

Chwarae Cymru

Play Wales



Playwork qualifications in Wales

For playworkers and others who work
with children

www.play.wales

Introduction to qualifications

A short guide to help playworkers, employers and managers better understand the playwork qualifications that are available in Wales.

The playwork sector covers many different professions, many of which could benefit from playwork qualifications or training. There are a few different options available if you need a playwork qualification as part of your work.

Whatever your interest in playwork, Play Wales can help you find the learning that's right for you.

These options vary depending on:

- Your job role
- Whether the setting you work in is regulated and inspected by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)
- In what type of setting you work
- What other qualifications you hold – particularly if they are in childcare, youth work or education.

What is playwork?

Playwork is a recognised profession. Playwork is child-centred and ensures that play is the main focus.

The role of the playworker is varied and is about much more than keeping children entertained. Playworkers support and facilitate children's play and this requires a range of skills. You will learn about these on any of the playwork qualifications described in this guide.

Important playwork qualities for playworkers include:

- A belief that children are the experts about their play
- A belief that children have a right to play
- A commitment to including all children
- A willingness to let children take the lead in their own play
- A willingness to step back when necessary so children can play in their own way
- An awareness that risk taking is an important part of play and that an adult's role is to balance risk taking with play's physical and emotional benefits
- An appreciation of the value of observation and how this helps adults understand children and their play
- An ability to reflect on good and bad experiences to improve playwork practice
- A creative approach to working with others
- A good understanding of how to provide resources for play.

It is important to know that playwork qualifications can also be valuable for anyone working with children.

Job roles

Playwork jobs may be full or part-time and are sometimes just available during school holidays. This means that playwork can be a full-time career or something that fits around study or other work.

Playworkers

Playworkers may work in a range of different places, including:

- Staffed adventure playgrounds
- After school clubs (out of school childcare)
- Holiday playschemes
- Doorstep play projects – such as street play
- Play ranger projects – such as in public parks
- Schools.



Understanding how to support children’s play is the most important task for a playworker. Playwork is different to many other professions involving work with children where the focus may be on learning, physical activity or the arts, for example.

Playwork progression route

Playwork: Principles into Practice (P³) is a series of three qualifications, each progressively developing learners' playwork skills and knowledge.

Starting as an unqualified playworker, completion of all three qualifications will allow you to work as a senior playworker or playwork manager. Each part of the progression route builds on the knowledge and skills gained in the qualification before.

These qualifications have been designed to provide an effective route to qualify as a playworker:

1 The Agored Cymru Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP) is the entry requirement for the P³ route and has to be completed successfully before progressing to the other qualifications in the series. It includes information

about the importance of play, inclusion, playwork theory and creating spaces for playing.

2 The Agored Cymru Level 2 Certificate Playwork: Principles into Practice has been designed to meet the requirements of face-to-face playworkers working year-round in a range of settings. It includes information about reflective practice, safeguarding, working with others and practical playwork skills.

3 The Agored Cymru Level 3 Diploma Playwork: Principles into Practice is the next step from the Level 2 Certificate and is aimed at playwork managers and supervisors. It includes information about community development, risk management, legislation and working with families.

Find out more at: www.play.wales/playwork/training



Playwork: Principles into Practice

The P³ progression route is special because:

- It is truly play centred training where the needs of playing children come first.
- Inclusive playwork and meeting the play needs of all children are embedded throughout the courses.
- The learning experience is a dynamic interactive one that ensures learners will find it interesting and stimulating.
- Learners and employers tell us it transforms their practice.
- It is structured around the Playwork Principles.
- It is delivered by some of the most dynamic, inspirational playwork trainers in the UK.
- The course materials have been written, designed and edited by some of the UK's leading playwork experts.
- It can be delivered in English or Welsh (including handbooks).

Playwork qualifications progression route

To meet the play needs of all children in Wales and all those who work where children play, Play Wales has worked with the sector to develop the Agored Cymru Playwork: Principles into Practice (P³) qualifications.

Agored Cymru Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP)

For holiday playscheme workers and those new to playwork. This is the entry requirement to progress to the other qualifications in this suite.

Agored Cymru Level 2 Certificate in Playwork: Principles into Practice

For face to face playworkers working year round in a range of settings.

Agored Cymru Level 3 Diploma in Playwork: Principles into Practice

Progression from the Level 2 Certificate. It is aimed at senior playworkers, playwork managers and supervisors.

Other playwork qualifications

In addition to the P³ progression route there are other playwork qualifications that are suitable for those who already have other qualifications in working with children, such as childcare or education. These other playwork qualifications also give a helpful introduction to play and playwork.

Agored Cymru Level 1 playwork – an introductory training course for those wanting to gain a better understanding of the importance of children’s play and how playworkers work with children. It does not qualify learners to work in a registered playwork setting.

Agored Cymru Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (LZAPP) – part of the P³ progression route but it is also good as an introduction to playwork. If you work in schools, youth work, sports, early years or other settings with children, it has been designed to help you.

Agored Cymru Level 3 Managing a Holiday Play Scheme (MAHPS) Award – for people who already have another level 3 qualification in working with children. It has been developed mainly to help people working in holiday playschemes to add playwork knowledge and skills to their existing level 3 qualification in working with children.

Agored Cymru Level 3 Award in Delivering Dynamic Playwork Training (ADDaPT) – a train the trainer course

for playwork tutors. It is also the minimum qualification that Play Wales requires for tutors delivering the P³ progression route.

Level 3 Award in Transition to Playwork – for people with another level 3 qualification in working with children, in particular those with education, youth work or care qualifications. This qualification can be added to your existing qualifications to cover the knowledge and skills for playwork in settings that are registered with Care Inspectorate Wales. It is offered by several awarding bodies including Agored Cymru, NCFE Cache and City & Guilds.

Level 2 and 3 playwork diplomas – these qualifications are available from other awarding bodies including NCFE Cache and City & Guilds. They are recognised qualifications in Wales and are the only ones available as playwork apprenticeships. Apprenticeships can be a good way of getting funding to learn on the job.

Required qualifications

To work in a play or childcare setting that is regulated by Care Inspectorate Wales, you need to hold the appropriate qualifications for your job role.

- Playwork qualifications are needed for anyone working with children of school age in a regulated after school or open access setting.
- In some cases, you may need a playwork qualification as well as a childcare qualification.
- Those that work face-to-face with children and who are not managers generally need to hold a level 2 qualification.
- Those who work as managers generally need to hold a level 3 qualification.

Your role and other qualifications you already have will impact on which qualifications are most suitable for you. To help you decide on the best qualification for you, take a look at the playwork qualifications flowchart available on Play Wales' website.

More information about the *List of Required Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales* is also available on the website. The Playwork Education and Training Council for Wales (PETC Wales) decides which qualifications are needed in which situation.

Find out more at: www.play.wales/playwork/required-qualifications



Further support and information

If you would like to find out more about playwork qualifications and how to enroll, please contact:

Play Wales – www.play.wales

Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs – www.clybiauplantcymru.org

Important organisations

Play Wales

The national organisation for children's play. Play Wales has led on writing the playwork qualifications for the sector in Wales and can advise on the best qualification for you.

www.play.wales

Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs

The national organisation that helps set up, develop and support out of school childcare clubs. It is a major provider of playwork qualifications and an important partner of Play Wales.

www.clybiauplantcymru.org

PETC Wales

The Playwork Education and Training Council for Wales (PETC Wales) approves which playwork qualifications are required for people working in regulated playwork settings.

www.play.wales/playwork/workforce

Qualifications Wales

The independent organisation responsible for regulating qualifications in Wales. This includes qualifications gained at school (GCSEs and A-Levels) and vocational qualifications like playwork and childcare.

www.qualificationswales.org

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

The body that is responsible for regulating and inspecting childcare and playwork settings.

www.careinspectorate.wales

Awarding bodies

These are the organisations that award the qualifications. Ultimately, they are responsible for quality, content and design of qualifications – and your certificate! Play Wales has worked with Agored Cymru to develop the playwork progression route in this guide. Agored Cymru is a Welsh awarding body. You will also find playwork qualifications from other UK awarding bodies including NCFE Cache and City & Guilds.



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Play Wales is the national organisation for children's play, an independent charity supported by the Welsh Government to uphold children's right to play and to provide advice and guidance on play-related matters.