

Qualification Specification

QNUK Level 2 Award for Forest School Assistants (RQF)

603/7786/0

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Contact Us.....	1
3. Version Number.....	1
4. Qualification Objective	2
5. Sector Support and Industry Recognition.....	2
6. Geographical Coverage of this Qualification	2
7. Benefit for Learners	2
8. Progression	2
9. Recognition of Prior Learning	2
10. Complementary Courses	2
11. Qualification Information	2
12. Qualification Structure.....	3
13. Learner Entry Requirements.....	3
14. Delivery	3
14.1. Venue Requirements.....	3
14.2. Equipment Requirements.....	3
14.3. Blended Learning.....	4
14.4. Trainer to Learner Ratio	4
14.5. Recommended Resources	4
15. Centre Personnel Requirements.....	4
16. Assessment Requirements	4
16.1. Portfolio of evidence	4
17. Moderation	5
18. Resits.....	5
19. Reasonable Adjustments	5
20. Results.....	5
Appendix 1: Units	6

1. Introduction

Qualifications Network Limited (QNUK) is an Awarding Organisation recognised and regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations (Ofqual) in England, the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) in Northern Ireland and Qualifications Wales.

This specification outlines key information required by users of the qualification to ensure they can make an informed decision about the suitability of the qualification they are taking or proposing to take for the purposes that they intend to use it.

2. Contact Us

Please get in touch if you need any advice or guidance with this qualification.

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3. Version Number

Centres should make sure they are using the most up to date document by checking the footer which will confirm the current version number.

Document owner	Qualifications Manager
Date last updated	13/08/2021
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4. Qualification Objective

This qualification has several objectives, including:

- preparing learners to progress to a qualification in the same subject area but at a higher level or requiring more specific knowledge, skills and understanding
- preparing learners for employment
- supporting a role in the workplace,

5. Sector Support and Industry Recognition

Our Forest School qualifications have been supported by the Forest school association (<https://forestschoollassociation.org>) and is one of the qualifications required should learners wish to progress to recognition as a forest school provider.

6. Geographical Coverage of this Qualification

This qualification is available in England, Wales, and Internationally

7. Benefit for Learners

This qualification is designed to enable to the learner to competently support Forest School sessions. The learner is likely to be developing skills and knowledge to progress to running their own sessions.

8. Progression

Learners could progress to the:

- QNUK level 3 Certificate for Forest School Leaders (RQF)
- Employment as a forest school assistant

9. Recognition of Prior Learning

QNUK are unable to accept requests for recognition of prior learning (RPL) for this qualification

10. Complementary Courses

Learners may also wish to attend the QNUK Level 3 Award in Forest School First Aid (RQF)

11. Qualification Information

Qualification Number (QN)	603/7786/0
Learning Aim	60377860
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	70
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	54
Credit value	7
Level	2
Validity	Lifetime
Assessment	Portfolio of evidence
Achieving the qualification	Learners must achieve the 2 mandatory units

12. Qualification Structure

Unit No.	Unit Title	Level	GLH	TQT	Credit
Mandatory units					
L/618/8258	Supporting a Forest School Programme: Learning and Development	2	30	40	4
R/618/8259	Supporting a Forest School Programme: Practical Skills	3	24	30	3
Optional units					
	N/A				
Additional units					
	N/A				

The learning outcomes for the qualification may be found in Appendix 1. The Assessment Guidance details the assessment criteria which are used to determine if a learner has met the requirements of the learning outcomes. Further depth of coverage is also provided in the Assessment Guidance.

13. Learner Entry Requirements

There are no specific recommended prior learning requirements for this qualification. Entry is at the discretion of the centre; however, learners should be aged 16 years and over to take this qualification.

Learners must have sufficient command of the English language to understand and undertake the recommended assessment methods for this qualification.

Learners should have access to a forest school where they will be able to assist a forest school leader

There are no other pre-requisites for this qualification. However, learners should be able to work at level 2 and above.

14. Delivery

Learners should complete the qualification within 2 years.

14.1. Venue Requirements

The training venue should be suitable for learning and meet all relevant Health and Safety requirements, land owner's permission should be gained. A suitable area for a fire must be available.

14.2. Equipment Requirements

A variety of equipment should be available for children to play and discover in the outdoor environment. In addition the following should also be available:

- A range of hand tools should be available
- Equipment for providing appropriate shelter such as a canopy or wind breakers.

14.3. Blended Learning

Blended learning is accepted for this qualification where elements of theory are covered. Due to the nature of the qualification and its purpose, learners are expected to spend a significant amount of the guided learning hours in the presence of their trainer/assessor in an outdoor setting.

14.4. Trainer to Learner Ratio

The maximum Trainer to learner ratio for this qualification is 1:12. This number may be reduced for individual activities as per the risk assessment for the session.

14.5. Recommended Resources

Due to the wide range of skills and knowledge required of a forest school assistant a range of resources should be accessed. These may include:

- Edible and Medicinal Wild Plants of Britain and Ireland
- A Year of Forest School: Outdoor Play and Skill-building Fun for Every Season
- Forest School Wild Play: Outdoor Fun with Earth, Air, Fire & Water
- Forest School for All
- Risk and Adventure in Early Years Outdoor Play: Learning from Forest Schools

Trainers may recommend other resources to learners that align to the forest School ethos.

15. Centre Personnel Requirements

This qualification is delivery by suitably qualified trainers. Trainers and assessors should:

- Hold a current teaching or training qualification such as the Level 3 Award in education and Training or 12 Credit PTLLS, and
- Hold a Level 3 Forest School Leader Qualification, and
- Have a minimum of 2 years experience, post qualification, leading a forest school with at least one long term (i.e. through the seasons) programme with a variety of client groups and
- Hold a first aid qualification of at least 16 hours in duration which includes an outdoor element and
- Have professional and public liability insurance

Internal quality assurers should hold the same requirements for the trainer/assessor but also hold a Level 4 Qualification in internal quality assurance of assessment.

Please note whilst centre personnel may be approved for both roles, those assigned the role of Trainer/Internal Verifier are not permitted to operate in both these roles for any learner.

16. Assessment Requirements

Learners are assessed for this qualification through:

16.1. Portfolio of evidence

Learners are assessed for this qualification using a portfolio of evidence. The portfolio can include a range of assessment methods including:

- Short answer questions
- Record of professional discussions
- Observation of practical tasks/activities
- Product of work

- Video recordings
- Witness testimony

Language of assessment	English
Duration	As required
Pass mark	100%
Grading	Pass / Fail

17. Moderation

The level of external moderation required for this qualification will be risk based and in line with the Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny Strategy applicable to this qualification.

There may be situations within the centre devised assessment methodology that require observations, in these situations QNUK EQA Department will also require to conduct verification visits to ensure the accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions.

QNUK EQA Department will advise the centre of the required levels of moderation/verification to anticipate for this qualification upon centre approval for delivery.

18. Resits

As this qualification is evidence based, resits are not required; however, appropriate referral of submitted work from the learner may be used where additional detail or depth of knowledge is required.

19. Reasonable Adjustments

Learners are required to complete the assessments in a manner appropriate to the purpose of the qualification.

The prescribed assessment methods for this qualification should not unfairly disadvantage learners who would otherwise be able to demonstrate competence in line with the purpose of the qualification. Learners should contact their centre to discuss reasonable adjustment if they feel the prescribed assessment methods would disadvantage them.

20. Results

The centre is required to submit learner results within 10 working days of assessment to Qualifications Network UK for moderation. We will issue verified results and appropriate certification to the approved centre within 7 working days of receiving the results. Centres will forward results and/or certificates to learners, who can expect to receive them within 20 working days of taking the assessment. If learners have not received results and/or certificates within 25 working days, they should contact the centre in the first instance.

Appendix 1: Units

Unit 1 Supporting a Forest School Programme: Learning and Development (L/618/8258)

Unit Summary

This unit gives learners an introductory knowledge and understanding of the Forest School pedagogy and approach to Learning and Development.

1. The learner will: Understand the Forest School ethos, principles and holistic approach to learning and development.		
Assessment Guidance The learner must		Types of Evidence
1.1	Summarise the Forest School approach to learning and how this supports holistic development.	Portfolio

2. The learner will: Know how experiences can support learning and development at a Forest School.		
Assessment Guidance The learner must		Types of Evidence
2.1	Summarise the key characteristics of play and its role at Forest School.	Portfolio
2.2	Explain, giving examples, how play and choice have been integrated into Forest School programmes.	Portfolio
2.3	Describe how to develop a community of learning by meeting the needs of all participants, giving examples from own Forest School experiences.	Portfolio

3. The learner will: Be able to perform the role of Assistant at a Forest School in relation to the Forest School ethos, principles and criteria.		
Assessment Guidance The learner must		Types of Evidence
3.1	Describe the role of the Forest School Assistant mapping to the Forest School ethos and principles, giving examples from own Forest School experience.	Portfolio
3.2	Assist with the planning and delivery of three consecutive Forest School sessions.	Portfolio
3.3	Assist with the evaluations of the three consecutive Forest School sessions, showing how observations and evaluations inform future session plans.	Portfolio
3.4	Use observations of one participant over three consecutive sessions to assess the impact of Forest School on their learning and development.	Portfolio

4. The learner will: Know how to reflect on own Forest School training.		
Assessment Guidance The learner must		Types of Evidence
4.1	Summarise own development and learning gained whilst training to be a Forest School Assistant.	Portfolio

Assessment guidance	
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the Forest School ethos, principles and criteria for good practice as agreed by the UK Forest School community, which can be found at: http://www.forestschoollassociation.org/full-principles-andcriteria- for-good-practice/ Explain how Forest School promotes holistic development giving examples Cross referencing to session evaluations/observations
2.1	<p>(Direct from L3 – L & D 2.1 & 2.2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to widely recognised principles of play, Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and current play work practice. Links will need to be made to the Play Policy in the Forest School handbook. Evidence to be drawn from the learners’ plans, observations and evaluations during their ‘Introduction to Forest School Programme’
2.2	
2.3	<p>(Direct from part of L3 – L & D 4.3)</p> <p>The learner will reflect how a community of learning has been developed, considering the effectiveness of a range of strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During training During ‘Introduction to Forest School Programme’
3.1	<p>What is the role of the Forest School Assistant? Understanding should be mapped to the Forest School Ethos and Principles. This could be presented (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job description Detailed mind map Written explanation
3.2	<p>Assisting with the planning, delivery and evaluations of 3 consecutive sessions with the same children on the same site. Session plans to include (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weather check Site check Staffing Resources ie kit, craft resources, refreshments and handbook Safety & welfare equipment Risk Benefit Assessments for the experiences in that particular session Possible Lines of Development: linking to the learning and development needs of the individuals in the group demonstrating how your planning has been informed by the previous session. <p>(The learner is not required to plan the three sessions in advance, as each session will be informed by the previous session).</p> <p>Other areas to include on the session plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a safe community of learning Establishing group expectations Opportunities for self-directed learning and play Opportunities for holistic development Opportunities for participant reflection
3.3	<p>Forest School Programme Evaluation</p> <p>Documented evidence from each session with objective observations about what actually happened compared to the plan</p>

	<p>Reflection on each session, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What worked well/didn't work well • Key learning and development aspects for participants and leaders • Recommendations to inform the next session plan
3.4	<p>Observations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented evidence of objective observations from each session, for each of the three participants • Evaluation of the above observations to assess the impact on the learning and development of the three participants
4.1	<p>(4.1 based on part of L3 - L & D 5.1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners to be alerted to this assessment criteria on day 1 of training • Offer a range of approaches in ongoing personal reflective practice

Rationale for level			
	Level	Emphasis	Comments
Knowledge	2	Strong	N/A
Skills	2	Good	
Overall	2		

Rationale for TQT and credit			
	Hours	Comments	
Guided learning	30	The learner will undertake a number of guided learning hours, some of this will be within the forest school setting. Some independent research will be required and a portfolio compiled	
Directed study	N/A		
Independent study	3		
Work-based learning	2		
Non invigilated assessment	5		
TQT:	40	Credit:	4

Unit 2 Supporting a Forest School Programme: Practical Skills (R/618/8259)

Unit Summary

Learners will gain practical skills to be able to support a Forest School leader

1. The learner will: Understand the structure of woodlands.		
Assessment Guidance The learner must		Types of Evidence
1.1	Compare the structures and biodiversity of native broadleaf and coniferous woodland eco systems.	Portfolio

2. The learner will: Know how to identify a range of flora and fauna and understand the importance of identification.		
Assessment Guidance The learner must		Types of Evidence
2.1	Identify a range of woodland flora and fauna for own site, detailing identifying characteristics for each species.	Portfolio

3. The learner will: Be able to manage the ecological impact of a Forest School programme.		
Assessment Guidance The learner must		Types of Evidence
3.1	Assess the ecological impact of running Forest School programmes on own site.	Portfolio

4. The learner will: Understand the role of risk assessment at Forest School.		
Assessment Guidance The learner must		Types of Evidence
4.1	Define the terms 'hazard' and 'risk' with reference to Forest School.	Portfolio

5. The learner will: Be able to carry out a site risk assessment and a risk-benefit assessment.		
Assessment Guidance The learner must		Types of Evidence
5.1	Carry out a site risk assessment and a risk- benefit assessment related to an experience at Forest School.	Portfolio

6. The learner will: Be able to apply a range of practical skills relevant to a Forest School Programme.		
Assessment Guidance The learner must		Types of Evidence
6.1	Select and use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing for working in a range of situations at Forest School.	Portfolio
6.2	Safely check, clean, maintain and store at Forest School: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools • Ropes/cords. 	Portfolio/ obs
6.3	Safely use different hand tools for a range of applications at Forest School.	Portfolio/ obs

6.4	Tie and use a range of knots selecting ropes/cords for different applications at Forest School.	Portfolio/ obs
6.5	Safely make a range of craft items using woodland materials.	Portfolio/ obs
6.6	Erect temporary group shelters using tarpaulin/natural woodland materials.	Portfolio/ obs
6.7	Safely site, build, light and manage a campfire suitable for purpose.	Portfolio/ obs
6.8	Extinguish a fire and leave the site safe.	Portfolio/ obs

Assessment guidance	
1.1	<p>This AC is directly from L3 FS Programmes & Woodland – it is now wider than just woodland layers as was previously in L2)</p> <p>Identify and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vertical layers: below ground, ground, field, shrub, understorey, canopy • Horizontal features may include (but not limited to): rides, banks, hedges, edges, glades, water, aspect (geography) and topography. <p>Discussion of related ecological terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity • Abiotic elements eg soil and water • Natural succession • Eco-systems • Habitats • Life-cycles • Seasonality • Food chains and webs • The effect of light and photosynthesis • Wildlife corridors in relation to ecosystems
2.1	<p>This AC is directly from L3 FS Programmes & Woodland - 2.2 only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail identifying traits and information for at least 20 species across a range of flora and fauna (may include but not limited to) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Physical description including colour, size, scent etc ○ Habitat ○ Life-cycle ○ Ecological niche ○ Relevant Health & Safety ○ Uses ○ Folklore ○ History

3.1	<p>This AC is directly from part of the L3 Planning & Preparing AC 2.1 – the remaining areas would need to be covered in a top up to L3 training)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological survey – ie Flora, Fauna, Abiotic Elements • Special features • Type and level of impact • Mitigations
4.1	Define hazard and risk giving examples from own Forest School sessions
5.1	Create 2 different risk/benefit assessments for the site and for an experience at Forest School referring to the Health & Safety Executive’s 5 steps approach to risk management, with the addition of a benefit analysis.
6	<p>The following AC for learning outcome 6 are taken directly from the new L3 Practical Skills unit however the cooking AC has not been included for this level. However for:</p> <p>6.3 If someone is topping up to L3 – it is expected that far more time is spent on training tool use in order to top up to Level 3.</p> <p>6.5 If someone is topping up to L3 – they need to make an additional 2 items (minimum) and it is expected that far more time is spent on training of making craft items in order to top up to Level 3.</p>
6.1	<p>Clothing and PPE – Personal Protective Equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across the 4 seasons • Minimum fire and tools plus (<i>but not limited to</i>) one other experience e.g. collecting natural materials, shelter building etc.
6.2	<p>Tool and rope/ cord maintenance Basic tool maintenance is to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>Rope/cord maintenance and storage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning and drying • Checking rope/cord condition prior to use • Identifying when rope/cord needs to be taken out of circulation • Storage
6.3	<p>Using hand tools A minimum of 4 hand tools to cover (<i>but not limited to</i>) the range of operations below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sawing • Cutting • Drilling • Whittling • Splitting • Carving <p>Ensuring task/tool and the woodland materials chosen are appropriate. Refer to country appropriate legislation relating to tools</p>
6.4	<p>Knots The range of applications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join two ropes together • Attaching a rope to an object • Attaching two objects together

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tensioning a rope • Stopping slippage on ropes
6.5	<p>Items made with natural materials Detailed instructions and photographic evidence for making at least 2 items using a range of techniques (<i>including but not limited to</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woven • Joined • Shaped • Carved <p>with at least 2 items made using woodworking hand tools</p>
6.6	<p>Temporary group shelters (tarpaulin/natural woodland materials) considering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather conditions • Construction and dismantling • Group • Site conditions/natural materials available • Purpose • Minimising ecological impact
6.7	<p>Camp Fire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose • Safety equipment • Safe positioning • Woodland Type • Soil Type • Permissions • Site conditions • Escape routes • Legislation <p>Managing the surrounding area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating distances away from fire pit • Minimising ecological impact <p>Building fire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire pit base and surround • Fire Lays for different purposes • Non-toxic types of wood to burn • Weather <p>Lighting fire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire lighting using range of methods including fire strikers • Tinder, kindling and fuels <p>Managing fire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire triangle • Size and type of fire • Management of resources
6.8	<p>Extinguishing Fires</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To include permanent and temporary fires. • Show understanding of geographical context minimising ecological impact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ soils ○ woodland ecology. • Leave no trace principles • Cross reference to management plan and ecological impact assessment

Rationale for level			
	Level	Emphasis	Comments
Knowledge	3	Good	
Skills	3	Strong	
Overall	3		

Rationale for TQT and credit			
	Hours	Comments	
Guided learning	24		
Directed study	N/A		
Independent study	6		
Work-based learning	N/A		
Non invigilated assessment	N/A		
TQT:	30	Credit:	30