

## Further details

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Training within the  
Youth or Adult?  
Initiative

## Introduction

The YMCA George Williams College, in association with the Rank Foundation, has developed a unique professional education programme for youth workers and community educators within the *Youth or Adult?* Initiative. Not only does the programme provide an induction into professional work, it also leads to a BA Informal and Community Education. This is recognized by the National Youth Agency as a professional qualification for youth work and community work, and by CeVe Scotland as a professional qualification for community education and learning in Scotland.

In addition to providing training, the College has also developed facilities in order to help workers in the Foundation's *Youth or Adult?* Initiative to write up and research their work.

## Training and support within the *Youth or Adult?* Programme

The College has put together a special package of training and support for people involved in the *Youth or Adult?* Initiative.

**Students** undertake an extended version of Foundation Studies (a UK wide qualification for sessional youth work and community education) and then move onto the 4 year degree programme. They also receive special help around report writing and dissemination of the project's work.

**Managers** can undertake specialized training with the College, and take part in an accredited programme for fieldwork supervision. The College can also provide support around project management and developing agency capacity.

## Foundation Studies

Workers begin their studies with *Foundation Studies*. Endorsed as a qualification for sessional and 'part-time' youth work and community education, it also provides an accredited access route to higher education study. A full description of this element of the programme can be found in the *Foundation Studies* leaflet.

*Youth or Adult?* workers meet together in regular study groups during this first year. They also have two residentials and receive individual supervision from the College.

## BA Informal and Community Education

*Youth or Adult?* workers then move on to the qualifying programme (which is set out in the prospectus). It is structured around exploring practice. We seek to develop reflective, professional informal and community educators who are able to work with individuals, groups, communities and organizations.

During this time workers join with other participants in the main degree programme. They take part in regional study groups, residentials and undertake regular supervision.

## Practice

One of the great advantages of the programme is that participants are working as they study. They must be involved in regular face-to-face work – at least 360 hours in each academic year. Throughout the time students will be working with young people, but with other slants in different levels (e.g. community groups at level 2 and adults at level 3). As people progress they will focus on getting to know their area, working with individuals, groups, communities, managers and other adults.

## Selection requirements

After interview with their agency, potential participants gain entry to the programme by providing the College with evidence about their potential. They have to show that they will be able to use the programme for learning; and are likely to achieve the standard required for the *Youth or Adult?* Initiative. The selection requirements are laid out in detail in the College prospectus.

## Partnership between student and employer

Students have the full support of their employer. This means that all agencies involved in the *Youth or Adult?* Initiative have agreed to release students from normal duties for the required study, and to attend regional study days and residentials, and provide adequate managerial supervision and written assessments of the student.