Standard Qualification Framework (SQF) for Youth Work

National Youth Agency



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Introduction

Purpose of the Framework

The Standard Qualification Framework (SQF) for Youth Work establishes a clear, coherent, and progressive structure for youth work education and professional development. It provides a shared reference point for learners, employers, and providers, ensuring consistency in expectations, quality, and outcomes across the sector.

The framework defines what it means to develop as a youth work practitioner – from first engagement at an introductory level through to advanced professional and strategic leadership roles. It supports the development of a confident, skilled, and values-driven workforce capable of responding to the evolving needs of young people and communities.

At its core, the SQF aligns youth work learning with professional practice, ensuring that knowledge, skills, and behaviours are directly connected to real-world application.

Who the Framework is For

Students and Learners

- Understand progression routes into and within youth work
- Develop confidence in what is expected at each stage
- Identify clear pathways into employment and advanced study

Employers

- Define workforce roles and expectations with clarity
- Support staff development and progression
- Ensure consistent standards across teams

Education and Training Providers

- Design curricula aligned to sector expectations
- Ensure progression between levels is meaningful
- Map learning to real practice requirements

Find Out More

Read the SQF Overview

Read the supporting guidance in our Standard Qualification Framework (SQF) for Youth Work Overview to understand how the framework works.

This introductory guide includes:

- Overview of the SQF
- How the Framework Works
- The 6-Level Journey
- Themes Across All Levels
- Benefits for Different Audiences
- How to Use the Framework
- Where to Find Full Standards

Level 1

Level Indicator:

- Introductory, knowledge based only.
- No requirements for practice, classroom based learning and assessment.
- No previous knowledge or experience of youth work required.
- If in practice requires regular supervision with a practitioner who has successfully completed Level 4.

Who is it for?:

- Anyone interested in learning more about youth work – the practice of youth work, the youth work sector, safe and inclusive practice, how youth workers and youth work impact on young people's lives.
- Available to 16 - 18 year olds as an alternative to Childcare/Health and Social Care.
- Available to the current workforce as a step towards a Level 2 qualification.

NOS emphasis (if in practice)

YW01 Initiate, build and maintain relationships with young people

YW02 Assist young people to learn and engage with the youth work process

YW03 Comply with legal, regulatory and ethical requirements when carrying out youth work

YW07 Apply youth work values and principles in group work



SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
	Reflective practice					
Area of practice		**Planning reviewing and reflecting**		**The importance of children's and young people's development in youth work**	**Youth work theory communication and settings**	**Safe and inclusive practice**
	Reflective practice is not included as a standalone unit at Level 1 because the qualification has been designed with a strong emphasis on practical learning and assessment. At this stage, learners are primarily focused on gaining confidence, developing foundational skills, and participating in youth work activities. However, the principles of reflective practice are embedded throughout the programme and are encouraged through the reflective learning approaches used in delivery. Learners are regularly supported to think about their experiences, discuss what has gone well, identify areas for improvement, and learn from feedback. This approach introduces the habits and mindset of reflective practice in an accessible way, providing a foundation for the more structured and formal study of reflective practice at Level 2 - 6+.					
Aims	The theme of social justice is not identified as a discrete component within the Level 1 programme because the introductory nature of the course focuses on establishing foundational knowledge and skills. However, principles of equity, inclusion, diversity, and social responsibility are embedded throughout a range of modules and learning activities. Social justice becomes a more explicit area of study at Level 2, where the practice-based focus of the programme provides greater opportunities for learners to critically engage with these concepts and apply them meaningfully within professional contexts, allowing them to inform and shape practice.	This unit introduces learners to the principles of planning, delivering, and reviewing suitable youth work activities. Learners will identify appropriate activities for youth work sessions and explore the steps involved in planning a short, safe, and inclusive activity for young people. The unit also develops learners' understanding of the importance of reviewing in youth work, including why reviews are carried out, what can be reviewed, and methods that can be used to gather feedback from young people. Learners will also be introduced to reflective practice and how reflection supports professional development. The unit concludes with learners creating an action plan to support their own learning and development as a youth worker.	The theme of leadership and management is not included as standalone areas within the Level 1 programme, as the emphasis at this stage is on developing core knowledge, understanding, and professional competencies. Nevertheless, elements of leadership, teamwork, communication, and professional responsibility are reflected across the curriculum. At Level 2, leadership and management concepts are introduced more explicitly within the practice-based curriculum, where learners have increased scope to explore these ideas in depth, relate them to real-world settings, and use them to influence and develop their professional practice.	The aim of this unit is to enable learners to understand the importance of children's and young people's development in youth work. This unit introduces the key stages of children's and young people's development, highlighting development milestones and how areas of development are related, and explores factors that can influence this. Learners will explore factors that affect development and understand how youth work can contribute to young people's social development. The importance of children and young people's development in youth work provides foundational knowledge of development, wellbeing, and context, which underpin 'Relational Practice'.	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.	This unit provides learners with an awareness of safe and inclusive practice in youth work settings and the importance of safeguarding. This will include recognising possible signs that a young person may be at risk of harm and knowing the appropriate actions to take. The unit also introduces key principles of inclusive practice.

Continued

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Indicative content		1. Appropriate activities 2. Steps for planning 3. Different settings 4. Purposes of review 5. Review methods 6. Reflection in youth work 7. Professional development 8. Action plan		1. Areas of development 2. Developmental milestones 3. Related factors 4. Wellbeing	1. Purpose of youth work 2. Core values 3. Different Settings 4. Build Positive Relationships 5. Communication 6. Teamwork 7. Potential Barriers to Communication 8. Professional Boundaries 9. Ways of working with young people 10. Building Trust	1. Safe Practice 2. Signs 3. Appropriate actions 4. Youth work settings 5. Equality, equity, inclusion, diversity and belonging

Continued

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Evidence of achievement		Identify types of activities suitable for youth work sessions. Outline the steps for planning a short youth work activity. Describe how to make activities safe and inclusive in different settings. Plan an engaging simulated youth work activity. Identify the purposes of review within youth work. List examples of what can be reviewed. Identify review methods. Identify ways to review with young people. State what is meant by reflection in youth work. Describe the benefits of reflection for professional development. Produce an action plan which supports own development as a youth worker.		Identify key areas of development in children and young people. List typical developmental milestones from birth to 19 years. Outline how different areas of development are related. Identify factors that influence development. Describe how factors can impact young people's development and wellbeing Identify ways youth work contributes to young people's: ■ wellbeing ■ social development	Describe the purpose of youth work. Outline the core values of youth work. Give examples of different settings where youth work takes place. Identify ways youth workers build positive relationships with young people. Define active listening skills. Give examples of how to communicate in an age-appropriate, inclusive way. Outline the importance of communication in teamwork. Identify potential barriers when communicating: ■ when working with young people. ■ as part of a professional team. Identify ways to overcome potential barriers when communicating. Outline why relationship building with young people is important in youth work. Outline why professional boundaries are important when engaging with young people. List different ways of working with young people that can empower them.	Outline why safe practice is essential in youth work. List signs that may indicate a young person is at risk of harm. Identify appropriate actions to take if concerned about a young person's safety. Describe safe practices relevant to a range of youth work settings. Define what is meant by equality, equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging (EEDIB) in youth work. Outline the importance of equality, equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging (EEDIB) in youth work.
Learning outcomes		Know how to plan youth work activities.		Understand the stages of development in children and young people.	Understand the purpose and settings of youth work.	Understand safe practice in youth work.
		Understand the importance of review in youth work.		Understand factors that affect the development of children and young people.	Know how to develop communication and engagement skills used in youth work.	Understand inclusive practice in youth work.
		Know about reflective practice within youth work.		Know how youth work contributes to young people's social development.	Know how to build quality relationships with young people.	

Level 2

Level Indicator:

- Developing reflective skills, practical abilities and problem-solving techniques. Basic knowledge of processes and policies which support good youth work in a range of contexts.
- Contribute reliably to youth work delivery under supervision, applying National Occupational Standards (NOS), following procedures and maintaining safe practice.
- Requires regular supervision with a practitioner who has successfully completed Level 4.

Who is it for?:

- Entry point for part time workers and volunteers who are new to youth work, looking for support and guidance on how to effectively engage with young people in safe and healthy ways, achieving positive outcomes for young people.
- Options to progress to Level 3 and more significant roles with regular practice hours.

NOS emphasis

YW01 Initiate, build and maintain relationships with young people

YW02 Assist young people to learn and engage with the youth work process

YW03 Comply with legal, regulatory and ethical requirements when carrying out youth work

YW04 Develop and maintain productive working relationships in collaboration with colleagues, agencies and stakeholders for youth work

YW05 Enable young people to identify, reflect and use their learning to enhance their future development

YW07 Apply youth work values and principles in group work

YW11 Plan, prepare and facilitate learning activities with young people

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
	Reflective practice					
Area of practice	**Anti-discriminatory practice in youth work**	**Evaluation and feedback in youth work**	**Roles and responsibilities in youth work**	**At Level 2 building relationships is embedded in the developing youth work practice theme**	**Principles and practice in youth work**	**Safeguarding in youth work**
Aims	This unit develops learners understanding of anti-discriminatory practice in youth work, including the principles of equality, inclusion, and respect. Learners will explore the role of the youth worker in promoting and maintaining anti-discriminatory practice, and reflect on their own practice to support continuous improvement and inclusive work with young people.	This unit develops learners understanding of the purpose of evaluation, feedback and accurate record-keeping in youth work. Learners will explore how recording information and evaluating their own practice contribute to effective, accountable, and responsive youth work, supporting continuous professional development and improved outcomes for young people.	This unit develops learners understanding of organisations, their structures, roles, and functions within the youth work sector. Learners will explore different types of organisations, understand organisational policies and procedures, and develop the knowledge and skills required to work effectively as part of a team within a professional youth work environment.	The relational practice theme is reflected within the Developing Youth Work Practice theme at Level 2 rather than being delivered as a standalone unit. This approach recognises that, at Level 2, learners are developing a broad foundation of youth work knowledge and skills and are beginning to understand how positive relationships support engagement with young people. Introducing relational practice within the context of wider youth work practice enables learners to apply these principles in a practical and accessible way. As learners progress to Level 3, relational practice becomes a more distinct area of study, allowing for deeper exploration of the theories, approaches and skills required to build purposeful and effective professional relationships with young people. This staged approach ensures that the content is introduced at an appropriate level and provides a strong foundation for more detailed study at higher levels.	This unit develops learners understanding of the purpose, principles, and values of youth work and how these inform effective practice. Learners will explore adolescent development, relational approaches to engaging young people, and the importance of participation and inclusion. The unit also provides opportunities to apply youth work principles in practice to support positive outcomes for young people.	This unit develops learners understanding of safeguarding within youth work, and the responsibilities of those working with young people to promote their welfare and safety. Learners will explore the principles of safeguarding, recognise potential safeguarding concerns, understand organisational safeguarding procedures, and contribute to creating and maintaining safe youth work environments.

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SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Indicative content	1. Anti-discriminatory practice 2. Approaches to anti-discriminatory practice 3. Inclusive youth work environments 4. Reflection 5. Action plan	1. Purposes of evaluation and feedback 2. Benefits of evaluation and feedback 3. Methods of recording outputs 4. Feedback	1. Roles and functions in organisations 2. Policies and procedures 3. Responsibilities and boundaries of role 4. Accessing appropriate support 5. Teamwork 6. Communication		1. Purpose of youth work 2. Principles and values 3. Ethical responsibilities 4. Models of youth work practice 5. Social contexts 6. Adolescent development 7. Influences 8. Appropriate information and support 9. Professional relationships and boundaries 10. Relational practice 11. Methods of engagement 12. Participation and advocacy 13. Group work	1. Importance of safeguarding 2. Legal and organisational requirements for safeguarding 3. Roles relevant to safeguarding 4. Safeguarding concerns 5. Recording and sharing information 6. Digital and online safeguarding

Continued

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Evidence of achievement	Define the terms: ■ Equality ■ Equity ■ Diversity ■ Inclusion ■ Belonging ■ Discrimination ■ Prejudice ■ Bias Explain how anti-discriminatory practice supports effective youth work. Describe ways youth workers demonstrate anti-discriminatory practice. Demonstrate anti-discriminatory practice in own youth work. Contribute to an inclusive youth work environment in own practice. Reflect on own anti-discriminatory practice. Develop a plan to improve own anti-discriminatory practice.	Outline the purpose of evaluation and feedback in youth work. Describe the benefits of evaluation and feedback for ■ Young people ■ Youth workers ■ Organisations ■ Local community Record outputs from own youth work practice. Record feedback from own youth work practice. Evaluate own delivery of a youth work activity. Based on feedback create an action plan to develop own practice.	List different organisations where youth work takes place. Compare and contrast different functions of own organisation and another organisation. Identify policies and procedures relevant to youth work in own organisation. Explain why policies and procedures are important in youth work. Outline responsibilities of own role. Explain the boundaries of own role. Describe when and how to seek appropriate support in own organisation. Explain the importance of effective teamwork in youth work. Identify characteristics of good communication in a team. Use a range of communication methods to communicate with colleagues. Demonstrate working as part of a team.		Explain the key purposes of youth work. Outline the core principles and values of youth work. Outline the ethical responsibilities of youth workers. Identify different models of youth work practice. Explain how youth work supports personal, social, and emotional development. Describe how youth work helps young people engage with their social context. Describe key stages of adolescent development (social, emotional, physical and cognitive). Explain how development influences young people's behaviours and needs. Identify different sources which support the social, emotional, physical and cognitive development of young people. Explain ways of enabling young people to access appropriate information and support.	Define the term safeguarding. Outline why safeguarding is important in youth work. Identify the legal and organisational responsibilities for safeguarding young people. Describe the different types of responsibilities of those involved in safeguarding. List different types of safeguarding concerns. Describe possible indicators that a young person may be at risk of harm. Explain factors that may increase a young person's vulnerability.

Continued

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
					Explain the importance of building professional relationships with young people. Explain the importance of professional boundaries in relational practice. Demonstrate ways to engage with young people in own youth work practice. Reflect on how trust and respect are developed in own youth work relationships. Define participation in youth work. Outline key principles of participation. Explain the importance of youth voice and choice. Describe the importance of group work. Outline different approaches to managing and resolving conflict. Apply participation principles when ■ Planning a youth work activity ■ Supporting the delivery of a youth work activity	Describe the actions to take when a safeguarding concern arises, in line with own organisational procedures. Explain the importance of recording safeguarding concerns accurately. Explain the importance of confidentiality and restrictions on information sharing. Identify ways to promote: ■ a safe environment ■ young people's wellbeing Contribute to a risk assessment. Discuss good practice for online and digital safeguarding.

Continued

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Learning outcomes	Understand key principles of anti-discriminatory practice.	Understand the purpose of evaluation and feedback in youth work.	Understand types of organisations where youth work takes place.		Understand the key purposes, principles and models of youth work.	Understand the principles of safeguarding in youth work.
	Be able to apply anti-discriminatory practice as a youth worker.	Be able to record information accurately.	Understand own organisation's policies and procedures.		Understand adolescent development and support needs.	Know how to recognise safeguarding concerns.
	Be able to reflect on own youth work practice to strengthen anti-discriminatory practice.	Be able to evaluate own practice.	Understand role in own organisation.		Understand relational practice and engagement with young people.	Understand the processes for safeguarding in own organisation.
			Be able to work as part of a team.		Be able to apply relational practice in youth work.	Be able to contribute to safe youth work practice.
					Understand participation and inclusion in youth work practice.	
					Be able to apply youth work principles in practice.	

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Sqf themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Area of practice	Reflective practice in youth work					
Aims	This unit develops learners ability to use reflective practice to support their personal and professional development as youth workers, and has been designed to encourage reflection in each of the SQF themes. Learners will explore how reflection on experiences, feelings, values and feedback can strengthen relationships with young people and improve practice. The unit encourages learners to identify areas for development, recognise their strengths and challenges, and use reflection as a tool for continuous learning and improvement within youth work settings.					
Indicative content	1. Reflective practice 2. Models of reflection 3. Feelings and reactions 4. Describe your reactions 5. Youth work values 6. Own values 7. Sources of feedback 8. Areas of development 9. Action planning					
Evidence of achievement	Define reflective practice Explain the benefits of reflective practice Identify models that can be used to support reflection Review own contribution to a youth work activity Describe own feelings and reactions Identify own ■ successes ■ challenges State youth work values Recognise own values Compare youth work with own values Prepare for a reflective discussion with an experienced youth work professional Contribute to a reflective discussion with an experienced youth work professional Use reflective discussion to inform future practice and ongoing learning					
Learning outcomes	Understand reflective practice in youth work Be able to reflect on own youth work practice Understand youth work values from a personal perspective Be able to reflect with experienced youth work professionals					

Level 3

Level Indicator:

- Skills requiring independent thinking and application of knowledge Basic knowledge of youth work theory, processes and policies which support good youth work in a range of contexts.
- Apply NOS when delivering youth work sessions competently, manage routine situations, and reflect on practice with growing confidence, where relevant, supporting others, Level 2 or below.
- Requires regular supervision with a practitioner who has successfully completed Level 4.

Who is it for?:

- Youth workers with regular youth work practice, delivering youth work activity.
- Options to progress to all Level 4 routes.

NOS emphasis

YW01 Initiate, build and maintain relationships with young people

YW02 Assist young people to learn and engage with the youth work process

YW03 Comply with legal, regulatory and ethical requirements when carrying out youth work

YW04 Develop and maintain productive working relationships in collaboration with colleagues, agencies and stakeholders for youth work

YW05 Enable young people to identify, reflect and use their learning to enhance their future development

YW06 Explore the concept of values and beliefs with young people

YW07 Apply youth work values and principles in group work

YW08 Engage with and empower young people to make use of digital media in their daily lives

YW09 Support young people to become responsible citizens through active involvement with youth work

YW10 Advocate with and on behalf of young people so that their interests are represented

YW11 Plan, prepare and facilitate learning activities with young people

YW13 Access information with and for young people to inform decision making

YW15 Assist young people to assess risk and make informed choices in the management of their health and well-being

YW25 Work as an effective and critically reflective youth work practitioner

KSBs

skillsengland.education.gov.uk/apprenticeship-standards/st0906-v1-0



Level 3 Youth work apprenticeship - Duties	**Duty 2 –** Establish and maintain relationships with community groups and/or key partners	**Duty 4 –** Actively participate in supervision with a professional youth worker or equivalent **Duty 5 –** Plan for, deliver and evaluate youth work experiences supported by the supervision of a professional youth worker or equivalent	**Duty 10** – perform and ensure the discharge of administrative duties (for example budget control, record keeping or reporting **Duty 11 –** Line management responsibility for assistant youth support workers, sessional workers, volunteers or peer leaders, including recruiting, developing and support	**Duty 1 –** Establish and maintain relationships with young people **Duty 6** – Enable young people to explore their values, beliefs and identity	**Duty 3 –** Use informal education practices to develop young people's social education; providing programmes of activities, services and facilities and **Duty 7** – Work with young in line with youth participation principles to promote and facilitate youth voice and influence	**Duty 8 –** Work within relevant legislative requirement including this regarding Health and Safety, Child Protection, Safeguarding, Data Protection and the Equalities Act 2010 and **Duty 9** – Maintain a safe environment for a group work under the supervision of a professionally qualified youth worker of equivalent
SQF Themes	**Social justice**	**Evaluation and impact**	**Leadership and management**	**Relational practice**	**Developing youth work practice**	**Professional responsibility**
	Reflective practice					
Area of practice	**Working with communities and groups to support equity, diversity and inclusion**	**Youth work planning and evaluation**	**Leading and managing in youth work teams**	**Relational practice**	**Youth work policy, principles and practices**	**Managing a safe youth work environment**
Aims	To develop learners' ability to work collaboratively with young people, groups, communities and stakeholders to promote participation, inclusion, equality and social justice, while recognising and challenging discrimination and barriers to engagement.	To enable learners to plan, deliver, review and evaluate youth work programmes and activities that are informed by young people's needs, participation and feedback, while using reflection and supervision to continuously improve practice.	To develop learners' leadership, organisational and management skills, enabling them to contribute effectively to team development, administration, conflict management, decision-making and the support and development of others within youth work settings.	To equip learners with the knowledge, skills and values required to build trusting and professional relationships with young people, communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders, and support young people's personal, social and identity development.	To develop learners' understanding of the purpose, principles, values and practice of youth work, enabling them to apply informal education approaches that empower young people and promote participation, youth voice and positive development.	To enable learners to create and maintain safe, inclusive and supportive youth work environments through effective safeguarding, risk assessment, health and safety practice, professional boundaries, and adherence to relevant legal and ethical responsibilities.
Indicative content	1. Communities 2. Context 3. Places and spaces for youth work 4. Principles of youth work 5. Current and relevant legislation 6. Protected characteristics 7. Group work 8. Ground rules	1. Behavioural change 2. Group work 3. Evaluation 4. Deliver a youth work programme 5. Manage individuals 6. Plan sessions 7. Compliance 8. Manage resources 9. Recording	1. Identifying and seeking support 3. Conflict	1. Communication 2. Stakeholders 3. De-escalation techniques	1. Adolescent development 2. Cultural theories 3. Challenging stereotypes 4. Available support 5. Policies and guidance 6. Skills, qualities, knowledge and values of youth workers 7. Conflict 8. Influences	1. Child protection 2. Safeguarding 3. Vulnerable adults 4. Multi-agency working 5. Abuse and exploitation 6. Online harm

Continued

SQF Themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Evidence of achievement	Explain different types of communities. Explain how the local community affects young people's lives. Outline how youth work impacts on the young person's local community. Identify different contexts where youth work could operate within young people's communities and wider society, including social and political perspectives. Explain different models of youth work delivery, taking into account different places and spaces and how approaches might differ dependent on context, environment and/or young person. Engage with the local community to support young people's involvement in a way that promotes acceptance and understanding of others. Support young people to develop positive relationships in their local community that promote acceptance and understanding of others.	Evaluate own youth work practice in relation to anti-discriminatory practice. Develop a plan using anti-discriminatory practice to increase active participation and opportunities for youth voice and leadership. Explain how positive feedback affects and enhances behavioural change in young people. Describe methods for providing positive acknowledgement of changed behaviour. Analyse examples of the impact of positive acknowledgement of changed behaviour in a youth work setting.	Explain situations when additional support is required to manage conflict and behaviour that challenges. Evaluate support mechanisms available when managing conflict and behaviour that challenges. Explain three leadership styles appropriate to different group stages and situations. Analyse own leadership styles when working with groups of young people. Explain how conflict may arise in a group work setting. Explain ways of managing personal feelings in a potential conflict situation. Explain ways of defusing conflict in a group work setting.	Explain why relationship building with young people is important in youth work. Analyse how effective communication skills impact on building and maintaining professional relationships with young people. Describe ways to engage young people in order to establish a professional relationship with diverse groups of young people. Describe different approaches of engaging young people and increasing their participation in youth work. Compare local community networks and ways in which young people might become involved. Describe places and spaces in which professional youth work might happen and how approaches might differ dependent on context, environment and/or young person.	Define adolescence. Explain social and cultural theories that relate to adolescent development. Outline how adolescent development impacts on young people's lives. Identify how knowledge of adolescent development benefits youth work and young people. Identify ways to encourage young people to explore their values and beliefs. Explain how changes during adolescence could affect the professional relationship between the youth worker and the young person. Outline how changes during adolescence affect young people's behaviour and lead to stereotypes. Explain how to challenge stereotypes impacting on young people.	Define the terms 'child protection' and 'safeguarding'. Outline current safeguarding legislation, guidelines, policies and procedures relevant to own organisation. Outline how own organisation's child protection policies and procedures create a safe environment that benefits young people and vulnerable adults. Describe how own organisation's child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures influence own practice. Describe the boundaries of confidentiality when working with young people and vulnerable adults and how this could affect their rights .

Continued

SQF Themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Evidence of achievement	Demonstrate maintaining professional behaviour boundaries when working with young people. Define what is meant by anti-discriminatory practice. Explain how anti-discriminatory practice relates to the principles of youth work with reference to different contexts, including cultural, social and political perspectives operating within young people's communities and wider society. Outline current legislation relating to anti-discriminatory practice. Explain what is meant by protected characteristics. Describe the groups defined by current legislation as having protected characteristics. Respond appropriately to oppressive or discriminatory attitudes, behaviours and situations.	Explain own practice in relation to conflict and behaviour that challenges in youth work settings. Reflect on own practice in relation to managing conflict and behaviour that challenges. Create a development plan to enhance own skills in managing conflict and behaviour that challenges. Reflect on methods used to evaluate and record youth work sessions. Evaluate achievement of group goals. Evaluate group strengths and weaknesses. Demonstrate celebrating the success of young people.	Identify line management styles that support and develop youth work practice in others. Monitor outcomes of own work and others. Review and revise own practice based on feedback from others. Apply the result of own reflection and development to own practice. Support others in reflective practice and provide constructive feedback to them around delivery. Demonstrate how critical reflection can improve own and others practice in line with organisational procedures.	Explain different contexts, including cultural, social and political perspectives operating within young people's communities and wider society. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of different methods of communication when working with young people, to include verbal, written and electronic techniques. Describe the challenges of using social media to engage with stakeholders. Describe a youth worker's role in supporting young people to access impartial information and guidance. Assess own strengths and areas for improvement when communicating with others using a reflective practice model.	Explain how youth workers can support young people during adolescence. Identify agencies that can support young people that may face difficulties during adolescence. Explain the key purpose of youth work. Identify current national and local policies and guidance and how these impact youth work socially, environmentally, economically and politically. Outline current legislation that informs youth work. Explain own organisation's purpose and policies.	Identify a range of child protection and safeguarding multi-agency partnerships. Describe forms of abuse including their characteristics and how to recognise them. Describe forms of exploitation including their characteristics and how to recognise them. Identify own organisation's safeguarding officer in relation to reporting child protection issues. Identify own organisation's policies and procedures for keeping staff and volunteers safe. Outline individual responsibility in terms of what actions should be taken when indicators for abuse and exploitation are recognised.

Continued

SQF Themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Evidence of achievement	Explain the meaning of the following terms: ■ prejudice ■ stereotyping ■ stigma ■ labelling ■ discrimination ■ equality ■ diversity ■ hate crime ■ hate speech Critically compare the differences between prejudice and discrimination.	Explain what is meant by young people's participation and empowerment. Review a range of methods of empowering young people to participate in planning a youth work programme. Use a planning model to create session plans for a youth work programme. Analyse the rationale for developing the youth work programme. Summarise the main stages of the youth work programme and activity planning. Plan youth work activities using participation and empowerment principles to support young people's own development. Comply with organisational policies, procedures and safeguarding requirements when planning the youth work programme.		Demonstrate own ability to communicate, including active listening skills, with young people and two other stakeholders from the list below: ■ members of the public ■ wider community ■ public authorities in the youth sector ■ youth organisations and youth councils ■ donors ■ media Work in an anti-oppressive, anti-discriminatory manner, maintaining professional communication with stakeholders.	Explain the following principles for youth work: ■ active participation and empowerment of young people ■ voluntary engagement by young people ■ informal education ■ equality, diversity and inclusion ■ professional codes of conduct Describe the skills, knowledge, qualities and values of an effective youth worker. Outline how professional boundaries are important to engaging with young people and with own team. Outline how anti-discriminatory practice can impact youth work practice.	Describe how youth work can protect and support young people. Describe how the purposes and principles of youth work align with child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures. Outline ways to support and empower young people and vulnerable adults to manage personal risk. Outline the challenges when implementing safeguarding procedures in a youth work setting.

Continued

SQF Themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Evidence of achievement	Explain the following types of discrimination: ■ direct discrimination ■ indirect discrimination ■ discrimination by association ■ perception discrimination ■ harassment ■ third-party harassment ■ victimisation Outline the types of groups young people are part of or join. Describe the reasons why young people join groups. Review the benefits for young people of joining groups.	Develop and manage budgets and resources in a format appropriate to the needs and capabilities of young people. Deliver a youth work programme upholding the principles and values of youth work including anti-oppressive practice. Manage individuals in line with organisational procedures. Undertake and adjust session plans to deliver a youth work programme. Explain methods of evaluating and recording the effectiveness of activities in youth work programme. Plan evaluation and recording methods for the youth work programme. Evaluate and record the youth work programme.		Explain de-escalation techniques that can be used to address conflict and behaviour that challenges in a youth work setting. Analyse own strengths and weaknesses in dealing with conflict and behaviour that challenges in youth work settings. Demonstrate methods of defusing conflict and behaviour that challenges in youth work settings.	Define what is meant by behaviour that challenges. Explain the impact of conflict and behaviour that challenges in a youth work setting. Compare examples of conflict and behaviour that challenges that can occur in a youth work setting. Explain why it is important to develop a trusting and respectful relationship with young people. Explain the importance of setting and maintaining appropriate boundaries and expectations with young people. Evaluate own values in relation to working with young people and managing young people's behaviour. Explain internal and external influences that can contribute to the presentation of conflict and behaviour that challenges in a young person.	Describe a health and safety risk assessment benefit process used in a youth work setting, including assessing behaviour and needs of an individual young person or group of young people. Develop health and safety risk assessment benefit analysis of work areas including off-site visits. Record all health and safety risks in a group work environment and take the correct actions to ensure the safety of all young people in line with own organisation's policies and procedures. Describe professional obligations regarding administration, recording and management of data. Describe the importance of an organisation-wide approach to using social media and other technologies safely.

Continued

SQF Themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Evidence of achievement	Plan a group activity which takes into account internal and external factors that influence effective groups. Apply group work theory with a group of young people in a youth work setting. Negotiate with a group, appropriate ground rules (which promote acceptance and understanding of others), for use in group activity. Review the group activity with an appropriate observer. Reflect with an appropriate observer, the positives, and negatives of the following: ■ Group effectiveness ■ Roles in group ■ Own contribution to group	Evaluate and record youth work programme requirements with young people using participation principles and inclusive practice. Complete evaluation records for the programme delivered.			Explain the consequences of not meeting the needs of a group or individual with protected characteristics in relation to: ■ own practice ■ youth service delivery Summarise how the needs of protected characteristics groups can be met: ■ through own practice ■ within the youth work environment Critically compare the different roles in a group. Explain the stages of group development. Describe the factors that increase group effectiveness. Evaluate how to maintain groups. Explain the reasons for group breakdown .	Outline how youth work can raise awareness around potential harm related to using technologies.
Evidence of achievement					Identify the different roles in the group. Understand the characteristics of a specific group. Describe own roles within the group. Identify the role of the group leader. Describe the importance of different roles within the group.	

Continued

SQF Themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Learning outcomes	Understand the role of Youth Work in the young person's local community.	Be able to evaluate a programme of group work activities.	Understand the appropriate use of leadership styles in groups.	Understand the importance of building relationships with young people in Youth Work.	Understand the key purpose and role of Youth Work.	Know about the importance of safeguarding policies and procedures, in providing a safe environment for young people and vulnerable adults.
	Understand different contexts and models of professional Youth Work delivery.	Understand the role of feedback in relation to changed behaviour in a Youth Work setting.	Understand how to manage conflict in a group work setting.	Understand different ways to engage stakeholders.	Understand key principles of youth work.	Know about roles and responsibilities in relation to keeping young people, vulnerable adults, self and colleagues safe in Youth Work settings.
	Understand the importance of group membership.	Be able to develop own practice in relation to conflict and behaviour that challenges.	Understand when support is required in managing conflict and behaviour that challenges.	Understand the importance of good communication skills for Youth Work activities.	Understand the skills, knowledge, qualities and values required to practice as a Youth Worker.	Understand how Youth Work can help and protect young people and vulnerable adults.
	Understand anti-discriminatory practice in Youth Work.	Understand how to evaluate personal practice in relation to anti-discriminatory practice.	Be able to use reflection to develop own practice and others practice.	Be able to communicate with stakeholders to develop a professional relationship.	Understand how young people develop during adolescence.	Be able to risk assess in a Youth Work setting.
	Understand prejudice and discrimination.	Be able to uphold the Youth Work principles and practice of participation and empowerment to plan activities with young people in a work based setting.		Be able to de-escalate conflict and behaviour that challenges in Youth Work settings.	Understand how knowledge of adolescence impacts on Youth Work.	Understand how to safeguard young people when using technologies.
	Be able to respond to discriminatory practice.	Be able to deliver a Youth Work programme based on participation processes.			Know where young people can get support during adolescence.	
	Be able to work reflectively within a group activity.	Be able to evaluate practice following the delivery of Youth Work programmes.			Understand what is meant by conflict and behaviour that challenges.	
	Be able to support young people in engaging with the local community.				Understand how anti-discriminatory practice impacts on Youth Work delivery.	
					Understand group work theory.	
					Understand the characteristics of a specific group.	

Continued

SQF Themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
	Reflective practice in a youth work setting					
Indicative content	1. Evaluation 2. Reflection 3. Feedback 4. Continuing professional development					
Evidence of achievement	Assess personal skills, knowledge, qualities and values required for youth work practice. Identify the impact own prejudice and values could have when engaging with young people. Identify the professional behaviour boundaries of own role within youth work practice in relation to young people and colleagues. Develop a personal development plan to address own areas for improvement. Define reflective practice within a youth work setting. Explain the benefits of reflection in developing youth work practice. Evaluate approaches to reflective practice and their potential strengths and weaknesses. Demonstrate regular reflection on own experience, skills, and behaviour, upholding the principles and values of reflective practice in youth support work. Evaluate own areas of strength and potential areas for development. Reflect individually and through supervision on practice in line with daily tasks to enhance the support young people receive. Evaluate the development plan with own line manager. Summarise relevant sources of information that can support own continuing professional development on a regular basis. Use sources of information appropriately in order to demonstrate the impact and benefits of youth support work. Explain the value of reflective practice and continuing professional development in relation to youth support work.					
Learning outcomes	Be able to evaluate own role in the delivery of a program of group work activities. Understand the principles and values of reflective practice in Youth Work. Be able to undertake self-directed reflection on own practice and continuing professional development. Be able to maintain continuous professional development that support own Youth Work Practice.					

Level 4

Level Indicator:

- Higher-level competence grounded in youth work practice, with an emphasis on the development of analytical skills and specialised knowledge.
- Capable of interpreting and evaluating a range of information/data to make informed decisions.
- Able to consider a range of approaches in problem solving, and determine the best course of action.
- Apply NOS in predictable contexts, integrating theory with practice and demonstrating professional responsibility.
- Supervising/mentoring Level 3 and below.
- Requires regular supervision with a qualified practitioner.

Who is it for?:

- Significant (permanent) roles, with some focus on specialist approaches, able to progress to all Level 5 options.

NOS emphasis

YW01 Initiate, build and maintain relationships with young people

YW02 Assist young people to learn and engage with the youth work process

YW03 Comply with legal, regulatory and ethical requirements when carrying out youth work

YW04 Develop and maintain productive working relationships in collaboration with colleagues, agencies and stakeholders for youth work

YW05 Enable young people to identify, reflect and use their learning to enhance their future development

YW06 Explore the concept of values and beliefs with young people

YW07 Apply youth work values and principles in group work

YW08 Engage with and empower young people to make use of digital media in their daily lives

YW09 Support young people to become responsible citizens through active involvement with youth work

YW10 Advocate with and on behalf of young people so that their interests are represented

YW11 Plan, prepare and facilitate learning activities with young people

YW13 Access information with and for young people to inform decision making

YW15 Assist young people to assess risk and make informed choices in the management of their health and well-being

YW18 Engage with young people to promote their emotional wellbeing and mental health

YW20 Determine, evaluate and prioritise your organisation's objectives for youth work in the community

YW24 Monitor and evaluate the impact of youth work strategy and delivery

YW25 Work as an effective and critically reflective youth work practitioner

KSBs

Apprenticeship Knowledge

K1: The importance of building trust and rapport, and methods for achieving this

K10: National and local plans and strategies relevant to youth work and young people

K13: Informal and non-formal education

K15: Youth work policies and strategies

K17: inclusive and active participation

K23: Reflective practice

K27: Anti-oppressive practice

Apprenticeship Skills

S1: Communication skills

S12: Plan youth work

S13: Engaging young people

S14: Facilitate youth work programmes

S16: Provide a safe environment

S17: Create and evaluate learning environments

S21: Challenge oppression

S25: Monitor own practice

S28: Being person centered

Apprenticeship Behaviours

B1: Work in an anti-oppressive manner

B5: Be a reflective practitioner

B6: Respect young people's rights

B7: Promote justice, fairness and equality

B8: Take an interest in young people's concerns

Sqf themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
	Reflective practice					
Area of practice	**Developing anti-oppressive practice and anti-discriminatory practice with young people, groups and communities**	**Programme/ curriculum design and evaluation**	**Leading and managing individuals and teams**	**Working relationally to support human growth and development**	**Pedagogy and youth work**	**Developing and managing safe youth work environments**
	Reflection on professional practice					
Aims	Introduce learners to the principles of anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice in youth work. Explore how discrimination, inequality, and marginalisation affect young people and communities. Equip learners with practical strategies to challenge oppression and promote inclusion. Support learners to reflect on their own values, biases, and positionality in youth work relationships.	Introduce learners to the principles and processes of programme and curriculum design in youth work. Explore how youth work programmes can be planned to meet developmental, social, and learning needs. Equip learners with basic tools for evaluating youth work programmes and activities. Support learners to reflect on the purpose, values, and impact of youth work interventions.	Develop fundamental leadership and management skills in youth work. Equip learners to effectively support and develop individuals within youth work teams. Explore power dynamics and inclusivity in team functioning and dynamics. Support learners to assess the culture, resilience and adaptability of youth work teams.	Introduce learners to the principles and values of relational practice in youth work. Develop learners' ability to build trust, communicate effectively, and maintain professional boundaries. Explore how relational approaches support young people's development, wellbeing, and agency. Support learners to develop a professional frame of reference.	Develop learners' understanding of foundational youth work principles. Equip learners to plan and deliver engaging group work Explore participatory methods that promote the voice of young people. Support learners to create empowering, inclusive and reflective learning environments. Develop learners understanding of the pedagogical approaches which support quality youth work practice.	Develop learners' understanding of safeguarding, boundaries and duty of care. Equip learners with knowledge of legislative frameworks and organisational policies for safe practice. Understand the principles of risk management, confidentiality and disclosures; responding to concerns in real-world youth work settings. Support learners to contribute to a culture of learning and accountability in youth work teams.

Continued

Sqf themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Indicative content	1. **Social Justice, Equality and Human Rights** Equality, equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging, rights and participation. 2. **Power, Privilege and Oppression** Power dynamics, privilege, marginalisation, intersectionality and systemic discrimination. 3. **Impact of Inequality on Young People and Communities** Exclusion, disadvantage, violence, exploitation, stigma and barriers to participation. 4. **Inclusive and Responsive Youth Work Practice** Inclusive communication, accessibility, participation, co-production and culturally responsive practice. 5. **Professional Responsibility and Reflective Practice** Legislation, ethics, anti-oppressive practice, self-awareness, positionality and professional development.	1. **Youth Work Curriculum and Programme Design** Youth work values, planning models, curriculum approaches and developmental progression. 2. **Needs Assessment and Programme Planning** Asset-based practice, co-production, SMART outcomes and programme development. 3. **Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Measurement** Qualitative and quantitative methods, outcomes, impact assessment and action research. 4. **Evidence-Informed Improvement** Data analysis, feedback mechanisms, reflective review and continuous improvement. 5. **Ethical, Inclusive and Participatory Practice** Participation, accessibility, evaluation ethics, safeguarding and power dynamics.	1. **Leadership, Management and Organisational Culture** Leadership approaches, team roles, organisational values and workplace culture. 2. **Supporting and Developing People** Supervision, coaching, mentoring, workforce development and wellbeing. 3. Team Effectiveness and **Collaboration** Team dynamics, communication, decision-making and conflict resolution. 4. **Resource and Project Management** Resource planning, budgeting, sustainability and project delivery. 5. **Reflective Leadership and Continuous Improvement** Reflective models, self-assessment, accountability and professional growth.	1. **Relationship-Centred Youth Work** Trust, empathy, authenticity, attachment and relationship-based practice. 2. **Human Development and Wellbeing** Identity, resilience, trauma, wellbeing and developmental theory. 3. **Youth Participation and Co-Production** Youth voice, consultation, engagement and responsive practice. 4. **Professional Relationships and Partnership Working** Communication, boundaries, collaboration and stakeholder relationships. 5. **Empowerment, Reflection and Professional Support** Strengths-based practice, supervision, coaching, mentoring and reflection.	1. **Participation, Agency and Co-Production** Youth voice, shared ownership, democratic practice and participation frameworks. 2. **Group Work, Citizenship and Social Action** Collective action, community development, advocacy and leadership. 3. **Equity, Diversity and Inclusive Practice** Social justice, anti-discriminatory practice, cultural competence and accessibility. 4. **Experiential Learning and Personal Development** Reflection, critical consciousness, resilience, confidence and autonomy. 5. **Educational Approaches and Professional Values** Informal, non-formal and formal education, values, beliefs, bias and ethical practice.	1. **Safeguarding, Boundaries and Ethical Practice** Safeguarding, confidentiality, professional conduct and ethical decision-making. 2. **Legislation, Policy and Accountability** Legal frameworks, organisational procedures, compliance and governance. 3. **Risk Management and Safe Environments** Risk assessment, positive risk-taking, health and safety and emergency planning. 4. **Responding to Safeguarding Concerns** Abuse, exploitation, disclosures, referrals and multi-agency working. 5. **Professional Formation and Quality Improvement** Supervision, reflective practice, CPD, professional standards and accountability.
Evidence of achievement	Recognises issues of inequality and applies inclusive strategies in youth work settings.	Uses structured tools to evaluate session outcomes and gather feedback.	Demonstrates leadership and management in small group settings and contributes to team tasks.	Builds rapport and trust with young people using active listening and empathy.	Applies core youth work methods in structured settings, responding to young people's needs.	Follows organisational policies and ethical guidelines. Seeks support when needed.

Continued

Sqf themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Learning outcomes	Describe key concepts of anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice in youth work.	Describe the key principles of programme and curriculum design in youth work.	Describe roles, relationships and culture in youth work teams.	Analyse the role of relational practice in supporting human growth and development.	Demonstrate the ability to co-create opportunities with young people that promote agency, voice, and shared ownership.	Manage safeguarding, confidentiality and boundaries in real-world situations.
	Identify how discrimination and inequality impact young people, groups, and communities.	Plan and structure youth work sessions or programmes to meet identified needs.	Support, develop and lead individuals and teams.	Demonstrate the ability to work with young people to inform and develop youth work practice.	Design and facilitate informal and formal group learning experiences that support socio-emotional skill development and wellbeing.	Apply legal and organisational frameworks to ensure compliance with safeguarding and health and safety requirements.
	Apply inclusive and responsive strategies in youth work settings.	Apply basic evaluation tools to assess the effectiveness of youth work activities.	Evaluate team dynamics and structures.	Build and sustain purposeful relationships with young people.	Facilitate youth work practice which promotes equity, diversity and inclusion.	Design and implement risk assessments and safety protocols tailored to youth work settings.
	Reflect on their own values, biases, and positionality in relation to youth work practice.	Reflect on the values and purposes underpinning youth work programmes.	Demonstrate the ability to identify, organise, and manage resources effectively in youth work settings, ensuring ethical use, accessibility, and alignment with project aims.	Build and sustain professional relationships with a range of stakeholders.	Apply experiential learning approaches to youth work practice, facilitating activities that enable young people to reflect on lived experience, and develop personal insight, building critical consciousness, confidence and autonomy.	Analyse the role of youth workers in responding to disclosures, safeguarding concerns, and crisis situations.
	Demonstrate awareness of legal and ethical responsibilities in promoting equality and challenging oppression.	Demonstrate awareness of inclusion, participation, and ethical delivery in programme design.	Demonstrate the ability to plan youth work projects that respond to identified needs.	Develop open, warm and responsive relationships that support the empowerment of young people; and help to build confidence, autonomy and self awareness.	Identify, adapt and use interchangeably the principles of informal, non-formal and formal education in a youth work setting which support human growth and development.	Support teams in maintaining safe practice through supervision, reflective routines, and continuous improvement.

Continued

Sqf themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Area of practice	Reflection on professional practice					
Aims	This area of practice aims to develop learners' understanding of reflective practice as a fundamental aspect of professional youth work. Learners will explore how reflection can be used to examine experiences, relationships, values and professional decision-making, enabling them to understand and improve the impact of their practice on young people and communities. The unit supports learners to develop reflective and ethical self-awareness by considering how their identities, experiences, assumptions and values influence their work. Through engagement with reflective models, supervision, feedback, research and professional dialogue, learners will strengthen their professional judgement, evaluate and improve their practice, and contribute to a culture of continuous learning, accountability and professional development.					
Indicative content	1. **Professional Identity and Self-Awareness** Values, beliefs, identities, positionality and professional formation. 2. **Critical Reflection and Reflective Models** Reflective frameworks, reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action and critical analysis. 3. **Feedback, Evaluation and Evidence-Informed Improvement** Evaluation findings, feedback, learning and adaptation of practice. 4. **Supervision, Coaching and Professional Learning** Reflective supervision, mentoring, coaching and accountability. 5. **Professional Development and Continuous Improvement** CPD, development planning, growth goals, standards and lifelong learning.					
Evidence of achievement	Demonstrates basic reflection on own practice, identifying strengths and areas for improvement with guidance.					
Learning outcomes	Reflect on own values, experiences, and positionality in relation to social justice, exploring how these shape youth work practice, power dynamics, and responses to inequality.	Demonstrate the ability to adapt practice in response to feedback and evaluation.	Utilise reflective practice techniques, such as supervision, coaching or mentoring to foster growth, accountability, and wellbeing.	Employ a range of reflective models to assess practice and identify areas for growth.	Demonstrate an informed understanding of the way values, beliefs and biases can influence face-to-face practice with young people.	Identify, adapt and use relevant theories, principles, policies and professional standards to reflect on your own professional formation.

Level 5

Level Indicator:

- Youth work expertise, with a focus on leadership and working with complexity.
- Critical understanding of youth work principles and practices.
- Able to apply concepts and principles from aligned professions.
- Can exercise judgement and autonomy.
- Apply NOS independently in varied contexts, adapting approaches, analysing impact, and exercising professional judgement.
- Leading, managing and supervising Level 4 youth workers and below.
- Requires regular supervision with a qualified practitioner.

Who is it for?:

- Established roles, leading and managing in a diverse range of youth work settings and specialisms.
- Providing a progress route to Level 6 degree.



NOS emphasis

YW01-YW15 – applied autonomously

YW01 Initiate, build and maintain relationships with young people

YW02 Assist young people to learn and engage with the youth work process

YW03 Comply with legal, regulatory and ethical requirements when carrying out youth work

YW04 Develop and maintain productive working relationships in collaboration with colleagues, agencies and stakeholders for youth work

YW05 Enable young people to identify, reflect and use their learning to enhance their future development

YW06 Explore the concept of values and beliefs with young people
YW07 – Apply youth work values and principles in group work

YW08 Engage with and empower young people to make use of digital media in their daily lives

YW09 Support young people to become responsible citizens through active involvement with youth work

YW10 Advocate with and on behalf of young people so that their interests are represented

YW11 Plan, prepare and facilitate learning activities with young people

YW12 Manage resources with young people for youth work activities

YW13 Access information with and for young people to inform decision making

YW15 Assist young people to assess risk and make informed choices in the management of their health and well-being

YW18 Engage with young people to promote their emotional wellbeing and mental health

YW19 Develop a culture and ethos that promotes inclusion and values diversity

YW20 Determine, evaluate and prioritise your organisation's objectives for youth work in the community

YW21 Secure funding and resources for youth work

YW24 Monitor and evaluate the impact of youth work strategy and delivery

YW25 Work as an effective and critically reflective youth work practitioner

YW29 Develop your knowledge, skills and competence (Management and leadership NOS CFAMandLAA2)

KSBs

Knowledge

K2: Professional boundaries

K3: Communication styles and methods, including barriers to communication and ways to overcome these

K4: Models of youth work

K11: Key stakeholders roles

K14: Theories and models for programme planning

K16: Contemporary models for impact and evaluation

K18: International, national and local factors

K19: Needs analysis

K24: Critical reflection/ CPD

K25: rights, responsibilities and power dynamics

K26: Cultural and community competency

K31: Child development

Skills

S2: Maintain professional boundaries

S3: Select youth work models

S4: Work in partnership with young people

S9: Utilise information to plan services

S10: Partnership working

S11: Advocate in policy and service development

S18: Support young people to undertake activities

S19: Apply participation models

S20: Develop young people's voice

S22: Conduct and use information from situational needs analysis to develop projects.

S23: Produce reports

S24: Use evaluations in planning

S27: Maintain ethics

Behaviours

B2: Ambassador for young people and youth work

B3: Leads and manages by example, demonstrating inclusive and participatory behaviours in their work

B4: Work collaboratively for the benefit of young people

B9: Promote political and social education

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
	Reflective practice					
Area of practice	**Social justice as praxis**	**Monitoring, evaluation and learning in youth work practice**	**Leadership and management in youth work**	**Working relationally in different contexts (specialist approaches)**	**Principles and practice of youth work and professional judgement**	**Professional studies in youth work**
Aims	Develop learners' critical understanding of social justice as a core value and practice in youth work. Explore how structural inequalities, power, and privilege shape young people's lives and youth work responses. Equip learners to apply anti-oppressive, and rights-based approaches in diverse youth work contexts. Support learners to reflect on their own positionality, values, and ethical responsibilities as practitioners.	Develop learners' ability to critically engage with monitoring and evaluation processes in youth work. Explore the ethical, relational, and political dimensions of evidence and impact. Equip learners to design and apply context-sensitive tools for learning and improvement. Support reflective and participatory approaches to evaluation that centre young people and practitioners.	Develop learners' understanding of leadership and management theories in the context of youth work. Explore relational, ethical, and adaptive approaches to leading youth work teams and services. Equip learners to navigate complexity, risk, and change while centring young people's rights and practitioner wellbeing. Support learners to reflect on their own leadership identity, values, and influence within organisational systems.	Develop learners' understanding of relational practice as a core principle in youth work. Explore how relational approaches are adapted across diverse youth work contexts, settings, and roles. Equip learners to build, sustain, and evaluate professional relationships with young people, colleagues, and communities. Support learners to critically reflect on their own relational style, boundaries, and ethical responsibilities.	Develop learners' critical understanding of youth work principles, values, and ethics. Equip learners with frameworks and tools for professional judgement in youth work. Explore the tensions, dilemmas, and complexities inherent in contemporary youth work practice. Support reflective practice in a range of professional contexts including but not limited to supervision and self assessment, and ethical self-awareness in learners' professional development.	Develop learners' understanding of youth work as a professional role. Equip learners with knowledge, governance, funding and organisational frameworks. Explore safeguarding and professional responsibility in organisational contexts. Support learners to plan, deliver and evaluate resilient and sustainable youth work practice.

Continued

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Indicative content	1. **Social Justice Theory, Values and Social Change** Social justice traditions, human rights, democracy, empowerment and youth work as a vehicle for change. 2. **Structural Inequality and Social Exclusion** Poverty, discrimination, institutional oppression, participation barriers and contemporary youth policy issues. 3. **Identity, Intersectionality and Positionality** Culture, privilege, lived experience, identity formation and critical reflexivity. 4. **Rights, Participation and Collective Action** Youth rights, advocacy, co-production, participation, activism and community engagement. 5. **Anti-Oppressive Practice and Professional Responsibility** Power, anti-discriminatory practice, allyship, organisational inclusion and ethical practice.	1. **Monitoring, Evaluation and Organisational Learning** Accountability, impact, service development, quality assurance and evaluation cultures. 2. **Evidence, Impact and Knowledge Production** Quantitative and qualitative evidence, impact measurement, Theory of Change and professional judgement. 3. **Evaluation Design and Data Collection** Evaluation planning, tools, feedback systems, participation monitoring and data analysis. 4. **Ethical and Participatory Evaluation** Research ethics, consent, representation, data protection, power and young people's participation. 5. **Evidence-Informed Improvement and Strategic Learning** Continuous improvement, action research, organisational development and learning from evidence.	1. **Leadership Theory, Values and Influence** Leadership approaches, ethics, power, influence and values-based leadership. 2. **Relational and Inclusive Leadership** Communication, emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, participation and team development. 3. **Strategic Planning and Resource Management** Strategic leadership, operational planning, project management, workforce development and sustainability. 4. **Decision-Making, Innovation and Organisational Change** Complexity, uncertainty, change management, organisational improvement and adaptive leadership. 5. **Workforce Development and Partnership Leadership** Supervision, mentoring, CPD, partnership working and collaborative leadership.	1. **Relational Theory and Relationship-Centred Practice** Relationship-based approaches, trust, authenticity, participation and youth work values. 2. **Adapting Relational Practice Across Contexts** Outreach, youth justice, education, community settings, mentoring and digital youth work. 3. **Communication, Collaboration and Partnership Working** Advanced communication skills, interprofessional practice and professional networks. 4. **Power, Identity and Inclusive Relationships** Positionality, privilege, culture, empowerment, voice and anti-oppressive practice. 5. **Wellbeing, Emotional Intelligence and Developmental Relationships** Human development, resilience, belonging, emotional regulation and relational competence.	1. **Youth Work Values, Purpose and Educational Traditions** Informal education, participation, empowerment, democracy, social justice and professional ethics. 2. **Ethics, Professional Judgement and Decision-Making** Moral reasoning, ethical dilemmas, accountability, risk and professional responsibility. 3. **Complex Practice and Professional Reasoning** Critical thinking, uncertainty, risk assessment, autonomy and evidence-informed decisions. 4. **Learning, Pedagogy and Educational Approaches** Informal, non-formal and formal education, experiential learning and youth work pedagogy. 5. **Participation, Inclusion and Personal Development** Rights-based practice, youth voice, co-production, reflection, achievement and lifelong learning.	1. **Governance, Policy and Organisational Accountability** Organisational structures, governance arrangements, policies and procedures, regulatory compliance, accountability frameworks, professional standards and ethical practice. 2. **Safeguarding, Risk Management and Professional Responsibility** Duty of care, safeguarding legislation, risk assessment, professional judgement, accountability, confidentiality, information sharing and reflective safeguarding practice. 3. **Partnership Working and Multi-Agency Collaboration** Stakeholder engagement, partnership development, communication, negotiation, collaborative practice, interagency working, community partnerships and sustainable collaboration. 4. **Funding, Sustainability and Resource Management** Funding models, commissioning, governance oversight, financial accountability, income generation, resource management, sustainability planning and strategic leadership. 5. **Professional Development, Leadership and Workforce Learning** Supervision, mentoring, coaching, peer learning, workforce development, communities of practice, continuing professional development (CPD), reflective cultures and professional formation.

Continued

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Evidence of achievement	Analyses structural inequalities and applies anti-oppressive approaches to challenge injustice in practice.	Designs and applies evaluation frameworks, interpreting data to assess impact and inform strategic development.	Leads projects or initiatives with strategic planning, delegation, and reflective supervision of others.	Facilitates complex relational dynamics, modelling emotionally literate practice and co-creating learning experiences.	Adapts and innovates youth work approaches in diverse contexts, demonstrating autonomy, critical judgement and creativity.	Demonstrates professional integrity, manages boundaries, and maintaining and promoting professional standards.
Learning outcomes	Critically analyse the concept of social justice and its relevance to youth work.	Explain the role of monitoring and evaluation in youth work practice and policy.	Critically evaluate leadership and management approaches relevant to youth work.	Define relational practice and explain its relevance across youth work contexts and multi agency settings.	Evaluate the core values and principles underpinning youth work practice in relation to comparable pedagogies.	Exercise professional responsibility for managing safeguarding, demonstrating accountability and reflective reasoning.
	Evaluate how structural inequalities impact young people and youth work practice.	Critically assess different approaches to evidence and impact.	Apply relational and ethical leadership strategies in team and service contexts.	Apply relational approaches in diverse youth work settings, adapting to role, purpose, and environment.	Critically evaluate ethical dilemmas and decision-making processes in youth work.	Develop strategies for peer learning, mentoring, and continuous professional development for youth workers and youth work teams.
	Apply the principles of intersectionality and positionality in youth work settings.	Design and apply appropriate tools for evaluation in youth work settings.	Demonstrate understanding of strategic planning, resource allocation, and operational delivery.	Demonstrate relational skills in professional interactions with young people and colleagues interprofessionally.	Apply professional judgement within complex practice scenarios.	Examine funding models, accountability frameworks, and the role of governance in shaping practice.
	Reflect on their own values, biases, and ethical responsibilities as youth work practitioners.	Reflect on ethical and relational dimensions of data collection and use.	Reflect on their own leadership identity, values, and impact.	Reflect on their own relational style, boundaries, and ethical responsibilities.	Identify, adapt and use interchangeably the principles of informal, non-formal and formal education in a youth work setting.	Understand and maintain organisational structures, policies, and procedures across youth work settings.
	Design inclusive, participatory strategies that promote equity and young people's rights.	Use evaluation findings to inform practice improvement and organisational learning.	Navigate complex decision-making and lead change in youth work settings.	Evaluate the effectiveness of relational approaches in supporting young people's development and wellbeing.	Enable young people to identify, reflect and use their learning to enhance their future development.	Demonstrate the ability to initiate, maintain, and review professional partnerships, using effective communication, shared values, and strategic planning to foster ethical, inclusive, and sustainable collaboration.

Continued

SQF Themes	Social justice	Evaluation and Impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing Youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Areas of practice	Reflective practice and professional formation					
Aims	This area of practice aims to develop learners' capacity for critical reflection and reflexivity as a foundation for effective youth and community work practice. Learners will explore how personal values, professional ethics, identity, assumptions and experiences influence their relationships, decision-making and work with young people and communities. Through engagement with reflective models, professional dialogue and critical self-evaluation, learners will strengthen their ability to analyse practice, challenge assumptions and integrate learning from experience. It supports learners to examine the influence of power, positionality, responsibility and professional judgement within youth work contexts, whilst developing emotional awareness, ethical decision-making and accountability. Through feedback, supervision, mentoring and evaluation, learners will enhance their ability to learn from multiple perspectives, assess and improve their practice, and create informed development plans that support continuous professional growth, effective relationship-building and sustained professional competence.					
Indicative content	1. **Critical Reflection and Reflexivity** Reflective models, self-awareness, assumptions, bias and professional dialogue. 2. **Professional Identity, Values and Formation** Values, ethics, leadership identity, relational identity and professional growth. 3. **Power, Positionality and Professional Judgement** Decision-making, privilege, responsibility, accountability and ethical practice. 4. **Feedback, Supervision and Continuous Learning** Reflective supervision, mentoring, evaluation, feedback and lifelong learning. 5. **Practice Improvement and Development Planning** Action planning, competence development, continuous improvement and professional progression.					
Evidence of achievement	Engages in critical self-reflection, integrating theory, feedback, and ethical considerations to inform future practice.					
Learning outcomes	Critically examine the role of power, identity and positionality in youth and community work relationships.	Critically reflect on own role and practice in assessing impact and measuring outcomes in youth work, identifying how personal values, assumptions, and beliefs influence evaluation processes and the interpretation of evidence.	Apply structured reflective models to analyse youth work scenarios, demonstrating the ability to interrogate assumptions, adapt practice, and integrate learning from experience.	Triangulate personal, professional, peer and theoretical perspectives to develop and maintain a professional relationships.	Critically evaluate personal and professional values in youth work practice, exploring how they influence decision-making.	Recognise, name, understand, and regulate emotional responses in real time whilst responding appropriately in a youth work context.

Level 6 (BA Hons, BSc), Level 7 (MA, MSc, PG Dip)

Professionally Qualified Youth Worker

Level Indicator:

- Apply NOS with advanced youth work expertise with the ability to lead strategic development and navigate systemic complexity.
- A critical, reflexive understanding of youth work values, ethics, and contested practice across diverse settings.
- Critically evaluate, lead, and shape youth work practice, influencing policy, quality, and organisational direction.
- Integration of theory and practice from youth work and aligned disciplines (e.g. education, social care, public health, youth justice) to inform innovation and collaboration.
- Professional autonomy, ethical leadership, and adaptive decision-making in complex, multi-agency environments.
- Ability to lead on evaluation and impact, to generate purposeful evidence and data which supports the strategic development of youth work.
- Capacity to lead, supervise/mentor, and develop youth workers and youth work teams, including those at Level 5 and below, fostering reflective and relational cultures.
- Requires regular supervision with a qualified practitioner.

Who is it for?:

- Anyone with a Level 5 youth work qualification, Level 6 for postgraduate learners.
- Youth work practitioners operating across statutory, voluntary, and community sectors looking to progress into senior and strategic roles.
- Youth work practitioners progressing into professional roles such as leading service development, policy implementation, and organisational change.
- Those facilitating supervision, training, and reflective practice for youth work teams.
- Practitioners progressing toward advanced roles in education, policy, research, or multi-agency leadership.

Note on Level 7 Programmes

Professional qualification at Level 7 conveys the same professional competence as Level 6. SQF aligned Level 7 programmes should be designed and conducted at a standard consistent with postgraduate study. In such cases, the overall programme structure and thematic content may remain broadly similar; however, learners would be expected to engage with the material at a significantly greater depth and level of criticality. Learning outcomes, indicative content, assessment tasks and required evidence should reflect Level 7 expectations, including advanced critical analysis, evaluation of theory and practice, independent research, application of complex concepts to professional contexts, and the generation of original insights that inform youth work practice, policy and leadership. Any programme offered at Level 7 should therefore ensure that the academic demands, assessment criteria and learner outputs are demonstrably comparable to those expected within postgraduate education.

NOS emphasis

YW01-22 – applied autonomously

YW01 Initiate, build and maintain relationships with young people

YW02 Assist young people to learn and engage with the youth work process

YW03 Comply with legal, regulatory and ethical requirements when carrying out youth work

YW04 Develop and maintain productive working relationships in collaboration with colleagues, agencies and stakeholders for youth work

YW05 Enable young people to identify, reflect and use their learning to enhance their future development

YW06 Explore the concept of values and beliefs with young people

YW07 Apply youth work values and principles in group work

YW08 Engage with and empower young people to make use of digital media in their daily lives

YW09 Support young people to become responsible citizens through active involvement with youth work

YW10 Advocate with and on behalf of young people so that their interests are represented

YW11 Plan, prepare and facilitate learning activities with young people

YW12 Manage resources with young people for youth work activities

YW13 Access information with and for young people to inform decision making

YW15 Assist young people to assess risk and make informed choices in the management of their health and well-being

YW16 Equip young people with safeguarding techniques

YW17 Monitor and review your organisation's policy and practices for the protection and safeguarding of young people and self

YW18 Engage with young people to promote their emotional wellbeing and mental health

YW19 Develop a culture and ethos that promotes inclusion and values diversity

YW20 Determine, evaluate and prioritise your organisation's objectives for youth work in the community

YW21 Secure funding and resources for youth work

YW22 Influence and develop youth work strategy

YW23 Engage young people in the strategic development of youth work

YW24 Monitor and evaluate the impact of youth work strategy and delivery

YW25 Work as an effective and critically reflective youth work practitioner

YW26 Provide leadership to other youth workers and volunteers

KSBs

Knowledge

K5: Theories of management and leadership e.g. inter-professional and inter-disciplinary working

K6: Human resources procedures

K7: Youth work supervision models

K8: The importance of staff development

K9: Resource, financial and facilities management

K12: Strategies to build and manage professional partnerships

K20: Project management tools and processes

K21: Evaluation and impact processes and strategies

K22: Commissioning and funding processes

K28: Safeguarding legislation, government guidance and national framework regarding record keeping, disclosure management and reporting referrals to a designated safeguarding lead

K29: Safer recruitment and staff management processes

K30: Professional accountability

Skills

S5: Utilise methods for managing youth work

S6: Keep administrative and financial records

S7: Carry out regular staff development

S8: Apply different leadership styles

S15: Assess the impact of youth work

S26: Apply supervision models

S29 Abide with safeguarding processes

S30: Mitigate risks to ensure the safety of young people

Behaviours

B3: Leads and manages by example, demonstrating inclusive and participatory behaviours in their work

B10: Compliance with relevant policies and procedures

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
	Reflective practice					
Area of practice	**Youth work for equity and social change**	**Interrogating impact: evaluation, evidence and learning in youth work**	**Strategic leadership and adaptive practice in youth work**	**Relational pedagogy (independent study/ negotiated module-specialised practice)**	**Contested practice: power, purpose and possibility in youth work**	**Professional identity and accountability**
Aims	This area of practice aims to develop learners ability to critically analyse systemic inequality, power and oppression within contemporary society and youth work practice. Learners will explore social justice, intersectionality, critical race theory and decolonising approaches to understand how structural forces shape young people's lives and opportunities. The unit supports learners to design and lead anti-oppressive, rights-based and youth-led initiatives that promote collective agency, civic participation and social change, while critically examining their own positionality, values and responsibilities as practitioners.	This area of practice aims to develop learners critical understanding of evaluation, evidence generation and organisational learning within youth work. Learners will examine how knowledge is created, validated and used within professional practice, critically questioning dominant evidence hierarchies and exploring participatory, emancipatory and youth-led approaches to evaluation. The unit equips learners to design robust evaluation frameworks, synthesise qualitative and quantitative evidence, and utilise evaluation as a tool for strategic learning, policy influence, organisational improvement and systems change.	This area of practice aims to enable learners to develop advanced leadership capabilities for complex and changing youth work environments. Learners will explore strategic foresight, adaptive leadership, organisational change, innovation and collaborative governance, applying systems thinking to contemporary challenges facing young people and services. The unit supports learners to lead ethically, manage uncertainty, influence stakeholders, secure resources and develop sustainable organisational responses that remain grounded in youth work values and social purpose.	This area of practice aims to deepen learners understanding of relational pedagogy as a distinctive and transformative feature of advanced youth work practice. Through independent and negotiated specialist study, learners will explore how human development, relational theory and pedagogical approaches inform engagement with young people across diverse contexts. Learners will design, implement and evaluate a specialist relational intervention, critically examining the impact of relationships, creativity, inquiry and practitioner reflexivity on learning, development, participation and wellbeing.	This area of practice aims to support learners to critically interrogate the historical, political, ethical and ideological foundations of youth work. Learners will examine youth work as a contested practice shaped by competing values, policy agendas, social movements and educational traditions. Through engagement with critical theory, social pedagogy, radical youth work and decolonising perspectives, learners will analyse the tensions between resistance and compliance, intervention and autonomy, and explore how youth work can contribute to empowerment, social transformation and democratic participation.	This area of practice aims to develop learners professional identity, accountability and leadership capacity within contemporary youth work settings. Learners will critically examine professional ethics, governance frameworks, safeguarding leadership, accountability mechanisms and sector standards, whilst preparing for the expectations of autonomous professional practice and Degree Apprenticeship End Point Assessment requirements. The unit supports learners to articulate a coherent professional identity, navigate complex ethical dilemmas, promote practitioner wellbeing and contribute to workforce development, sector advocacy and organisational leadership.

Continued

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Indicative content	1. Systems thinking and structural change in youth work 2. Intersectionality, critical race theory and social justice 3. Decolonising youth work practice 4. Collective action, advocacy and movement-building 5. Ethics of solidarity, allyship and power 6. Youth-led social change and civic participation 7. Rights-based and anti-oppressive approaches to practice 8. Structural and systemic responses to inequality	1. Participatory and emancipatory evaluation approaches 2. Evidence hierarchies and knowledge politics 3. Data ethics, representation and youth voice 4. Strategic learning and adaptive planning 5. Evaluation for systems change and social impact 6. Complexity-informed evaluation 7. Organisational learning and evidence-informed practice 8. Interprofessional and multi-agency learning systems	1. Strategic foresight and scenario planning 2. Adaptive leadership and complexity theory 3. Organisational development and innovation 4. Ethical leadership and accountability 5. Collaborative governance and stakeholder engagement 6. Funding, sustainability and resource development 7. Entrepreneurial approaches to youth work 8. Leading change within complex systems	1. Human development informed engagement 2. Context-specific relational youth work practice 3. Youth work in multi-agency, specialist and justice settings 4. Creative pedagogies and arts-based approaches 5. Practitioner inquiry and action research 6. Reflective and relational methodologies 7. Pedagogical innovation in youth work 8. Evaluating relational impact and developmental outcomes	1. Critical policy analysis and youth work history 2. Power, resistance and contestation in practice 3. Youth work as social pedagogy and political education 4. Ethics of intervention and non-intervention 5. Radical youth work traditions Decolonising and transformative approaches 6. Ideological debates within contemporary youth work 7. Reimagining youth work's purpose and future	1. Professional ethics and boundary negotiation 2. Accountability frameworks and governance standards 3. Strategic safeguarding leadership 4. Reflective supervision and practitioner wellbeing 5. Continuing professional development and lifelong learning 6. Professional identity formation and sector advocacy 7. Reputational risk, public scrutiny and organisational accountability 8. Leadership, professionalism and End Point Assessment preparation
Evidence of achievement	Critically analyses systemic inequalities, power and oppression, applying intersectional, anti-oppressive and rights-based approaches to design and lead youth work initiatives that promote equity, participation, collective agency and social change.	Designs, implements and critiques participatory evaluation frameworks, synthesising qualitative and quantitative evidence to assess impact, inform strategic learning and contribute to organisational improvement and systems change.	Demonstrates strategic and adaptive leadership by leading projects, managing change, engaging stakeholders, supporting others through reflective supervision, and making values-based decisions within complex and evolving youth work environments.	Designs and facilitates relational and pedagogical interventions that foster participation, learning, development and wellbeing, demonstrating critical reflexivity, emotionally literate practice and the effective use of relationship-based approaches.	Critically navigates complex and contested youth work contexts, adapting and innovating practice through the application of critical theory, decolonising perspectives, systems thinking and professional judgement to promote empowerment, participation and social change.	Demonstrates autonomous professional judgement and accountability by managing ethical dilemmas, safeguarding responsibilities, governance requirements and professional boundaries, whilst articulating a clear professional identity and promoting sector standards, advocacy and workforce development.

Continued

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Learning outcomes	Critically evaluate systemic inequalities and apply intersectional analysis to youth work strategy and programme design.	Design and critique participatory evaluation frameworks that centre youth voice and challenge dominant evidence hierarchies.	Lead strategic planning and organisational change in youth work settings, navigating complexity, risk, and uncertainty.	Design and deliver a specialised relational youth work initiative informed by pedagogical theory and critical reflexivity.	Critically interrogate the ideological, ethical, and practical tensions within contemporary youth work practice.	Demonstrate autonomous professional judgement in navigating ethical dilemmas and sector responsibilities.
	Design and lead anti-oppressive, rights-based youth work initiatives that foster collective agency and structural change.	Synthesise qualitative and quantitative data to inform strategic learning, policy influence, and sector development.	Apply adaptive leadership theory and values-based decision-making to multi-agency youth work contexts.	Apply human development theory to relational practice in a chosen context.	Analyse youth work as political education, exploring its role in resistance, empowerment, and social pedagogy.	Critically analyse accountability frameworks, governance standards, and reputational risk in youth work leadership.
	Synthesise theories of social justice, allyship, and movement-building to inform youth-led advocacy and practice.	Apply systems thinking to evaluate youth work impact across micro, meso, and macro levels.	Critically evaluate governance models, stakeholder engagement strategies, and collaborative leadership approaches.	Evaluate the effectiveness of relational strategies using practitioner inquiry and participatory methods.	Evaluate historical and policy frameworks shaping youth work, and propose transformative alternatives.	Design strategies for reflective supervision, practitioner wellbeing, and continuing professional development.
	Analyse the ethical dimensions of solidarity, positionality, and power in youth work across diverse settings.	Analyse the ethical and political dimensions of data use, representation, and accountability in youth work evaluation.	Design and implement innovation strategies that respond to emerging needs and systemic challenges in youth work.	Analyse the ethical tensions and boundary negotiations inherent in relational youth work.	Apply radical and decolonising perspectives to reframe youth work purpose and practice.	Articulate your professional identity, values, and ethical stance in relation to youth work standards and expectations.

Continued

SQF themes	Social justice	Evaluation and impact	Leadership and management	Relational practice	Developing youth work practice	Professional responsibility
Area of practice	Critically reflective practice					
Aim	This area of practice aims to embed critical reflection as a foundation for advanced professional practice, leadership and lifelong learning within youth work. Learners will develop sophisticated reflective capabilities that enable them to interrogate assumptions, challenge bias, examine power relationships and critically analyse the impact of their decisions and actions. The unit encourages ongoing reflexivity in relation to professional identity, ethical practice, leadership, evidence use and social justice, enabling learners to integrate theory, experience and research to inform transformative practice and continuous improvement.					
Indicative content	1. Critical reflexivity and professional judgement 2. Positionality, values and ethical decision-making 3. Reflective leadership and practitioner inquiry 4. Power, privilege and responsibility in professional practice 5. Learning from complexity, uncertainty and ambiguity 6. Professional identity and lifelong development 7. Evidence-informed reflection and action 8. Transformative practice and continuous improvement					
Evidence of achievement	Engages in critical reflexivity, critically evaluating personal values, assumptions, positionality and professional decisions, integrating theory, research, evidence, feedback and ethical considerations to inform professional judgement, leadership practice and continuous improvement.					
Learning outcomes	Reflect critically on your own values, biases, and professional stance in relation to equity and social change.	Reflect critically on your own assumptions about evidence, impact, and learning in youth work practice.	Reflect critically on your leadership identity, influence, and ethical responsibilities within youth work systems.	Reflect critically on your relational style, pedagogical stance, and the impact of your practice on young people.	Reflect critically on your professional positioning within contested youth work landscapes.	Reflect critically on your evolving role as a youth work professional and your contribution to sector advocacy.

Thank you

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