

Qualification Unit

This unit forms part of a regulated qualification.

Unit Title: Youth Work Theory, Communication and Settings

Unit Reference Number: H/652/1664

Level: One (1)

Credit Value: Two (2)

Minimum Guided Learning Hours: 16

Unit Summary

This unit provides learners with a foundational understanding of youth work, focusing on its purpose and values, and understanding where youth work takes place. It explores how youth workers support young people's development and build meaningful relationships, as well as the importance of communication.

Learning Outcome (The Learner will):	Assessment Criterion (The Learner can):
1. Understand the purpose and settings of youth work	1.1 Describe the purpose of youth work
	1.2 Outline the core values of youth work
	1.3 Give examples of different settings where youth work takes place
2. Know how to develop communication and engagement skills used in youth work	2.1 Identify ways youth workers build positive relationships with young people
	2.2 Define active listening skills
	2.3 Give examples of how to communicate in an age-appropriate, inclusive way
	2.4 Outline the importance of communication in teamwork
	2.5 Identify potential barriers when communicating: • when working with young people • as part of a professional team
	2.6 Identify ways to overcome potential barriers when communicating

3. Know how to build quality relationships with young people	3.1 Outline why relationship building with young people is important in youth work
	3.2 Outline why professional boundaries are important when engaging with young people
	3.3 List different ways of working with young people that can empower them

Scope of Training

The Scope of Training identifies areas that must be covered during the delivery of this unit. 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 the tutor's own professional experience.

When a plural is stated in the assessment criteria, a minimum of two examples must be given – unless stated otherwise.

Purpose of youth work

Learners should understand the main reasons youth work exists and why it is important in supporting young people. This may include:

Supporting social and emotional development

- Helping young people build confidence, self-esteem, and social skills.
- Encouraging positive decision making and independence.

Providing safe and inclusive spaces

- Offering environments where young people feel valued, respected, and able to participate.
- Protecting young people from harm and promoting wellbeing.

Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion

- Ensuring all young people have opportunities regardless of background, ability, or identity.
- Challenging discrimination and supporting anti-discriminatory practice.

Encouraging participation and citizenship

- Supporting young people to engage in community life.
- Helping young people express their views and influence decisions that affect them.

Offering guidance and support

- Providing informal learning, advice, and mentoring.
- Helping young people access further opportunities, education, or employment.

Following professional principles and guidance

- Working in line with the NYA standards.
- Upholding the youth work values and principles, including voluntary participation, empowerment, and promoting social justice.

	Promoting lifelong learning • Helping young people develop skills and knowledge they can use in life and work. • Supporting personal growth and preparation for adult life. Learners should understand that youth work is voluntary, inclusive, and focused on supporting young people's development in a safe and respectful way.
Core values	To ensure core values are current and up to date, learners can find the core values of youth work in: • The National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Youth Work. • Professional frameworks used by organisations such as the National Youth Agency (NYA) The core values recognised across the UK typically include: 1. Young people choosing to take part – participation is voluntary. 2. Starting from young people's own experiences and interests. 3. Respecting and valuing young people's differences. 4. Promoting equality and challenging injustice. 5. Empowering young people and supporting their voice. Supporting young people's holistic development — socially, emotionally, and educationally.
Different settings	Learners should understand that youth work happens in a variety of settings and situations, depending on the needs of young people. These may include: Formal settings • Schools, colleges, or youth centres. • Structured programmes, workshops, or mentoring sessions. Community settings • Community centres, libraries, sports clubs, faith-based centres. • Activities designed to engage young people locally. Outdoor and recreational settings • Parks, adventure centres, playgrounds, or open spaces. • Activities like team building, outdoor education, or sports. Specialist settings • Hospitals, mental health services, residential care, or services for young people with additional needs. • Programmes focused on wellbeing, support, or development. Detached or outreach settings • Street-based youth work or outreach projects. • Engaging young people who may not attend structured services. Digital or online settings • Social media, online forums, virtual workshops, or digital mentoring. • Offering support and engagement where young people cannot meet in person. Learners should understand that the setting affects how activities are planned and delivered, including considerations for safety,

	accessibility, and inclusion.
Build positive relationships	Learners must understand strategies youth workers use to develop trust, respect, and engagement with young people.
Communication	Learners need to be able to define active listening - Body language - Tone - Asking open questions Inclusive communication - Using different formats for communication Respecting the communication needs of others
Teamwork	This could include: • Sharing information clearly – keeping colleagues informed about plans, risks, or updates • Supporting collaboration – discussing ideas and agreeing on roles • Resolving conflicts – using respectful communication to solve disagreements • Building trust and respect – maintaining professionalism in all interactions Receiving and acting on feedback – listening to colleagues' suggestions and adapting practice
Potential barriers to communication	Learners must know that communication can be blocked by practical, emotional, or social barriers and how to address them.
Professional boundaries	Learners should know that boundaries protect both youth workers and young people. Professional boundaries can help to: • Ensure safety – prevents harm or risky situations. • Maintain trust – young people know what to expect from the youth worker. • Protect professionalism – prevents inappropriate relationships or behaviour. Reduce risk of complaints or misunderstandings – clear limits protect everyone.
Ways of working with young people	Learners should understand simple, practical approaches that give young people choice, control, and confidence. A minimum of five must be included. This could include: • Involving young people in decision making – letting them choose activities or express opinions. • Encouraging participation – giving everyone a chance to take part. • Offering support and guidance – helping young people develop skills and confidence. • Providing positive feedback – recognising achievements and effort. • Listening and responding to their views – showing their opinions matter. Promoting independence – helping young people take responsibility for tasks or projects.
Build trust	Learners should understand the key elements that help youth

workers to build trust with young people.

This may include:

- Consistency and reliability – keeping promises and following through on commitments.
- Respect – treating young people fairly and valuing their opinions.
- Honesty and openness – being truthful and clear in communication.
- Confidentiality – respecting private and/or personal information where appropriate.
- Listening and responding – showing understanding and care.

Support and encouragement – helping young people develop skills, confidence, and wellbeing.