [Back to 'On this form'](#)

#### **Module 1 content**

Introduction to the Forest School ethos, behaviour strategies, and learning and teaching including the key contribution of play and self directed learning.

How the above can support positive outcomes for participants.

Nature connection

Being in the forest sustainably and safely, including working with risk assessments

Knowledge and understanding of forest and outdoor environments

Practical skills and creativity in including story, rope and knots and basic tool use

Encouraging others in all of the above

**Level 5 assessment plan** (Candidates are encouraged to suggest alternative ways of evidencing performance criteria and discuss their suitability with their tutor. )

Workbook of short written responses

Student observes and reflects on a Forest School session run by a qualified Forest School practitioner. (This is organised by the student.)

Tutor observed small group discussions during 1 online seminar

Tutor observation of practical skills during woodland sessions

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### SCQF Level 6: Assistant Forest School and Outdoor Learning Leader

Equivalent to Higher and SVQ 3.

**An assistant leader award**, this level of training supports you to become an 'assistant leader', who can support a leader and plan and support learning for small groups learners within a Forest School or other outdoor learning context.

Learners develop skills and understanding in the core units of Being, Knowing, Working and Making in the Forest and Outdoors, and complete units focused on 'Learning' and 'Leading'. Participation in the award should build confidence to move beyond the practice of skills towards collaborating in leading others in forest and outdoor contexts.

Level 6 begins with Module 1 above (some self-paced study, followed by one 2.5-hour seminar session online and 1.5 days in the woodland) and then continues to cover module 2 (some further self-paced study, followed by a 2.5-hour seminar session online and another 1.5 days in the woodland). Students also need to assist on 3 consecutive sessions of Forest School with a qualified Forest School leader. This includes planning, assisting, reflecting and adapting, and supervised leadership of small sub-groups of learners. This is organised by the student. [Back to 'On this form'](#)

#### **Module 2 content** (after completing module 1 - see L5 above)

develop further practical experiences of woodland management, tool use, and an introduction to fire.

explore further useful theory and approaches to person-centred teaching and learning in the outdoors.

demonstrate personal competency in practical skills.

combine the above to plan and test a short session of small-group, person-centred teaching and learning in the outdoors.

continue to develop risk assessment and woodland management skills

**Level 6 assessment plan** (Candidates are encouraged to suggest alternative ways of evidencing performance criteria and discuss their suitability with their tutor. )

Workbook of written responses

Tutor observed small group discussions during 2 online seminars

Tutor observation of practical skills during woodland sessions

Planning, assisting, reflecting and adapting during 3 consecutive sessions with a qualified Forest School leader, including supervised leadership of small sub-groups of learners. (This is organised by student.)

Final reflective workbook focussing on experience of assisting sessions.

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### SCQF Level 8: Forest School and Outdoor Learning Leader

Equivalent to HND, Diploma of Higher Education, and SVQ 4

**A leader award**, this level of training enables you to lead Forest School independently. You will become secure in the knowledge and skills of being with groups in woodland and similar environments, including higher risk activities, and will be confident to share those skills to others. The approach to learning is to focus on people holistically within the forest and outdoor environment, to their mutual benefit.

You will develop your understanding of the process of learning, develop leadership skills, and be able to implement these skills to support the learning of others. You will also become proficient in the overall management of a Forest School or other Forest and Outdoor Learning project, as well as the planning, practice and adaptation of learner-centred pedagogy to create a Forest School programme.

Students must understand the commitment of moving from level 6 to level 8 in terms of the loading of assessment and allocation of time. The additional credit value of moving to level 8 equates to a further 114 hours of learning. This reflects the depth and breadth of running a Forest School for groups of learners. It also demonstrates the shift from level 6 where a leader is supporting other leaders, to level 8 where a leader is responsible for the group and often reports to an organisation and is bound by legislation and guidance. [Back to 'On this form'](#)

**Modules 3 and 4:** Level 8 begins with modules 1 & 2 above (self-paced study, followed by two 2.5-hour seminar session online and 3 days in the woodland). In addition to this, students cover modules 3, 4 and 5. Modules 3 & 4 comprise self-paced study, and two 2.5-hour seminar sessions online. There are also 3 additional full days in the woodland.

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### **Module 3 & 4 content** (after completing modules 1 & 2 - see levels 5 & 6 above)

Explore how values frame and influence approaches to learning and teaching.

Relate theory to practice in learner-centred provision and interaction.

Understand behaviour and positive methods to make a community for learning.

Relate the Forest School principles and criteria for good practice to students own planned provision and context, identifying strengths and challenges and planning to overcome them.

Begin to plan the management and leadership of 8-session practice Forest School programme, including framing key values, identifying appropriate learning and development goals and possible lines of development, and understanding requirements for up to date legal and good practice compliance, including daily operating procedures and (benefit) risk assessment.

Explore strengths and challenges within the intra- and inter-personal skills of leading communities of learning and support teams.

Develop and demonstrate competency in a further range of practical skills

Develop and demonstrate competency in scaffolding others to use tools, ropes and fire in higher risk activities.

### **Level 8 assessment plan** (Candidates are encouraged to suggest alternative ways of evidencing performance criteria and discuss their suitability with their tutor. )

Level 6 workbook of written responses covering modules 1 and 2

Tutor observed small group discussions during 4 online seminar

Tutor observation of range practical skills during woodland sessions, including higher risk tools, rope work and campfire cooking, and scaffolding these skills others

Workbook B, including programme planning , operational handbook and risk assessments, and woodland management plan

Running 8-session practice FS programme, including assessor visit and professional discussion

Workbook C, including session evaluation, observations of three learners, reflection on outcomes and . Some may be covered in professional discussion following delivery assessment



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### Overview of FOLA Leadership Awards

| SCQF level | Unit Title →<br>High level descriptor ↓         | Unit 1<br>Being in the forest | Unit 2<br>Knowing the forest | Unit 3<br>Working in the forest | Unit 4<br>Making in the forest | Unit 5<br>Learning in the forest                    | Unit 6<br>Leading a Forest School        | Unit 7<br>Managing a Forest School   | Unit 8<br>Legal compliance in the outdoors |
|------------|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| 5          | Developing Forest School and Outdoor Leadership | Ethos and understanding       | Knowledge                    | Skills                          | Creativity                     | Pedagogy<br>Ethos<br>Learning                       | Not for Level 5                          |  |  |
| 6          | Assistant Forest School and Outdoor Leader      |                               |                              |                                 |                                |   | Values<br>Purpose<br>Decisions<br>People | Not for Level 6  |  |
| 8          | Forest School and Outdoor Leader                |                               |                              |                                 |                                | Pedagogy<br>Ethos<br>Learning and Evaluate learners |  | Values<br>Purpose<br>Decisions<br>People<br>Teams<br>Community<br>Handbook<br>Evaluation | Implement-ation<br>Planning<br>Evaluation  |

Green units show course content covered for that level.  
Grey units show content not covered for that level.

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