AIM Qualifications
Level 3 Certificate for Forest School Leaders Specification

603/2406/5

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Document version history

Version number	Date	Description
1	February 2024	▪ Document created/rebranded after qualification review. There are minor amendments to the components in this qualification. The specific changes can be found here. After review, the GLH of components have also been amended. NB This does not affect the TQT or credit value.

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About us

Qualification specification for Level 3 Certificate for Forest School Leaders

AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group is a leading Awarding Organisation supplying hundreds of centres with high-quality regulated vocational and technical qualifications. We also offer non-accredited provision and apprenticeship end-point assessments.

AIM qualifications cover a range of academic levels from Entry Level to Level 6 across a wide range of subject areas. All our UK Level 3 qualifications carry UCAS tariff points which can count towards university entry requirements.

About this qualification specification

This specification is intended for tutors, internal quality assurers, centre managers and other staff within AIM recognised centres and/or prospective centres. It provides information about the structure and delivery of the qualification. The specification should be read in conjunction with the AIM Centre Handbook and other policy documents available on the website and in the MIA portal.

Offering this qualification

In order to offer this qualification, you must be an AIM recognised centre and be approved to deliver this qualification. If your centre is not yet recognised, please contact our business development team to discuss becoming an AIM recognised centre. They can advise you on the best qualifications for your organisation.

You can arrange a meeting by emailing businessdevelopment@aimgroup.org.uk or calling 0333 034 8833. More information can be found on: www.aim-group.org.uk/newcentre

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Section 1 – Qualification overview

About this qualification

The AIM Qualifications Level 3 Certificate for Forest School Leaders provides learners with the knowledge and skills required to support individuals in Forest School programmes and outdoor learning.

This qualification enables learners to gain the skills and knowledge required to plan and lead Forest School programmes. The AIM Qualifications suite of Forest School qualifications has been developed with the support of the Forest School Association and specialists in Forest School delivery and training.

This qualification is designed to develop leadership, facilitation, practical and teaching skills to enable learners to understand the principles and ethos of Forest School. It also enables learners to deliver Forest School programmes. It is designed to meet the needs of school and college staff, teachers and teaching assistants, youth workers, adults, and professionals in training to become a Forest School Leader.

This qualification will prepare learners for further study and employment in the outdoors.

Qualification details

AIM Qualifications Level 3 Certificate for Forest School Leaders	
Qualification	Academic
Assessment	Portfolio of evidence/workbook
Grading	Pass/Fail
Geographical coverage	England
Operational start date	18/09/2017
Review date	31/08/2026
Sector	3.2 Horticulture and Forestry
Qualification number	603/2406/5
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	96
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	180
Minimum learner age	19
Rules of combination	Learners must achieve the mandatory components to achieve this qualification.

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Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF)

The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) provides a single, simple system for cataloguing all qualifications regulated by Ofqual. Qualifications are indexed by their level and size. Levels indicate the difficulty and complexity of the knowledge and skills associated with any qualification. There are eight levels supported by three "entry levels". Size refers to the estimated total amount of time it could typically take to study and be assessed for a qualification. Size is expressed in term of Total Qualification Time (TQT). The part of the TQT spent being taught or supervised is known as Guided Learning Hours (GLH).

Total Qualification Time (TQT) and Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

Total Qualification Time (TQT) is the number of notional hours it takes a typical learner to achieve the full qualification and is **made up of two elements:**

- the minimum number of Qualification Guided Learning Hours (GLH) - the number of Tutor led contact hours
- the number of hours spent on preparation, studying and the assessment that is non-guided

For example, the number of tutor-led contact hours (GLH) for a qualification is 30 and the number of hours spent by the learner (non-GLH) on preparation, studying and the assessment is 6 hours. Therefore, the Total Qualification Time (TQT) for the qualification is 36 hours.

Progression opportunities

This qualification is designed to develop leadership, facilitation, practical and teaching skills to enable learners to understand the principles and ethos of Forest School. It also enables learners to deliver Forest School programmes.

Entry requirements

It is recommended that learners have a minimum of Level 2 literacy and numeracy skills or Grade 4/C GCSE English and Maths, or equivalent.

Resource requirements

Centres should only deliver the components that they have the human and physical resources to deliver. For example, if a learner needs to demonstrate the use of tools in a specific environment, then the centre will need to have access to both the tools and the environment.

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Learners are required to experience forest school therefore the equipment requirements would be typical of a Forest School setting.
Blended learning is accepted for this qualification where elements of theory are covered. Due to the nature of the qualification and its purpose, learners should spend a significant amount of the guided learning hours in the presence of their trainer/assessor in an outdoor setting.

Requirements to deliver this Qualification

o offer this qualification, centres must ensure that tutors: hold or are working towards:

- have a teaching or training qualification such as a level 3, 4 or 5 education and training qualification, PTLLS (or equivalent);
- have level 3 forest school leader accreditation;
- have a minimum of two years of experience, post qualification, leading forest school with at least one long term (ie through the seasons) programme with a variety of client groups;
- have a first aid qualification of at least 16 hours in duration which includes an outdoor element;
- have professional indemnity and public liability insurance.

In addition, the Head of Centre, Centre Contact or Curriculum contact must:

- Inform AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group of any changes in staffing associated with the delivery of these qualifications;
- hold public liability insurance.

Centres must also ensure they have in place an Internal Quality Assurance person who:

- holds or is working towards a level 4 award in internal quality assurance of assessment processes and practices
- has substantial experience of working in or assessing qualifications in the subject area
- is familiar with the assessment requirements of the qualification for which they are the internal quality assurer.

As an Awarding Organisation, we require that:

Centres should only deliver the components that they have the human and physical resources to deliver. For example, if a learner needs to demonstrate the use of tools in a specific environment, a forest school for example, then the centre will need to have access to both the tools and the environment.

Blended learning is accepted for this qualification where elements of theory are covered. Due to the nature of the qualification and its purpose, learners should spend a significant amount of the guided learning hours in the presence of their trainer/assessor in an outdoor setting.

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Section 2 – Qualification structure

Qualification structure and components

This section details the rules of combinations for the qualifications. Select the component titles to view the component details.

Rules of combination for:	Level 3 Certificate for Forest School Leaders		
Learners must achieve the mandatory components to achieve this qualification.			
Component code	**Component title**	**Credit**	**GLH**
Mandatory			
A/616/2559	Forest School Programme: Delivery	3	15
M/616/2560	Forest School Programme: Learning and development	3	30
T/616/2561	Forest School Programme: Planning and preparation	3	15
A/616/2562	Forest School Programme: Practical skills	3	18
F/616/2563	Forest School Programme: The Woodland environment	3	18

Level descriptors

Components are assigned a level based in the current requirements for the RQF as issued by OFQUAL.

Level	Knowledge descriptor	Skills descriptor
Level 3	Has factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to complete tasks that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine. Can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas. Is aware of the nature of the area of study or work. Is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.	Identify, select and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills, methods and procedures to address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine. Use appropriate investigation to inform actions. Review how effective methods and actions have been.

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Section 3 – Assessment

How this qualification is assessed

A summary of the assessment of each component is shown below. Guidance on our expectations is available in the AIM Qualifications: Assessment Handbook.

Assessment method	Overview
Internal assessment by portfolio of evidence	Where the assessment method for the qualification is by internally set assessments (portfolio of evidence), then centres are free to devise their own assessments for the qualification/unit.
Internal assessment by observation	Where the assessment method for the qualification is by observation of learners to demonstrate their application of skills.

Reasonable adjustment and special considerations

Reasonable adjustments and Special Considerations are available for all assessments, irrespective of whether they are internally or externally set. Where a learner or group of learners may not be able to access the assessment without Reasonable Adjustments, centres should ensure that they apply in good time for relevant reasonable adjustments to be made, using the AIM Qualifications Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy which gives clear guidance on the reasonable adjustments and arrangements that can be made to take account of disability or learning difficulty without compromising the achievement of the assessment criteria.

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Section 4 – Operational guidance

Offering this qualification

Centres wishing to offer this qualification must be an AIM recognised centre.
New centres can apply to become a centre using the centre recognition application process on our website: www. aim-group.org.uk.

We can advise centres of the best and most efficient methods for offering this qualification.
All procedures for the use of this qualification, including approval, registration of learners, verification and certification will be completed through AIM and all centres will have an allocated customer experience advisor to support them.

Approval to offer qualifications

Centres wishing to offer this qualification must complete and submit a qualification approval request. This can be found on the AIM website when choosing a qualification. Some qualifications require centres to have specific resources in place and/or their assessors/internal verifiers should hold certain qualifications. Where this is the case, centres must provide evidence of resources/staff qualifications when completing the Qualification Approval request.

Registration and certification

Once your centre has approval to offer a qualification, you will be able to register learners to these qualifications via our Quartzweb portal, at this point you can also select their chosen components. Please ensure that learners are registered against the correct qualification and are aware of the rules of combination required to achieve the qualification.

For all registration and certification processes, please refer to the Quartzweb guidance document which can be downloaded from our website's centre handbooks and forms page. Details of assessment, internal verification and external verification can be found in the AIM Qualifications: Assessment Handbook.

Learners achieving a qualification will be issued with a qualification certificate detailing the achieved qualification and components. Learners who have not achieved a qualification will, on request, be issued with a component certificate detailing the components achieved.

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Section 5 – Appendices and links

Appendices and links

Select an appendix or link from the list below to view the document.

Useful links

Link 1 - AIM Centre handbooks and forms

Link 2 - AIM Qualifications: Assessment Handbook

Link 3 - Fees and Charges

Link 4 - Qualification Search

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Command verbs

Level 3	
Analyse	Learners present the outcome of methodical and detailed examination either: breaking down a theme, topic, or situation in order to interpret and study the interrelationships between the parts. and/or of information or data to interpret and study key trends and interrelationships.
Assess	Learners present careful consideration of varied factors or events that apply to a specific situation or identify those which are the most important or relevant and arrive at a conclusion.
Compare and Contrast	Learners can identify the main factors relating to two or more items/situations or aspects of a subject that is extended to explain the similarities, differences, advantages, and disadvantages. This is used to show depth of knowledge through selection and isolation of characteristics.
Create	To produce work in response to a brief or to apply skills and techniques to meet an intention.
Demonstrate	Learners' work or practice shows the ability to carry out and apply knowledge, understanding and/or skills in a practical situation.
Describe	Learners give a clear, objective account in their own words showing recall and, in some cases application, of the relevant features and information about a subject.
Discuss	Explore issues, lines of reasoning and situations, articulating different viewpoints.
Estimate	Give an approximate decision or opinion using previous knowledge or experience.
Evaluate	Review information then bring it together to form a conclusion, drawing on evidence including strengths, weaknesses, alternative actions, relevant data or information. Come to a supported judgement of a subject's qualities and relation to its context.
Explain	Learners' work shows clear details and gives reasons and/or evidence to support an opinion, view, or argument. It could show how conclusions are drawn.
Justify	Learners are able to give reasons or evidence to,support an opinion,or prove something right or reasonable.
Outline	Learners provide a general description or plan showing the essential features of something but not the detail.
Summarise	Briefly present an abstract of the main points.

All levels	
Calculate	Work out a numerical problem, showing how they arrived at their answer.

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