

# Top tips for finding a playwork training provider

For playworkers and other professionals involved in children's play

Whether you are looking for a training workshop or a qualification, playwork training can vary greatly in quality. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we access training and qualifications but that doesn't mean you should settle for less. These top tips are designed to support you to make the most of your training time and budget by providing considerations to help you when selecting your training provider.

## 1 Playwork Principles

The language used in any publicity should reflect that of the sector and all playwork training should make direct reference to the Playwork Principles as our professional and ethical framework.

## 2 Occupational competence

This means that your tutor has a playwork background and is qualified to be teaching you playwork. They should have direct experience of working in a playwork setting. Whilst experience of working in schools, early years or other types of work with children can be useful, this should be additional to playwork knowledge and expertise. Feel free to ask about your tutor's expertise – if they are occupationally competent they should have no problem providing the evidence.

## 3 History

Look into the background of your training provider. It should have a history of delivering playwork training/qualifications and if it's a new provider at least be able to provide testimonials from recent learners.

## 4 Recommendations

Word of mouth is a great way to find out about quality training. Ask other playworkers or playwork organisations who they would recommend.

## 5 Online learning

Online learning has become more common since the pandemic. If courses are delivered entirely online, find out how much direct engagement you will get from an experienced tutor and ask if you will have the chance to work with other learners. Playwork is a practice-based profession and being able to learn and reflect with others is crucial.

## 6 Blended learning

Some learning providers offer a mixture of online and classroom learning and this is a good way of getting a balance.

## 7 Time with a tutor or assessor

Work-based learning is an option for those wanting to learn on the job. However, you should check with your training provider how much time you will also get learning in the classroom or directly with a tutor who can answer questions and guide your learning so it's directly related to your practice.

## 8 Assessment of practice

If your course is assessed, find out if there is a practical assessment. Practical assessment means that you are observed on your skills either in the classroom or in the workplace. Whilst not every training or qualification has assessment of practice it can be a useful way of gaining feedback on your individual practice.

## 9 Cost

Quality training costs money. There are some training providers that are able to secure funding to be able to offer low-cost or free training. However, if the cost seems too good to be true, it's worth undertaking further research into how the course is being funded or the background of the training provider.

## 10 Qualification levels

Playwork qualifications are given a level which relates to the academic level and also the level or grade of staff it is for. Generally, level 2 is for playworkers while level 3 and above is for senior playworkers or managers and relates to the required qualification for practice.

## 11 Required qualifications

If the training provider is advertising that the qualification is at a particular level and you need the qualification to work in a registered setting you need to ensure that the qualification is suitable. In Wales, check it's on the *Required List of Qualifications to work within the Playwork Sector in Wales*:

[www.play.wales/playwork/required-qualifications/](http://www.play.wales/playwork/required-qualifications/)

