

Component level	3
Component Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	24
Ofqual component reference number	Y/652/0798
Component sector	3.2 Horticulture and forestry

Component summary

Learners will gain practical skills to be able to support on a Forest School programme.

This component has **six** learning outcomes

1	Understand the structure of Forest School sites
2	Know how to identify a range of flora and fauna and understand the importance of identification
3	Be able to manage the ecological impact of a Forest School programme
4	Understand the role of risk assessment at Forest School
5	Be able to carry out a site risk assessment and a risk-benefit assessment
6	Be able to apply a range of practical skills relevant to a Forest School programme

Summary of assessment

This component is assessed through an internally set, internally marked, and externally verified portfolio of evidence. Our expectations on assessment and the evidence we require is detailed in the AIM Specification available on our website (www.aimgroup.org.uk).

Centres must devise assessment activities to meet the assessment criteria below if the assessment is by a portfolio of evidence:

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria
The learner must:	The learner must be able to:
1. Understand the structure of Forest School sites	1.1 Compare the structure and biodiversity of Forest School sites
2. Know how to identify a range of flora and fauna and understand the importance of identification	2.1 Identify a range of woodland flora and fauna for own site, detailing identifying characteristics for each species
3. Be able to manage the ecological impact of a Forest School programme	3.1 Assess the potential ecological impact of running Forest School programmes on own site
4. Understand the role of risk assessment at Forest School	4.1 Define the terms 'hazard' and 'risk' with reference to Forest School
5. Be able to carry out a site risk assessment and a risk-benefit assessment	5.1 Carry out a site risk assessment and a risk-benefit assessment related to an experience at Forest School

6. Be able to apply a range of practical skills relevant to a Forest School programme	6.1 Demonstrate the selection and use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) 6.2 Demonstrate how to check and maintain equipment 6.3 Demonstrate the use of hand tools 6.4 Demonstrate the use of appropriate rope work 6.5 Demonstrate the construction of temporary play structures 6.6 Demonstrate how to create craft items using woodland materials 6.7 Demonstrate how to erect temporary group shelters 6.8 Demonstrate how to site, build, light and manage a campfire suitable for purpose 6.9 Demonstrate how to cook on a campfire 6.10 Demonstrate how to extinguish a fire
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The following methods **must** be used in the delivery of this component:

- Portfolio of evidence
- Observation/witness testimony

Content

This describes the content to be taught as part of the overall qualification delivery. It describes specific subjects and topics that are to be covered, which will allow the learners to develop an appropriate knowledge base to successfully develop portfolios of evidence.

The content for this qualification was developed by the Forest School Association (FSA) in collaboration with a small group of Awarding Organisations/Bodies.

Centre staff may use this information to inform their teaching, including lesson plans, activities and other supporting resources.

The content is not to be used as the standard for assessment or marking scheme.

Indicative Content and Guidance

This identifies areas that must be covered during the delivery of this component. This is the minimum that is expected but tutors are expected to include other areas, knowledge of which will benefit their learners, based on location, types of work available and from the tutors own professional experience.

Structures and biodiversity of native broadleaf and coniferous woodland eco systems	Identify and explain: - 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) - topography Discussion of related ecological terms: - 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
Woodland flora and fauna	Detail identifying traits and information for at least 20 species across a range of flora and fauna. May include, but not limited to: - physical description including colour, size, scent etc - habitat - lifecycle - ecological niche - relevant Health & Safety - uses - folklore - history
Ecological impact	To cover: - ecological survey – ie Flora, Fauna, Abiotic Elements - special features - type and level of impact - mitigations
Define the terms ‘hazard’ and ‘risk’	Give examples from own Forest School sessions.
Site risk assessment and a risk- benefit Assessment	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.

Personal Protective Equipment – PPE	Across the 4 seasons: Minimum fire and tools plus (but not limited to) one other experience eg collecting natural materials, shelter building etc
Tool and rope/cord maintenance	Basic tool maintenance is to 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
Use different hand tools	A minimum of four hand tools to cover (but not limited to) the range of operations below: - sawing - cutting - drilling - whittling - splitting - carving Ensuring task/tool and the woodland materials chosen are appropriate. Refer to country appropriate legislation relating to tools.
Knots	The range of applications: - join two ropes together - attaching a rope to an object - attaching two objects together - tensioning a rope - stopping slippage on ropes
Craft items using Woodland materials	Detailed instructions and photographic evidence for making at least 2 items using a range of techniques (including but not limited to) - woven - joined - shaped - carved with at least 2 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
Safely site, build, light and manage a campfire	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 fuels - managing fire - fire triangle - size and type of fire - management of resources
Extinguish a fire and leave the site safe	To include permanent and temporary fires - show understanding of geographical context - minimising ecological impact: - soils - woodland ecology - leave no trace principles - cross reference to the management plan and ecological impact assessment

Version number	Date	Description
1	March 2026	Document created

Notes

It is expected that before the component is delivered, the tutor/assessor will have read the specification to ensure all conditions regarding rules of combination, delivery, assessment, and internal quality assurance are fulfilled.