



Fife College

# Your guide to Early Learning and Childcare



make  
it  
yours

# Welcome to Fife College

**We deliver Childcare courses at a number of campuses across Fife and this guide provides information about the structure of our full-time courses, the teaching and learning styles used and types of assessment, along with attendance expectations.**

These 12 month full-time courses offer you the opportunity to gain skills and experience in working with children, both on placement in a Childcare setting and through classroom-based units in child-related topics and Core Skills.

As well as having appropriate entry qualifications, selection onto all Childcare courses will be based on criteria outlined in Fife College's Admissions Procedure, which will include your personal statement, an interview and a satisfactory reference.

You will also require a PVG check through Disclosure Scotland in order to go out on the placement(s) that are part of all courses (visit [disclosurescotland.co.uk](http://disclosurescotland.co.uk) for more information). If you are concerned about any information that may affect your PVG, you can contact our Guidance team to discuss this before submitting your application.

In addition, you must be a minimum of 16 years of age at the start of your studies (please refer to individual course Entry Requirements for further details).

Our team is on hand to answer any questions you may have in relation to preparing for your studies, while the college website has up-to-date information on courses offered, along with details on the availability of places



**We hope you will find this Guide useful in selecting your preferred course of study and wish you every success with your future studies.**

**Jane Carruthers**  
Curriculum Manager, Early Education and Childcare

**The Childcare sector is unlike any other. It allows you to use your knowledge and skills to help people and change lives for the better.**

We know that everyone has different reasons and motivations for pursuing a career in Childcare. And we also know that everyone's personal circumstances are unique. That's why we've made it so easy to study with us and get ready for your next step.

## Childcare at Fife College

The Childcare team at Fife College has a well-deserved reputation for providing quality Childcare training and for producing capable, confident and competent Childcare workers.

At Fife College, our approach to the training of professional Childcare and Education workers is characterised by the linking of personal and professional experiences. We promote active learning and you can expect to be taking part in activities both in and out of the classroom. We encourage students to reflect on their own childhood and family life as a key to rediscovering the needs and world of the child. This awareness is the basis of building a professional approach.

## Our Childcare courses enable you to:

- Develop knowledge of the facts and theories of development and the importance of Childcare and Education
- Gain confidence in your own capabilities as a learner and contribute to the learning of others by sharing experiences and insights
- Extend knowledge and deepen understanding of how children develop and learn in order to become more effective in the caring and educating of young children
- Gain experience of the equipment, materials, processes and practices currently used in Early Years contexts
- Develop professional skills and qualities in the workplace through a variety of practical placement experiences
- Deepen your understanding of the importance of anti-discriminatory practice, allowing you to meet the individual needs of every child

## Why study for a career in Childcare?

Children are naturally curious and enthusiastic for learning and play and this very often rubs off on those working with them. In the same way, the people who work with children are able to encourage and support them to explore and develop an understanding of the world around them.

There's more to childcare than just building sandcastles, making dens, or doing some glitter painting. Early Learning professionals are responsible for giving children the best start in life using ideas and activities that help their little personalities grow.

You'll be responsible for creating and maintaining a safe, supportive environment, and encouraging children to play and share with others, allowing them to develop good behaviour and cooperation skills.

At the moment, only 50% of early years officers in the UK are in full-time employment, with the other 50% being either part-time or self-employed. It's a great career if you have other existing commitments, such as your own family, to consider.

**You'll come up with creative ideas for activities to help children learn, grow, and better understand the world around them.**

## Careers

- Early years officer
- Playworker
- Early years practitioner
- Early years teacher
- Nursery teacher
- HNC: Childhood Practice or SVQ: Social Services (Childcare and Young People) SCQF Level 7 allow you to register as a practitioner with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

## The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

The Scottish Social Services Council was set up under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 to regulate social service workers and to promote their education and training.

There are many different jobs in Social Services each with a range of skills and qualities. Roles include those in Early Years, Social Care and Social Work.

Registration with the SSSC is compulsory for Childcare workers.

For further information, please visit the SSSC website: [sssc.uk.com](http://sssc.uk.com)

## Attendance

Your success as a student depends on full and regular attendance at all classes. You should inform the College as soon as possible if you have problems with attendance. Our records show that students who do not attend all their classes have a very high risk of failure.

As a prospective member of a caring profession, attendance is a basic professional attribute and full attendance at college is also the first step towards this.

## Workplace experience

This is a vital part of the coursework for all Childcare courses. It offers a rich source experience, where you can link theory with practice. Its central place is reflected in the assessment structure and college teaching makes continual reference to placement work.

Expected attendance hours will be discussed in more detail at the start of your chosen course, while patterns of placement may vary between campuses.

## Your learning

Your course will provide you with constant opportunities to learn new skills and acquire knowledge in your chosen subject areas. In order to make the most of all the opportunities available, you need to organise and plan your learning and also to manage your time effectively.

You must attend all your timetabled classes.

You also need to study in your own time and you should plan to spend several hours a week studying to fulfil your commitment as a full-time student. You need to allocate time for this in your diary.

Prepare for lectures and tutorials by doing any reading or exercises in advance. Always make some notes – there is usually a hand-out provided. Review these hand-outs after the class and ask your lecturer if there is anything you do not understand.

## Assessment

Throughout your course, your work will be assessed in a number of different ways, depending on the different criteria in individual units.

A number of our courses have units that are assessed on a continuous basis – in other words, you will be assessed on parts of your work as you go along rather than all of it at the end of the unit.

## Submission of coursework

All coursework should be handed in to the appropriate lecturer. All coursework for assessment will have a specified deadline for submission. It is essential that you meet the submission deadline to ensure fairness amongst all students and to enable staff to mark efficiently. Please see Fife College's Assessment Policy for more details.

Any coursework (for which there are no mitigating circumstances or an agreed extension), handed in after the submission deadline will normally receive a mark of zero.

# Support for your learning

Fife College has a positive policy of supporting students with learning difficulties or disabilities, and their interests are represented by the Diversity Committee which reports directly to the Academic Board. The College has teams which can provide help and advice on all aspects of learning support and coping with learning difficulties. The College offers support in making alternative arrangements for exams and assessment, support with study skills and advice with applications for the Disabled Students Allowance. Support and advice can also be provided in the specification and purchase of specialist equipment and the use of Information Technology. In order to ensure that you are provided with the appropriate advice and support from the start of your studies, it is important that you discuss any difficulties and special requirements with the College as early as possible.

## Funding your studies

It's not just the study options that are flexible at Fife College – our funding is flexible to your needs, too!

Funding for HNC, HND, and degree courses is applied for through the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS).

SAAS deals with full or part-time funding as well as bursaries and loans. These are dependent on your individual circumstances.

If you're looking to study for your HNC and/or HND part-time, you could be eligible for a Part-Time Fee Grant from either SAAS or the Individual Learning Account (ILA). This is used to partially or fully fund the tuition fees for your course.

Funding could also be available for you for Childcare, Travel, and Rent/Mortgage. If you are unsure about what funding you could be eligible for, contact us to discuss your options on [studentfunding@fife.ac.uk](mailto:studentfunding@fife.ac.uk)

## Guidance and support

We're dedicated to supporting you in any way possible to help ensure that your time with us is the very best it can be. You can make an appointment to see one of our Guidance Advisers to talk about any issues that may arise during your time at college. This includes personal issues, financial concerns, support, and exit and progression guidance.

Email [guidance@fife.ac.uk](mailto:guidance@fife.ac.uk) to make an appointment. We're here to help!

## Care Experienced

Our fantastic and friendly Guidance Advisers will also be there to make sure you are given as much support as you need to help you succeed in your studies if you are currently in care (including foster care and kinship care), or you have recently left care.

You can arrange regular meetings with one of our Guidance Advisers who will also then be your main point of contact while you're at college. You can go to them about anything and everything – be it personal or related to your course.



# SCQF Table

SCQF Level	SQA Qualification		Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Apprenticeships/ SVQs	
12			Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship	
11	<b>Some SQA qualifications changed between 2013-2016.</b> see <a href="http://www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner">www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner</a>		Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship SVQ	
10			Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship	
9			Professional Development Award	Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
8			Higher National Diploma	Diploma of Higher Education	Higher Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
7	Advanced Higher Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate	Certificate of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ	
6	Higher	National Certificate Advanced Certificate		Foundation Apprenticeship Modern Apprenticeship SVQ	
5	National 5 Intermediate 2	National Certificate Intermediate Certificate		Modern Apprenticeship SVQ	
4	National 4 Intermediate 1	National Certificate Certificate	National Progression Award	SVQ	
3	National 3 Access 3				
2	National 2 Access 2				
1	National 1 Access 1				



**Danyella Philip**  
Studying for a career in Childcare

“I was working two jobs and at the time I wasn’t in a position where I could leave full-time work. As Fife College offered a part-time evening course, this fitted in fantastically with my work and family.

“I have really enjoyed both Advanced Certificate: Access to HN Childhood Practice, and HNC: Childhood Practice. In both courses the placement opportunities I have been given have been fantastic. I also enjoyed the HNC graded unit; being able to choose my aim and carry out research to help me reach my aim has been a great way to further my knowledge and learn new things.”



**Hazel Cownie**  
Studying for a career in Childcare

“I have always wanted to work with children. I attended a local learning centre to do ECDL. This gave me the confidence to do the National Certificate.

“I’ve found the National Certificate and HNC courses very interesting and learned so much but it has not been easy due to having dyslexia and dyspraxia. Which I was only tested for last year.

“I am so glad I did the National Certificate first before moving on to the HNC as I gained so much knowledge from it.

“I haven’t completed my HNC yet, but since completing the National Certificate, I have applied for a relief job with fife mobile crèche which I do on my day off and have gained a lot of extra experience.

“I would highly recommend the courses at the College. I now have so much confidence in myself, thanks in part to the help of the Inclusion team, and my lectures believing in me.

“In the future, I would like to get a job as an early years officer, but I think first I would like to do HND: Additional Support Needs: Managing and Supporting the Services.”



**EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE COURSE AND CAREER PLANNER**

**4**  
**SCQF LEVEL**  
Equivalent to National 4s

**5**  
**SCQF LEVEL**  
Equivalent to National 5s

**6**  
**SCQF LEVEL**  
Equivalent to Highers

**7**  
**SCQF LEVEL**  
Equivalent to Year 1 at University and Advanced Highers

**8**  
**SCQF LEVEL**  
Equivalent to Year 2 at University

**9**  
**SCQF LEVEL**  
Equivalent to Year 3 at University

**10**  
**SCQF LEVEL**  
Equivalent to Year 4 (Honours) at University

Certificate: First Steps to a Career in Childcare incorporating Early Learning and Childcare. National 4: Skills for Work

Certificate: Skills for Childcare incorporating Early Learning and Childcare. National 4: Skills for Work

National 4: Early Education and Childcare – Skills for Work (School College Partnership)

Intermediate Certificate: Early Education and Childcare incorporating National Progression Award: Playwork and Childcare

National 5: Early Education and Childcare – Skills for Work (School College Partnership)

Intermediate Certificate: Preparation for Early Learning and Childcare incorporating National 5: Education and Childcare. (January start)

National Certificate: Early Education and Childcare

Advanced Certificate: Access to HN Childhood Practice

Professional Development Award: Educational Support Assistance

SVQ: Social Services (Children and Young People)

HNC: Childhood Practice

HNC: Additional Support Needs: Supporting the Individual

SVQ: Social Services (Children and Young People)

HND: Additional Support Needs: Managing and Supporting the Services

BA Learning Difficulties/Disabilities

SVQ: Social Services (Children and Young People)

Please see the Health, Social and Community Care career map for more progression options

**Articulation to university**  
Articulation routes for direct entry to years 2 or 3 of a related degree exist for degree course at the University of the West of Scotland on successful completion of an HND. Please see our website for further information.



**Key:**

Solid line box

**College courses**

Filled in box

**School College Partnership courses**

Dotted line box

**Courses share progression options**

**POTENTIAL CAREER OPPORTUNITIES**

Playworker, nanny, childcare assistant

Support worker – early years, nursery assistant, playworker, childminder, educational support assistant

Childcare practitioner, early years officer, educational support assistant

Practitioner, supervisor

Manager/lead practitioner of a day care of children service, social care, education



## HNC: Childhood Practice

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SCQF Level 7

HNC: Childhood Practice has recently been launched as the new and updated replacement for the Early Education and Childcare Award; as a Practitioner level qualification for working in Childcare settings across Scotland.

The full-time course will provide you with a wide knowledge of the factors which influence children's care and their learning and development. You will gain an understanding of the theory, principles, values and legislation underpinning Early Years practice.

The course also provides opportunities to relate theory to practice along with a practical placement of two days each week (SQA 60 days mandatory requirement) which will give you the opportunity to contribute to how the setting operates.

On successful completion of the course you will be eligible to seek employment and register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) at Practitioner level. Visit the Scottish Social Services Council website for more information about registration requirements.

### Entry Requirements

- External Applicants: Two Highers at Level A-C and including English
- Internal Applicants: SCQF Level 6 Group Award within the Care discipline

For full course information, and to apply, visit our website: [www.fife.ac.uk/childcare](http://www.fife.ac.uk/childcare)

## National Certificate: Early Education and Childcare

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SCQF Level 6

This group award combines theory and practical work experience in an Early Years setting. This course will develop awareness and understanding of all aspects of children's growth and development from birth to 16 years. It provides the practical skills needed to recognise and meet the needs of the developing child.

You will undertake a two-day work placement in an approved Nursery and/or Primary School setting selected by the College. This will enable you to gain direct experience of working with children; linking theory to practice along with enhancing communication and interpersonal skills.

On successful completion of the course, you will be eligible to seek employment and register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) at Support Worker level. Visit the Scottish Social Services Council website for more information about registration requirements and progression to further study.

### Entry Requirements

- External Applicants: Five National 5s including English at Level A or B
- Internal Applicants: Successful completion of a Care course at SCQF Level 5

For full course information, and to apply, visit our website: [www.fife.ac.uk/childcare](http://www.fife.ac.uk/childcare)

## Intermediate Certificate: Early Education and Childcare incorporating National Progression Award: Playwork and Childcare

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SCQF Level 5

Working with children in early learning settings can provide a rewarding career choice. This course provides you with an introduction to working within Early Learning and Childcare.

Whilst studying the foundations of Early Learning and Childcare, you will develop and prepare skills required for work within the Childcare industry. The course incorporates the SQA National Progression Award (NPA) Playwork and Childcare, which is an ideal first qualification for anyone who is interested in working with children in a variety of Childcare environments.

A two-day work placement, in an approved Childcare setting selected by the College, will enable you to gain direct experience of working with children; linking theory to practice along with enhancing communication and interpersonal skills.

### Entry Requirements

- External Applicants: Four National 4s including English
- Internal Applicants: Successful completion of a Care course at SCQF Level 4
- National 4 Early Education and Childcare award

For full course information, and to apply, visit our website: [www.fife.ac.uk/childcare](http://www.fife.ac.uk/childcare)

## Certificate: First Steps to a Career in Childcare incorporating Early Learning and Childcare. National 4: Skills for Work

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SCQF Level 4

This entry level course is intended for those interested in pursuing a career in Childcare and who have few or no formal qualifications.

A career in Childcare involves working with pre-school and school age children often in a play group, crèche, nursery or out of school care setting.

You will develop the knowledge to organise a safe environment for children, to plan for play experiences along with study units that will provide an introduction to Child Development and how to care for a child's needs. This course also contains a number of personal development Units which will assist in the development of the skills and attitudes required for the progression into the field of Early Years Study, along with a short work placement within a Childcare setting.

### Entry Requirements

- External Applicants: Two National 3s including English
- Internal Applicants: Successful completion of a Care course at SCQF Level 3

For full course information, and to apply, visit our website: [www.fife.ac.uk/childcare](http://www.fife.ac.uk/childcare)



## Ready to start your Childcare career?

Check out our part-time and work-based options.

For full information, and to apply, visit our website:

[www.fife.ac.uk/childcare](http://www.fife.ac.uk/childcare)

For more information:

**0344 248 0115**

**[info@fife.ac.uk](mailto:info@fife.ac.uk)**

**[www.fife.ac.uk/childcare](http://www.fife.ac.uk/childcare)**

Or pop in to one of our campuses:

### Halbeath Campus

Pittsburgh Road  
Dunfermline  
KY11 8DY

### Stenton Campus

Stenton Road  
Glenrothes  
KY6 2RA

### Levenmouth Campus

Methilhaven Road  
Buckhaven  
KY8 1HL

### St Brycedale Campus

St Brycedale Avenue  
Kirkcaldy  
KY1 1EX



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[@fifecollege](https://www.instagram.com/fifecollege)

The information published in this guide was correct at the time of print.  
For the most up-to-date information, you should always check our website.

Images courtesy of NHS Scotland and Scottish Government

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Fife College is a registered Scottish charity (No. SC021203)