



Certificate in
**SPECIAL NEEDS
ASSISTING**

QQI Component
Level 5 | 5N1786

Course Duration: 12 Weeks

Course Cost: €360

I just had to email you on completion of the Special Needs Course, to say thank you for creating that which was the most amazing experience for me.

You couldn't have chosen a better teacher, he was so informative and engaging, and encouraged us all from start to finish. The quality of the learning resources is great to have for referral.

Carmel Hughes

PINNACLE
TRAINING

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COURSE PROFILE

The purpose of this award is to equip the learner with the knowledge, skill and competence in the practices and principles underpinning the role of the Special Needs Assistant in order to enable the learner to work effectively, under direction, in a special needs assisting capacity.

AIM

Learners will acquire knowledge, skills and competence in the role of the Special Needs Assistant, learning how to effectively relate to children with special needs. Working within the principles of good practice (e.g. confidentiality, inclusion, independence, boundaries, etc.) they will learn how to form appropriate relationships with the children, their parents, their primary carers, teachers and other professionals.

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF QUALIFICATIONS (NFQ)

This course qualifies as a component certificate and counts as 15 credits towards QQI (Level 5) Certificates. It is a recognised module within the NFQ.

PROGRAMME DURATION

DURATION OF THE COURSE IS AS FOLLOWS:

- 🔗 36 hours direct tutor led classes (Face to face classes either on Zoom or classroom based)
– 12 Three hour classes.
- 🔗 20 hours work experience.
- 🔗 In addition to the 36 hours direct tutor led classes, the tutor meets with the learner before and after class to give guidance and feedback on assignments etc.

WHAT SUPPORTS ARE PROVIDED

- ✓ Dedicated tutor throughout
- ✓ Access to Online Learning Technologies
- ✓ Tools to support virtual learning
- ✓ Online activities to support assessment
- ✓ Face to face classes either on Zoom or classroom based
- ✓ Assessment is submitted, marked, and returned to students with feedback in electronic or other media
- ✓ Small class numbers ensure enhanced Personalised Training & Support

PREFERRED ENTRY LEVEL AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

It is preferable that learners have either a QQI Level 4 certificate or equivalent qualifications and/or relevant life and work experiences

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should have the required level of spoken and written English. Applicants may be asked to present for a pre-course meeting. During this meeting their English language skills will be informally assessed. If there are any concerns that their level of English may not be adequate to complete the course, they will have the option to provide evidence as follows:

This can be proven through any one of the following methods:

- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) Level B2 or higher
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) - Minimum overall band score of 6
- Successful completion of a qualification at an equivalent level through the medium of English

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Prior learning can only be applied to gain admission to a programme and does not allow learners the opportunity to skip individual modules.

TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION:

Information and guidance is available to all learners on potential transfer and progression pathways.

SPECIFIC VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS

Information and guidance is available to all learners on potential transfer and progression pathways. Each learner must complete a minimum of 20 hours work experience to enable them to acquire knowledge, skill, competence and have assessments carried out in a notified Early Childhood Care and Education setting or recognised equivalent.

PROTECTION FOR ENROLLED LEARNERS

Protection for Enrolled Learners is not required as this course is less than 3 months in duration.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

LEARNERS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

1. Explore the roles and responsibilities of the Special Needs Assistant (SNA)
2. Identify, reflect and discuss personal qualities and skills associated with the role of the Special Needs Assistant (SNA).
3. Examine the relevant Irish legislation in relation to disability.
4. Explore the rights of children with disabilities and be familiar with the UN Convention on Human Rights, the role of the Ombudsman, the National Children's Strategy (2000-2010). Discuss and debate what personal autonomy, participation and decision making means for children with a disability.
5. Examine various methods of communication both verbal and non-verbal and detail how to respond appropriately to incidents of Challenging Behaviour and explore the importance of having Positive Behaviour Supports in place.
6. Explore the principle elements of safe and healthy intimate and personal care.
7. Develop and maintain appropriate relationships with children, their parents/carers, teachers and other members of the multidisciplinary team. Gain an insight into the nature and structure of the multidisciplinary team and understand the importance of effective communication at all levels.
8. Gain a clear understanding of classroom boundaries and appreciate the necessity and importance of confidentiality.
9. Assist children with disabilities in a range of activities, ensuring equality of opportunity through working in a safe and professional manner and have a clear understanding of the terms of equality and inclusion. Discuss and explore various activities that may be of benefit to a child with a disability and be informed in relation to the relevant contents of Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act.
10. Reflect on good work practices including the importance of self-reflection, ongoing training and development, the importance of regular supervision support meetings. Be aware of the importance of boundaries when dealing with parents and the importance of seeing them as the main care givers.

ASSESSMENT

All learning outcomes must be assessed:

SKILLS DEMONSTRATION	60%
LEARNER RECORDS	40%

TESTIMONIALS

I cannot fault the course as it was a brilliant course. I loved how the tutor taught us as it was fun learning and constantly great vibes. The only thing in the course that was extremely hard was getting work experience, but overall it was honestly one of the best courses I did.

DIANA JOYCE

The Special Needs Assistance course with Pinnacle was very interesting. Easy to navigate around Moodle, as well as being user friendly. Course notes were available to download every week, as well as a group chat in the event we needed assistance. The zoom link was sent well in advance of the class.

The tutor was excellent with a good sense of humour. The class had to do some of the thinking which allowed us to think outside the box and learn from our collective experiences. Interactive discussions regarding the day-to-day operations were of value and shared experiences also made for good learnings

GRAINNE WHITESIDE

This course was one of best course I have ever done. There was banter along with learning. You didn't feel like it was like school instead it was like group of people getting together to learn about something we were all so passionate about while getting qualification. The tutor was so helpful. Advice I'd give to anyone doing this course would be don't panic instead do piece by piece and enjoy the experience. There was no fault to this course, it opened so many opportunities for me, were now I am in primary school doing SNA.

PHILOMENA JOYCE

I qualified as a Special Needs Assistant, (QQI Level 5) with Pinnacle Training in 2018 under the instruction of Karl. I was very happy with his conviction to content, his ability to engage, and his dedication toward educating those of us who took the course.

For me it was an enjoyable challenge as I had been out of the education system for many years. The course is relatively fast paced which makes you take it seriously. Karl at Pinnacle Training made the classes a joy to attend every week as did my classmates who were all completing the course for different reasons many very personal.

It was great to be reminded of the many positive ways we can support children with special needs and of course the icing on the cake was undertaking a placement at St. Michael's School in Baldoyle where I gained hands on experience of working with the most delightful children."

Regardless of whether you want to simply educate yourself or work as a SNA, I would highly recommend Pinnacle Training for their highly qualified teachers and very helpful admin staff, namely Ann who was very accommodating.

PATRICIA BIRCH

Should you require further information do not hesitate to contact us.

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