



Colaiste Abaid a' Bhatail Nuaidh

Forest and Outdoor Learning Award at SCQF Level 6 Assistant Forest School and Outdoor Learning Leader Course Guide



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What are the Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards?

The Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards offer a learner centred approach to developing the skills and understanding to work sustainably in forest and outdoor environments.

They have been developed for the Scottish educational context, but have been designed to apply to all forest and outdoor situations. The awards are credit rated to SCQF levels that are recognised internationally.

At their heart the awards help people learn about how to be in forest and outdoor environments in sustainable ways. The awards are grounded in the ethos of 'Forest School' that places the human within the natural environment and supports active and person-centred approaches to learning.

They will support Curriculum for Excellence and the Attainment Challenge in Scotland. The awards seek to support the development of skills for Learning, Life and Work to meet the complex demands of a globalised society.

The awards are developed to achieve SCQF levels 2-6 & 8 and have been developed in consultation with a range of partners including: Local Authorities, colleges, schools, the Forest School Association (FSA), Forest School trainers, Forestry Scotland and leaders of outdoor learning.

The Awards are an innovation in Scotland as they:

- Introduce accreditation of SCQF level 2-6 & 8 to include a wide range of learners and offer clear progression routes to further training or employment
- Meet the requirements of Curriculum for Excellence explicitly
- Develop clear progression routes to further study and employment
- Meet the requirements of the current Forest School Leader system for the Scottish educational context and SCQF credit rating process
- Develop a robust Recognition of Prior Learning Policy to accredit a wide range of experienced educators

Forest and Outdoor Learning Award at SCQF Level 6 -

Assistant Leader: Overview

This award at level 6 is a qualification to assist in leadership of Forest School and outdoor learning. A learner will consolidate the knowledge and skills of being in forest and outdoor spaces and be able to communicate these skills to others. The approach to learning is to focus on the person holistically within the forest and outdoor environment to their mutual benefit. Level 6 supports a person to become an 'Assistant Leader', who would be confident supporting the leadership of groups of other learners in forest and outdoor activities.

Learners will build on core competences in the skills of outdoor woodland learning that will be further developed through experience. Participation in the award should build confidence to move beyond the practice of skills towards collaborating in leading others in forest and outdoor contexts. Qualified and experienced educators, within an organisation or group, working at this level should be able to support others to FOLA Level 4.

Level 6 could be taught in parallel to other levels as all units are progressive. Learners build on the core units of Being, Knowing, Working and Making and complete additional unit focused on 'Learning' and 'Leading'. Learners may benefit from moving from level 5 to level 6 over time as the knowledge, skills and understanding can be developed iteratively through varied curriculum planning and assessment. Alternatively, level 6 may be taught within a group aspiring to level 8.

There are many opportunities to develop Core Skills and integrate with other curriculum areas.

Recommended Entry

Literacy SCQF Level 5 or Forest and Outdoor Learning Award Level 5 or equivalent

Credit Value

The level has an SCQF credit value of 6 and will require 60 notional hours of learning.

Unit 1: Being in the Forest and Outdoors

Level 6

Credit Value 1

Unit Descriptor:

Learners will demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of how to be in the forest and outdoors and operate on sites in a sustainable way.

Learning Outcomes and Performance Criteria:

L01. Learners will support others in self and peer reflection within the context of forest and outdoor environments

Performance Criteria:

- a) Support others in discussion on the importance of the forest and outdoors to human beings, particularly the concept of 'nature connection'
- b) Assist in the leadership of others to develop respect for people in forest and outdoors
- c) Assist in the leadership of others to participate in autonomous activity and play

L02. Learners will take some supervisory responsibility for the behaviour of others in ways that are sustainable in the forest and outdoor environment in relation to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC)

Performance Criteria:

- a) Assist in the leadership of others to behave in ways that demonstrate responsibility in the outdoors
- b) Assist in the leadership of others to demonstrate behaviour that shows respect for the interests of other people in the outdoors
- c) Assist in the leadership of others to demonstrate behaviour that shows care for the environment

L03. Learners will apply, by supporting others, knowledge and understanding of techniques and terminology of safe practice

Performance Criteria:

- a) Apply, by assisting others, safe practice in forest and outdoor environments
- b) Apply, by assisting others, the use of suitable clothing and equipment for a given situation
- c) Produce a basic risk assessment for a given site and session, to support the safety of a participant group

Unit 1 Assessment

1. Tutor Assessment Records

- Observation reports/checklist of achievement of PCs
- Reports of practical activities, and/or professional dialogue, dated and signed
- Evidence Checklist- a checklist is provided to ensure that assessment evidence demonstrates the achievement of the Learning Outcomes to the appropriate level.

2. Learner Evidence

Forms of evidence:

- Learning Journal

Within the journal students should show awareness of the benefits of connection with forest and outdoor environments on well-being.

- Presentation using ICT that shows a mixture of written and visual evidence.
- Record of discussion- written or recorded in video or audio format, complemented by tutor notes

3. Explain the importance of Risk Assessment for group management.

- Comment should be made on the changing risk assessment needs for different client groups and sites

4. Produce a basic of risk assessment.

- Evidence to include the following: site, fire and tools plus other relevant areas to location e.g. collecting natural materials, shelter building, etc.

Unit 2: Knowing the Forest and Outdoors

Level 6

Credit Value 1

Unit Descriptor:

Learners will demonstrate a range of knowledge of woodland and wild environments; and relate this knowledge to demonstrate good practices of conservation.

Learning Outcomes and Performance Criteria:

L01. Describe a range of habitats including woodland habitats and explain how these habitats are managed

Performance Criteria:

- a) Describe the structure of deciduous, coniferous and mixed woodlands
- b) Describe the life cycle of a range of species found in forest or other natural habitats
- c) Identify a range of given flora and fauna
- d) Understand processes of identification and explain why they are important

L02. Learners will relate knowledge of ecology to demonstrate good practices of woodland/land management and conservation

Performance Criteria:

- a) Explain the conservation of woodlands as a sustainable learning environment.
- b) Apply knowledge and understanding to practices that conserve or enhance forest and natural environments
- c) Explain woodland management methods and their significance for sustainability
- d) Explain the importance of management of forests and natural environments

L03. Learners will take responsibility for a site survey

- a) Independently identify and record a range of flora and fauna on a given site

Unit 2 Assessment

1. Tutor Assessment Records

- Observation report/checklist of achievement of PCs
- Reports of practical activities, and/or professional dialogue, dated and signed
- Evidence Checklist- a checklist is provided to ensure that assessment evidence demonstrates the achievement of the Learning Outcomes to the appropriate level.

2. Learner Evidence

Forms of evidence:

- Learning Journal

Within the journal students should show awareness of the benefits of connection with forest and outdoor environments on well-being.

- Presentation using ICT that shows a mixture of written and visual evidence.
- Record of discussion- written or recorded in video or audio format, complemented by tutor notes

3. Site survey

This could include:

- Annotated photographs
- Video 'guided walk'
- Descriptive text
- Sketch notes

If a learner is progressing to level 8, this will inform the Woodland/Land Management plan

Unit 3: Working in the Forest and Outdoors

Level 6

Credit Value 1

Unit Descriptor:

Learners will demonstrate a range of practical skills in forest and outdoor environments.

Learners will assist in the leadership of others to use knowledge of problem-solving skills in different settings within a variety of forest and outdoor environments.

Learners will demonstrate a significant degree of autonomy in basic tasks; they will assist in leading others in basic tasks demonstrating positive interpersonal skills.

Learning Outcomes and Performance Criteria:

- L01. Learners will work independently and collaboratively to successfully assist other to apply a range of skills in different tasks.**

Performance Criteria

- a) Assist others to complete a range of tasks using a variety of skills
- b) Work with others to complete a task that has complex elements
- c) Demonstrate safe working practices

- L02. Learners will use a variety of tools, and assist others, to practice a range of tasks**

Performance Criteria

- a) Demonstrate use of a range of tools used in forest and outdoor learning activities
- b) Use tools to produce a range of items useful within a forest school setting
- c) Demonstrate safe working practices in relation to tools used
- d) Produce a Risk Assessment to ensure safe system of work and explain the benefits in relation to the client group
- e) Maintain and store tools appropriately

L03. Learners will use cord, and assist others, in order to participate in a range of tasks.

Performance Criteria

- a) Be able to tie a range of knots for a variety of given tasks
- b) Use cord in a range of given situations to complete tasks independently
- c) Maintain and store cordage / rope appropriately
- d) Help others apply a Risk Assessment to ensure safe practice with ropes in a range of situations e.g. rope swings, shelter building

L04. Learners will be able to assist others to work with fire in a range of situations

Performance Criteria

- a) Assist others to build, manage and extinguish a fire
- b) Assist others to safely boil water on a camp fire
- c) Cook a variety of food paying particular attention to food safety and hygiene
- d) Assist others apply a Risk Assessment to ensure safe practice with fire

L05. Learners will be developing knowledge of different woodland and/or land management skills

Performance Criteria

- a) Demonstrate at least two practical woodland management tasks
- b) Explain the reasons for undertaking woodland/land management tasks appropriate to the site

Unit 3 Assessment

1. Tutor Assessment Records

- Observation record/checklist of achievement of PCs
- Reports of practical activities, and/or professional dialogue, dated and signed
- Evidence Checklist- a checklist is provided to ensure that assessment evidence demonstrates the achievement of the Learning Outcomes to the appropriate level.

2. Learner Evidence

Forms of evidence:

- Learning Journal

Within the journal students should show awareness of the benefits of connection with forest and outdoor environments on well-being.

- Presentation using ICT that shows a mixture of written and visual evidence.
- Record of discussion- written or recorded in video or audio format, complemented by tutor notes

3. Woodland/Land Management Summary

- Summary of basic requirements for the management of the woodland or outdoor site- presented through talk/writing/audio-visual form
- Could be presented as part of the Learning Journal, or separately
- This could contribute to unit 7 in the Level 8 Award

Indicative content for L02-5

Using hand tools

A range of hand tools to cover (*but not limited to*) the range of operations below:

Low risk:

- Sawing
- Drilling

High Risk

- Cutting
- Whittling
- Splitting
- Carving
- Ensuring task/tool and the woodland materials chosen are

appropriate

- Refer to country appropriate legislation relating to tools

Basic tool maintenance might include:

- Cleaning, drying and oiling
- Stropping
- Changing blades
- Checking tool condition prior to use
- Identifying when tools need taken out of circulation
- Methods of tool maintenance
- Completion of tool maintenance log

Rope/cord maintenance and storage

- Cleaning and drying
- Checking rope/cord condition prior to use
- Identifying when rope/cord needs to be taken out of circulation
- Storage

Knots

The range of applications:

- a) Join two ropes together
- b) Attaching a rope to an object
- c) Attaching two objects together
- d) Tensioning a rope
- e) Stopping slippage on ropes

Example of useful knots: figure of eight; clove hitch; round turn and two half hitches; timber hitch; square lashing; slippery figure of eight; bowline; sheet bend.

Camp Fire

- Purpose
- Safety equipment
- Safe positioning
- Woodland Type
- Soil Type
- Permissions
- Site conditions
- Escape routes
- Legislation

Managing the surrounding area

- Seating distances away from fire pit
- Minimising ecological impact

Building fire

- Fire pit base and surround
- Fire Lays for different purposes
- Non-toxic types of wood to burn
- Weather

Lighting fire

- Fire lighting using range of methods including fire strikers
- Tinder, kindling and fuel

Managing fire

- Fire triangle
- Size and type of fire
- Management of resources

Cooking with fire

- Methods of cooking
 - Boiling /steaming
 - Frying
 - Baking
 - Roasting
- Over camp fire and/or the following:
 - Storm kettle,
 - Butane stove
 - Multi fuel stove
- With reference to Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP`s) for higher risk food groups
- Desirable: Information about Level 2 outdoor food safety training

Extinguishing Fires

- To include permanent and temporary fires.
- Demonstrate understanding of geographical context minimizing ecological impact:
 - Soils
 - Woodland ecology
 - Leave no trace principles
 - Cross reference to management plan and ecological impact
- Assessment

Unit 4: Making in the Forest and Outdoors

Level 6

Credit Value- 1

Unit Descriptor:

Learners will assist others to demonstrate a range of knowledge, skills and understanding and apply them to practical and creative activities in a range of environments. Learners will assist others in a range of problem-solving skills and apply a range of knowledge in different settings within familiar forest and outdoors environments. Learners will assist others to engage imaginatively with the forest environment.

Learning Outcomes and Performance Criteria:

- LO 1. Learners will assist in leading others to apply knowledge and skills to make meaningful outcomes in practical forest and outdoor based activities

Performance Criteria

- a) Work independently to plan a simple activity such as making a skewer or mallet. Consideration should be given to aims & objectives, resources and skills required and the group involved
- b) Assist participants in the above tasks
- c) Assist participants to evaluate the process or how skills were used to address the challenge and adapted to solve problems

- LO 2. Learners will use knowledge and skills to assist in leading others to approach challenges in the forest and outdoors

Performance Criteria

- a) Assist in the leadership of others to participate in a practical challenge with some non-routine elements such as making a shelter for a particular purpose, fire for cooking or other tasks
- b) Assist others to solve problems to support basic needs including making a group shelter
- c) Facilitate participants to reflect on their approaches to challenges and problems encountered during the activity.

- LO 3. Learners will assist in leading others to respond imaginatively to the forest environment

Performance Criteria

- a) Assist in leading others in one or more creative activities involving natural materials such as storytelling, wood craft, visual art or digital media
- b) Assist in leading participants in evaluating the activities undertaken above and activity and plan for future work

Unit 4 Assessment

1. Tutor Assessment Records

- a. Observation report/checklist of achievement of PCs
- b. Reports of practical activities, and/or professional dialogue, dated and signed
- c. Evidence Checklist- a checklist is provided to ensure that assessment evidence demonstrates the achievement of the Learning Outcomes to the appropriate level.

2. Learner Evidence

Forms of evidence:

a. Learning Journal

The learner should provide a record of how they have worked with others to engage in 'making' processes during their work in the forest and outdoor learning environment. This may be photographs of what they have built, or a record of a story they have told, or any other form that conveys their 'making' activities.

b. Presentation using ICT that demonstrates a combination of written and visual evidence.

c. Record of discussion- written or recorded in video or audio format, complemented by tutor notes

Unit 4 Indicative Content

Items made with natural materials:

Detailed instructions and photographic evidence for making at least 4 items using a range of techniques (*including but not limited to*)

- Woven
- Joined
- Shaped
- Carved
- Split

with at least 2 of the items made using woodworking hand tools

Temporary group shelters (tarpaulin/natural woodland materials) considering the following:

- Weather conditions
- Construction and dismantling
- Group
- Site conditions/natural materials available
- Purpose
- Minimising ecological impact

Imaginative responses/creative arts:

- Storytelling
- Drama/imaginative role play
- Visual art using natural objects
- 3 dimensional art/sculpture
- Musical response

Unit 5- Learning in the Forest

Unit Level: 6

Credit Value: 1

Unit Descriptor:

Learners will develop their understanding of ethos, behaviour and theoretical approaches to learning and teaching and consider how these can support positive outcomes for participants.

Learning Outcomes and Performance Criteria

L01. Learners will explain how the **ethos** of Forest School can support holistic development

Performance Criteria

- a) Explain how the Forest School ethos and principles compliment approaches to learning
- b) Describe person-centred holistic approaches to learning situations
- c) Explain the importance of learning in the forest and outdoors in relation to personal and social development
- d) Explain how forest and outdoor learning can relate to health and well being

L02. Learners will support positive outcomes for participants through an understanding and application of a variety of **learning and teaching** methods

Performance Criteria

- a) Apply a range of methods in the delivery of learning and teaching to ensure participants needs are catered for
- b) Reflect on own learning experiences and evaluate how this impacts on the learning of others.

L03. Learners will apply understanding of **behaviour** within forest and outdoor learning

Performance Criteria:

- a) Explain how behaviour impacts on learning and development.
- b) Describe the factors relating to meeting the behavioural needs of participants in order to support positive behaviour e.g. additional support needs, cultural background, equality of access
- c) Describe the social and emotional needs of participants when understanding their behaviour
- d) Describe the positive approaches used to support behaviour management e.g. restorative practice, non-confrontational language, working within organisational systems

L04. Learners will apply an understanding of **self-directed activity, or play**, as a central aspect of the ethos of Forest School

Performance Criteria

- a) Describe the key characteristics of play and its role in forest and outdoor learning
- b) Produce a risk assessment for play and self-directed activities in relation to the benefits to learning.

L05. Learners will **reflect** on their own learning about Forest School.

Performance Criteria

- a) Evaluate personal experience and areas for further development in the Forest School training process.

Unit 5 Assessment

This unit is the most theoretical aspect of the level 6 qualification. It is also credit-rated at level 7 to value the significant step up in terms application of knowledge and understanding. Assessment is therefore grounded in activities that demonstrate knowledge, understanding and reflection which are applied to practical situations.

Central to the assessment of *Unit 5 is assisting in the delivery of at least three Forest School sessions*. This feedback from this observation will contribute to the reflection required in the assessment of units 5 and 6.

It is important that the assessment method chosen suits the candidate. This may mean that different learners, even within the same group present evidence in different formats depending on their preferred learning style, previous learning and experience.

Some learners will need to do significant research if they are not familiar with different theories of learning or pedagogy. It may be appropriate for some to complete more extended written responses. Others, with previous experience or study, may be able to demonstrate evidence of the Performance Criteria through professional discussion within taught sessions or via a presentation.

Evidence may be demonstrated by more than one method. In all cases the Assessment Checklist will be completed to demonstrate completion of the Performance Criteria. Assessment will therefore be through observation, professional discussion, reflective, journal or extended written response under the Performance Criteria headings:

1. Ethos

Understand the Forest School principles and criteria for good practice as agreed by the UK Forest School community.

The learner will also demonstrate an understanding of the challenges of implementing the principles and criteria with a planned approach to overcome them.

Summarise how the Forest School principles apply to own programme.

Give examples of ways in which Forest School encourages physical development and well-being.

Give examples of ways in which Forest School encourages social and emotional development and well-being including:

- self-esteem
- confidence
- resilience
- spiritual development

Give examples of ways in which Forest School encourages intellectual development including:

- creativity
- independent learning
- emotional Intelligence

2. Learning and Teaching: Pedagogy

Explain understanding of how educational values can lead to different approaches to learning and teaching in practice

Learners may refer to different theories of learning and their relevance to Forest School.

This knowledge and understanding can be illustrated in Unit 7 with reference to the participants own 'Introduction to Forest School Programme.'

3. Behaviour

Demonstrate understanding of internal/external factors in Forest School and in the wider lives of all adults and children, including but not limited to:

- social
- environmental
- biological
- neural development

A non-judgmental approach to behaviour considers how needs (met and unmet) impact on neural development and how this is expressed as behaviours.

Explain how these behaviours then impact on the learning and development of individuals and others at Forest School.

4. Play/self-directed activity

Be aware of widely recognised principles of play, e.g. Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and current play work practice; 'Loose Play' (Scottish Government 2016)

Unit 6- Leading a Forest School

Unit Level: 6

Credit Value: 1

Unit Descriptor

Learners will demonstrate developing skills of leadership: purpose and values; intrapersonal and interpersonal skills; community and team building; and decision making. Learners will assist in the leadership of three sessions as part of a forest and outdoor learning programme.

L01. Learners will apply knowledge and understanding of the purpose and values of forest school in different contexts

Performance Criteria:

- a) Explain potential benefits of Forest School and outdoor learning for learners
- b) Explain the growth of Forest School
- c) Explain the importance of forest and outdoor learning based on learning theory and research

L02. Learners will be able to understand and contribute to decisions about learning and development within forest and outdoor learning

Performance Criteria:

- a) Describe learner centred theories and pedagogy in supporting sessions for participants
- b) Support the learning of practical skills for individual learners and groups
- c) Understand how Risk Assessment supports learning
- d) Use a recognised range of techniques when interacting with individuals or groups, for example: open questions, invitations, participation by choice, modelling...
- e) Demonstrate good practices of behaviour management, for example: restorative practice, collaborative approaches, contracting

L03. Learners demonstrate developing intrapersonal and interpersonal skills

Performance Criteria:

- a) Understand the importance of self-management of emotions, actions and decisions in the context of supporting a group
- b) Develop communication skills
- c) Maintain professional relationships within a team

Unit 6 Assessment

Assessment could be unit by unit or joined up through integrated tasks. It is likely that assessors will use a combination of assessment tools.

Learners will demonstrate core skills of spoken and/or written communication; use portable technology to record and demonstrate achievement.

Learners will demonstrate basic evaluation of some aspects of their learning.

1. Assist in the Leadership of 3 forest and outdoor learning sessions- this will inform other assessments.

2. Tutor Assessment Records

a. Observation of achievement of PCs Reports of practical activities, and/or professional dialogue, dated and signed

c. Evidence Checklist- a checklist is provided to ensure that assessment evidence demonstrates the achievement of the Learning Outcomes to the appropriate level.

3. Learner Evidence

Forms of evidence:

a. Learning Journal

The learner should provide a record of how they have worked with others to engage in 'making' processes during their work in the forest and outdoors. This may be photographs of what they have built, or a record of a story they have told, or any other form that conveys their 'making' activities.

b. Presentation using ICT that demonstrates a combination of written and visual evidence.

c. Record of discussion- written or recorded in video or audio format, complemented by tutor notes