



QQI LEVEL 5 YOUTH WORK AWARD STANDARDS

Youth work is an international informal and non-formal educational and reflective practice, committed to the personal/social development and empowerment of young people. Youth workers, paid and voluntary, play a pivotal role in the provision of a safe, social, inclusive learning environment where young people can flourish and take action on issues that impact their lives. Youth work practice is based on principles of voluntary participation, inclusion, equality, social justice, human rights and working in partnership with young people. The youth work relationship is an empowering one, based on mutual respect where youth workers and young people together create a learning environment that is enjoyable, inclusive, young person centred and promotes young people's sense of agency.

The revised QQI youth work standards are the result of a standard development process, based on cooperation and collaboration between stakeholders including youth work organisations, Further Education and Training (FEt) providers and Higher Education (HE) youth work educators, sectoral representatives and other subject experts. The Standards Development Group was led by the North-South Education Training Committee for Youth Work (NSETS) which is hosted by the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI). NSETS is recognised by QQI as a 'peak body' i.e. the relevant body to lead the standards development for the sector. The standards are among the first to be developed as "Broad Award Standards" and designed to provide maximum flexibility to providers to design and seek validation for youth work programmes (minor, major and special purpose) for their learner cohort.

NFQ Level 5

The NFQ Level 5 enables learners to develop a broad range of skills, which are vocational specific and require a general theoretical understanding. They are enabled to work independently while subject to general direction. In a lot of sectors learners who achieve a major award take up positions of employment. They are also deemed to meet the minimum entry requirements for a range of higher education institutions/programmes, including some leading to professional qualifications. An example of FET awards at NFQ Level 5 would be the Health Care Support, which is a gateway award to employment as a Health Care Assistant (HCA).

Note: The indicators at each level build on the skills from the previous one.

The outcomes indicated at the lowest level of the NFQ, Level 1, are brought forward to the next NFQ levels. This means we assume learners acquire the knowledge, skills and competence at each level that they take with them as they progress up the levels.

Youth Work (working title) — Draft Award Standards	
Purpose	<p>National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) Level 5</p> <p>The purpose of this broad award standard is to equip the learner with the knowledge, skills and competence to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. understand the distinctive nature of youth work as an (informal and non-formal) educational practice which is underpinned by specific values, principles and processes. 2. to engage in and contribute effectively to youth work responses, under direction of a professional youth worker, in a broad range of settings. 3. progress to further and/or higher education
NFQ	Level 5 Youth Work
Knowledge breadth	Broad range of knowledge
Knowledge kind	Some theoretical concepts and abstract thinking, with significant depth in some areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of youth work as a distinct professional educational approach to work with young people • Knowledge of youth work's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defining features

The Purpose, Values and Principles of Youth Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • underpinning principles and values • methods and processes • Knowledge of the purpose, role and boundaries of youth work • Understanding of youth work in relation to/as distinct from other practices/professions that work with young people e.g. teaching, social work, justice system etc.
Policy and Sectoral Context of Youth Work	<p>Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth work origins, history and key developments • The current context of youth work provision in Ireland • Youth work structures and funding • Relevant organisations and providers • Relevant policy and legislative context in relation to young people and youth work • Relevant quality standards, reporting and compliance requirements • The-European youth work context.
Young People and Society	<p>Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Youth' and 'young people' • Fundamental theoretical principles relating to youth work • Young people and society (sociology/social studies) • Public administration and policy.
Working with young people in youth work settings	<p>Knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of relationship building with young people • Communication and teamwork • Group work and working in groups as a means of learning • Youth work methods and approaches in different spaces/domains • The role and responsibilities of the Youth Worker • Needs assessment, review, evaluation and programme planning • Importance of reflective practice • Safeguarding and child protection principles and practices • How to create a safe, inclusive and enjoyable environment for young people.

Know-how and skill range	Demonstrate a broad range of specialised skills and tools
Know-how and skill selectivity	Evaluate and use information to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to varied unfamiliar problems
Teamwork, Communication & Relationship Building Skills	<p>Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present yourself in a warm, friendly and welcoming manner to all • Apply good teamwork skills • Develop effective communication skills, in particular listening skills • Use opportunities to engage informally with young people • Build positive relationships with young people, staff, volunteers and services • Use language and terminology that is appropriate to youth work and young people
Accountability, Reflection and critical Thinking Skills	<p>Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe youth work as a distinct profession, clearly and succinctly • Demonstrate responsibility & accountability in the workplace • Consider your own and others' personal and practice values and belief systems • Execute tasks effectively • Demonstrate basic understanding of the language and terminology of evaluation process • Reflect on your practice, assess effectiveness and identify areas for improvement • Make connections between youth work theory and practice • Prepare for and engage in support and supervision meetings with workplace supervisor • Use critical thinking skills in response to problems/challenges/barriers.
Inclusion, Equality, Human Rights	<p>Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in an inclusive manner with all young people • Be aware of and respectful of differences in attitudes and experiences • Recognise and respond appropriately to discrimination and prejudice.

Research & Administration	<p>Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform routine administrative tasks to support effective meetings • Use appropriate digital technologies to share information or data • Select a variety of appropriate digital ways to communicate in each situation • Gather information and present information in appropriate and accessible ways • Apply-standards regarding ethics, GDPR and other relevant statutory compliance.
Specific Youth Work Skills	<p>Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of the issues that young people face • Demonstrate a basic understanding of adolescent development • Undertake basic needs assessment and plan an appropriate session/activity for a group of young people • Undertake a review and evaluation of a programmes/activity with young people under guidance/supervision of a staff member • Build and maintain relationships with young people which are positive/healthy/safe, and which are cognisant of boundaries • Recognise various ways of responding to challenging behaviour from individuals and within groups • Identify services and supports available to young people in the community - e.g. mental health services.
Workplace Skills	<p>Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply appropriate boundaries between worker and young people • Embrace new opportunities that develop new skills/competencies • Recognise and follow health and safety procedures • Present themselves and act in an appropriate manner • Embrace new opportunities that develop new skills/competencies • Contribute to general tasks within workplace environments.

Competence context	Act in a range of varied and specific contexts, taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs; identify and apply skill and knowledge to a wide variety of contexts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take responsibility for self with young people, adults and the wider community

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate general work-related competence e.g. timekeeping, reliability, integrity etc • Undertake administrative tasks related to the effective planning, implementation and reporting of youth work programmes • Demonstrate ability to review and adapt activities in response to needs or circumstances • Employ a range of approaches/methods appropriate to the specific youth work context • Demonstrate facilitation skills.
Competence role	Exercise some initiative and independence in carrying out defined activities; join and function within multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate appropriate boundaries with young people, colleagues, management and wider community • Awareness of/compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures • Plan and manage learning and development activities with young people safely and effectively • Communicate effectively and appropriately with young people and other adults in the youth work context • Take guidance and direction from experienced youth workers and management.
Competence learning to learn	Learn to take responsibility for own learning within a managed environment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise areas for personal development and practice learning • Appreciate the value of reflective practice in relation to learning • Maintain a reflective learning diary/journal • Seek out opportunities for development and learning • Plan for progression opportunities • Management of self in workplace e.g. time-management, reliability, prioritising work, appropriate workplace behaviour and demeanour etc.
Competence insight	Assume full responsibility for consistency of self-understanding and behaviour
	<p>Demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to reflect on practice Insight on values in action • Appropriate boundaries in relationships with young people • Self-reflective practice to explore personal attitudes and values engagement with appropriate supervision.