



Forest School leader awards for Scotland
Forest & Outdoor Learning Awards (FOLA)
SCQF-accredited training levels 5 to 8

Qualification information

View **available course dates** here

<https://www.forestschoolltraining.co.uk/training/fs-training-dates-booking/>

To book, follow the booking form link beside each course and complete the online application form.

On this form:

- About Forest School and the 'Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards' (FOLA)
- About FSTC
- Estimated course commitments
- Which level of training is for me?
- Course entry requirements

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 an awarding centre for the Scotland-specific Forest School award system, called the 'Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards' (FOLA). Director Aline Hill 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 (see <https://forestschoollassociation.org/forest-school-qualification/>).

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.

For more information see:

- Forest School Association: www.forestschoollassociation.org/what-is-forest-school/
- Newbattle Abbey Forest College - www.newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk/forest-college/
- About Forest School - <http://owlsotland.org/local-options/forest-schools/>

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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. Valuing and working towards quality and inclusion, FSTC ensure all their trainers and associates offer courses that are as experiential as possible – you have to experience Forest School to understand it, and to feel Forest School to be able to work within the ethos with others.

Directors Mike Brady and Aline Hill and a team of qualified, experienced tutors and associate tutors deliver training. All have long-term, diverse experience of Forest School delivery and areas of specialist knowledge.

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*	Self-paced video time	Woodland sessions hours	Remaining self study hours	Total hours
Level 5	5.5	2	12	29	48
Level 5 to 6 step up	8	3.5	12	24.5	48
Level 5 to 8 step up	13	7	36	119	168
Level 6	8	3.5	24	24.5	60
Level 6 to 8 step-up	8	3	24	88	120
Level 8	13	7	48	112	180

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

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

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

An introductory 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.

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.)

Participation in small group discussions during online seminar, with short notes on your contributions scribed by a peer (optional))

Tutor observation of practical skills during woodland sessions

Qualification information

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.

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

Participation in small group discussions, with short notes on your contributions scribed by a peer during 2 online seminars (optional)

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.

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.

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

Workbooks of written responses

Participation in small group discussions, with short notes on your contributions scribed by a peer during 4 online seminars (optional)

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

Running 8-session practice FS programme, including FSTC assessor visit during one session

Option for professional discussion

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SCQF level	Recommended entry requirements
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate Literacy SCQF Level 4 or Level 5, or Forest and Outdoor Learning Skills at Level 4. • Be over 16-years of age. • Find and have access to a Forest School programme run by a FSA recognised L3/FOLA L8 qualified Forest Leader.
Level 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate Literacy SCQF Level 5, or Forest and Outdoor Learning Award Level 5 or equivalent. • Be over 16-years of age. • Hold current, clean Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme membership by the time you are assisting with the 3 consecutive sessions of Forest School. • Have experience of working with children or young people. • 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.
Level 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate Literacy SCQF level 6/7, or Forest and Outdoor Learning Award Level 6 or equivalent. • Be over 18-years of age • 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. • Hold a current, clean Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme membership by time of leading 8-session practice block. • 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> • 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.