

Professional Development Award in Youth Work

SCQF Level 6 – LAYC 2026-27





INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

(LAYC 2026-27)

Venue: LAYC Dunford House | 7 Boroughloch | Edinburgh | EH8 9NL

INTRODUCTION

The Professional Development Award in Youth Work has been designed for those working with young people in a Community Learning and Development context. It is suitable for people who have experience of youth work in a paid or volunteering capacity but who might not have formal qualifications in youth work.

The Professional Development Award in Youth Work offers a nationally recognised, Qualification Scotland (QS) accredited qualification at SCQF Level 6.

Participants will be required to complete all three units and also to undertake a practical placement within their workplace or the youth club/group where they volunteer. As part of their practical placement, they will be expected to deliver youth work sessions. In order to complete the PDA, participants will be observed delivering youth work in their workplace or the group/club where they volunteer.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

All applicants/participants must be 18 + (Young leaders aged 16+ – 18 who you are suitably experienced may also be considered) and be able to demonstrate that they:

- Have 1 year experience of regularly working/volunteering in a youth work setting.
- Have completed the Youth Scotland Ready for Youth Work 2-day course (in person or online 5 sessions) or equivalent covering core competencies as per the National Youth Work Induction Checklist.
- Have completed a Child Protection Awareness course in the past 2 years.
- Currently work or volunteer in a youth work setting.
- Have written permission from their workplace or the youth group where they volunteer, confirming they can be observed delivering youth work as part of the PDA course.
- Are able to attend **all** the outlined training sessions and undertake **all** the required assessments.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course will be delivered by LAYC using course materials developed by Youth Scotland and LAYC.

The course will involve six main delivery sessions designed to build knowledge and skills in working with young people. Participants are required to take part in all organised sessions of the programme. **Participants will also be required to undertake additional research and learning activities in their own time and to compile a learning log / portfolio to evidence their work.**

The PDA in Youth Work is divided into three units of work.

- Understanding and Exploring Youth Work
- Engaging Young People
- Delivering Youth Work

Unit 1 will be delivered (or taught) first to introduce participants to the underpinning knowledge they need to undertake Units 2 and Unit 3. Throughout Units 2 and 3, participants must practice developing their youth work skills within their own workplace/ volunteer setting. Unit 3 requires each participant to plan, organise and lead youth work sessions in their own workplace/ volunteer setting.

UNITS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of each unit, participants must demonstrate competence, knowledge and skills in each of the Learning Outcomes.

UNIT 1 Understanding and Exploring Youth Work

The Unit introduces participants to the context, core values and principles which underpin youth work and raises awareness of the issues facing young people and those working with them. It provides underpinning knowledge and understanding for the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work.

On completion of the Unit the participants should be able to:

1. Explain the current context of youth work in Scotland
2. Outline current definitions of youth work in Scotland
3. Explain the core values and principles underpinning youth work
4. Outline the factors which may impact on youth work practice

UNIT 2 Engaging Young People

This Unit is designed to provide participants with an understanding of communication and group work skills necessary to engage with young people in a range of settings.

On completion of the Unit the participants should be able to:

1. Describe a range of approaches which may be used to engage with young people
2. Outline relevant communication and interpersonal skills required of the youth worker
3. Describe group work skills used in youth work.

UNIT 3 Delivering Youth Work

This Unit is designed to provide participants with the knowledge and skills required to work with young people in a range of youth work settings. It offers opportunities to develop practical skills and to demonstrate the application of the core values and principles of youth work in practice.

On completion of the Unit the participants should be able to:

1. Demonstrate the application of core values and principles of youth work in practice
2. Engage with young people in a youth work setting
3. Plan, deliver and review a youth work activity

THE LEARNING LOG/PORTFOLIO

Participants will be required to keep a learning log /portfolio to record and evidence their learning throughout the course. Support on how to complete this log / portfolio will be given. **10 sessions are to be logged.**

ASSESSMENTS

Participants will be asked to undertake assessments for each unit. This will form part of their portfolio, see above.

As part of the assessment of Unit 3, participants will also be observed delivering a youth work activity in their own workplace/ volunteer setting. This observation will be carried out by a suitable person – either one of the course tutors or by a suitable workplace supervisor/colleague.

CERTIFICATION

Once participants have satisfactorily completed all three units of the PDA, the Approved Centre (Youth Scotland) will process the paperwork and Qualification Scotland (QS) will issue the PDA Certificate.

COURSE TIMETABLE

	Time	Unit	Assessment Due Dates
Thursday 24th September	10-4.30PM	Unit 1	
Thursday, 1st October			22 nd October
Thursday 12th November	10-4.30PM	Unit 2	
Thursday 19th November			10 th December
Thursday 21st January 2027	10-4.30PM	Unit 3	
Thursday 11th March			1 st April

A detailed programme for each of the sessions will be given to candidates at the start of each unit.

SUPPORT

All candidates will be supported throughout the course by members of the training team but will also need support from within their workplace/place where they volunteer.

SQA REGISTRATION

This is a community-based course, delivered by LAYC and accredited by Qualification Scotland (QS). Youth Scotland is an QS Approved Centre, and all candidates will be required to register with Qualification Scotland.

COST: Free to members, and CEC sessional youth & Children workers- please note the market value of this course is over £500.

HOW TO APPLY

For further information about the PDA in Youth Work course contact 	Please complete the attached PDA Lothian course application form and return to 
enquiries@layc.org.uk	

Closing date for applications: *Friday 4th September 2026*

- Successful applicants will be advised by **11th September** A formal acceptance form will be sent out to those offered places which must be completed and returned **asap**.
- The first session of the course will take place in person on:
Thursday 24th September 2026 from 10am – 4.30pm.
- **PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU MUST BE ABLE TO ATTEND ALL THE 6 LISTED SESSIONS.**