FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT:

The Training Unit on 057 93 22920
Email: training@familycarers.ie
By post to:

The Training Unit
Family Carers Ireland
Market Square
Tullamore
Co. Offaly

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FOREWORD

Family Carers Ireland has produced this Learner Handbook for the benefit of any learner who participates on any course run by us.

The handbook contains details about what you can expect from us when you participate on one of our courses. It also outlines what we would ask of you the learner in terms of your commitment so that you get the very best out of the training course you have chosen.

We sincerely hope that your learning experience will be a positive one and that you finish the course feeling empowered and confident in your caring role.

Please read through this handbook and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries. We are happy to assist you in any way we can at any time. Please do not hesitate to contact us on 057-93-22920 or by email training@familycarers.ie

Anne Jacob
Special Projects Manager
Family Carers Ireland

FAMILY CARERS IRELAND MISSION STATEMENT

We commit to being accountable and transparent so that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in Family Carers Ireland. We promise we will effectively apply your gifts to us for their intended purposes.

THE TRAINING UNIT MISSION STATEMENT

The Training Unit of Family Carers Ireland provides quality care related training that is accessible, cost-effective and relevant in meeting the present and future needs of Carers and others working in or wishing to work in the Care sector. These training courses will be delivered in a person-centred manner and continuously evaluated to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the learner.
Family Carers Ireland is a registered charity (number CHY 10962) and a company limited by guarantee, emerging from the coming together of two long standing charities of over 25 years – Family Carers Ireland and Caring for Carers in 2016. The merger brings the best of both charities together whilst broadening the range of services and supports to family carers and giving one national voice to represent fairness for carers.

The members of both Family Carers Ireland and Carer for Carers voted at an EGM on 7th February 2015 to merge both organisations based on the principles outlined in the Merger Agreement.

The formation of Family Carers Ireland represents a very significant and positive milestone for Ireland’s approximately 200,000 family carers. Family Carers Ireland and Caring for Carers Ireland have come together to form one stronger, dedicated, carer-centred organisation. Stronger than the sum of its parts. The merged organisation, Family Carers Ireland, is sustainable and in a better position to support, lobby for and advocate on behalf of Ireland’s family carers.

Both organisations were founded over 25 years ago – Caring for Carers Ireland in County Clare and Family Carers Ireland in Dublin. While they have a lot in common, including being registered charitable companies for family carers; providing supports, services and training; and involvement in research and policy development, there are some differences. For more information about us check out our website www.familycarers.ie
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Family Carers Ireland has 16 Resource Centres and 2 Service Projects from which it delivers a range of services. These services are aimed at improving the quality of life for the Carer and the person receiving care at home and come under the following headings:

**Training & Education**

Family Carers Ireland offer a range of training courses to Carers and to others interested in employment in the care sector. The Care in the Home Course certified by City and Guilds was written specifically to meet the needs of individuals who provide Care in a home environment and covers subjects such as:

- Palliative Care Support
- Care skills
- Communications
- Exercise and Fitness
- Care for the Older Person
- Activities of Living Patient Care
- Anatomy & Physiology
- Nursing Theory & Practice
- Care Support
- Safety & Health at work
- Work Experience
- Occupational First Aid – valid for 2 years
- Patient Moving and Handling – for 2 years

We have also written a QQI Level 5 Module called Care Skills consistent with HSE Minimum Standards for Care and it covers the following areas:

- Effective Communications – assertiveness, challenges of communicating with individuals who have impaired communication skills, listening, aids to communication, communication skills
- Safe Caring – personal hygiene, infection control, understanding how to prevent infection, food hygiene, safe work practices, safety in the home (accidents, fire prevention, safe storage)
- Practical Caring – principles of person centred care, ageing process and limitations of age related conditions, diet and nutrition, feeding, hygiene routines, bed making, bathing, oral and dental care, patient moving and handling, elimination and continence management, pressure areas
- Supports for those who care – practical, emotional, financial, stress management, coping with bereavement and loss

Please list any other topics or issues that you think the course should include?

Which sessions were of most benefit to you?

What did you enjoy most about the course?

What did you enjoy least about the course?

How can the course be improved?

What other training courses would you like the Carers Association to provide? Please give details.

Thank you for taking the time in completing this questionnaire.
We also offer personal development courses, patient moving and handling training, special needs courses, first aid courses, entitlements for Carers, one day intensive practical care courses, fire safety, food preparation and many more as we are very responsive to the need for training that exists in this sector. If there are any courses which you feel you would benefit from, please let us know and we will do our best to provide these for you subject to demand.

**Home Respite Service**

The role of the Family Carer whilst it can be rewarding can also prove very stressful which takes its toll on the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of the Carer. Carers are often providing care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with very little respite and even getting a break to undertake ordinary everyday tasks that we take for granted such as food shopping, visiting the doctor or simply paying a bill can become an impossible task.

Our Home Respite Service tries to address this by providing flexible and practical support to family carers in the home. Our Respite Workers will engage with the Carer to assist with caring duties such as moving and lifting, feeding and dressing. The Respite Workers can also take over the caring duties completely, giving the Carer a well deserved break.

**Carers Resource Centres**

We have 16 Resource Centres and 2 Service bases in key towns and cities throughout Ireland. All services operate from these centres and we provide outreach services to other areas and counties where we do not currently have a base. Each Centre deals with telephone enquiries and personal callers on a wide variety of welfare, social care, health care, personal awareness and advocacy issues and acts as a place where carers feel welcome and supported by people who understand their situation and value them and the work they are doing.

**Support Groups & Pamper Days**

The Resource Centre staff run support group meetings for Family Carers to provide them with a forum to share their experiences, feelings, ideas, concerns, and problems.

The support groups ensure that Carers feel less isolated in their caring role as they meet with others in their own area who are in a similar position and provides them with an opportunity to get a break from caring, let off steam, relax and socialise as well as learn from other peoples situations. Enduring friendships and other supports are formed. Guest speakers are invited in to address Carers on issues of interest to them.

Pamper Days are organised for Carers which take them out of their caring situation allowing them time to relax, unwind, socialise and receive a little pampering. Carers state that this energises and refreshes them and enables them to return to their caring role feeling less stressed and better able to cope.
Information Provision
Our Resource Centre staff provide invaluable information, advice, support and assistance to Family Carers on a wide range of topics from rights and entitlements, applying for Carers Allowance, Carers Benefit and other payments, supports available from the DSFA and the HSE, accessing equipment necessary to care in the home, advocating on their behalf with relevant agencies or service providers and simply just being there for Carers.

Family Carers Ireland produces a “Take Care” Magazine for Carers, a Carers Newsletter, a Carers Information Pack with details on critical services, contacts, supports and information essential to Family Carers. In addition we have a Carers website www.familycarers.ie

Lobbying and Advocacy
Family Carers Ireland is very active in lobbying and advocating on behalf of Carers and in supporting and empowering Carers to do the same. Some examples of our success in this area is in Pre Budget Submissions which have resulted in increases in respite grant, Carers payments, the introduction of the new half rate Carers Allowance, the inclusion of a question on the 2006 Census which revealed 161,000 people are looking after an ill or disabled relative at home, the commitment of the Government following years of lobbying to producing a National Carers Strategy (which has since been shelved due to the economic climate), and many other examples.

We are members of the Community and Voluntary Pillar of Social Partnership and are represented on a number of consultative committees, State Agencies and Boards.

We regularly meet with Senior Government Ministers and other high ranking Department officials in pursuance of the needs of Carers.

National Careline 1800 240724
Family Carers Ireland offers a confidential, friendly and supportive Careline service where Carers are listened to, can voice their concerns and worries as well as receive practical advice and information on a range of topics relevant to Carers.

Promotional Work & Partnership
Family Carers Ireland engages in a range of work on its own and with numerous other agencies and groups to publicise the work and plight of Carers and to offer services to Carers.

Every year we acknowledge the work of Carers and invite nominations for the Carer of the Year Award both for National Carer of the Year and Young Carer of the Year and for regional finalists. This is a wonderful and often emotional occasion and gives us the opportunity to acknowledge and value the work done by Carers all around the Country.

Early Leaver Form

| Why did you leave the Training Programme before it had finished?
| o Course was not what I expected
| o I was not getting enough from the course
| o The course was too hard for me
| o I secured employment and could not continue on that time of date
| o Did not like course tutor
| o Did not like other class participants
| o Did not feel comfortable
| o My needs were not met
| o Personal Reasons
| o Other circumstances outside my control
| o Other Comments or Details |

| What could we have done to support you or to facilitate you in continuing your chosen course of study?
| |
| |
| |

| What could we do to improve this course for other Learners in the future?
| |
| |
| |

We value your feedback. Thank You!

COMBINING QQI MODULES – EXAMPLE 1
The Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is the national body for further education and training in Ireland. It allows individuals the opportunity to gain recognition for education and training in the workplace, in the community or at recognised educational institutions or training centres across Ireland.

QQI are involved in:

- Making awards
- Promoting awards
- Giving training programmes recognised certification at an appropriate level
- Monitoring the quality of training programmes
- Ensuring quality and consistency of training
- Deciding on the standards required for training programmes and their delivery

When you or other learners begin a QQI accredited training programme, you are participating in a course of study or training that will give you credits towards a particular level on the new National Qualifications Framework.

There are 10 levels in the national framework of qualifications from basic level (Level 1) to advanced level (Level 10). In time, all qualifications or awards made in Ireland will be placed at some level on that framework. This is good for the learner in that the training that is done will count towards gaining full awards or other credits and it encourages people to make learning and achieving certification an ongoing process rather than just a one time experience. The framework of qualifications will show how each qualification or award relates to each other and will also help you the learner to progress to other courses or transfer to other courses perhaps bringing your credits with you.

QQI looks after awards from Level 1 to Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications. For further details, please refer to the QQI website on [www.QQI.ie](http://www.QQI.ie)
In the diagram on below you can see an outline of the National Framework of Qualifications, the levels, award types and awarding bodies. This is useful in understanding the structure of the framework and how major awards are placed at the various levels between 1 and 10.
For each module or component where the required standard has been achieved, the learner will gain a credit or Minor Award (very like an Honour or Pass in a Leaving Certificate subject).

So for example, by completing our QQI Level 5 Care Skills Module successfully, you would receive a QQI Level 5 Minor Award or 15 credits towards a full QQI Level 5 Major Award which requires completion of 8 modules (very like a whole Leaving Certificate).

Modules at QQI Level 4, 5 and 6 are graded as follows:-

- **Distinction**: 80-100%
- **Merit**: 65-79%
- **Pass**: 50-64%

The grade achieved depends on how well you complete your assignments, skills demonstrations or other tasks allocated by the tutor. It is through these assessment methods that the tutor assesses your learning so it is very important that you listen to your tutor and prepare for your assignments as he or she advises. The more preparation and effort you put in, the better your results are likely to be.

It is very important to note that participation and payment for a QQI Course does not guarantee that you will achieve a Pass Grade. The grade achieved is given based on a combination of factors such as the quality of the assignments submitted, overall attendance at sessions, successful and careful completion of skills demonstrations, submission of assignments by agreed deadlines and through other methods of assessment. The learner is responsible for ensuring that they have met these standards in order to pass the course. Each learner should prepare for skills demonstrations, examinations and assignments seriously as this is what they will be graded on.

The difference between doing a QQI Module and a Leaving Certificate subject for example might be the variety of ways that the learning is assessed.

Assessment of a QQI Module Level 4 or 5 might be done with group discussions, keeping a learner journal, completing written assignments, doing skills demonstrations or using other methods such as role plays or presentations depending on the module being studied whereas a Leaving Certificate subject is often assessed on the basis of one examination at end of a year. This way of learning and assessing is attractive to many adult learners and tutors.

Modules at QQI Level 1, 2, 3 are assessed by submitting a portfolio or collection of work. This work is not graded but is judged as “successful” or “referral” (means more work may be required by the learner in order for it to be judged “successful”).
Depending on the Major Award that is required, some of these Modules may have to be done (Mandatory Modules must be done to achieve that particular Major Award) and others can be chosen (Elective Modules - depending on which area of care is of most interest to you, the learner. For example if you were interested in working in a Hospice or Palliative Care setting you might choose the QQI Level 5 Palliative Care Module).

Please see in the appendices section examples of how modules can be combined to achieve major awards.

For 2009 for example, the following deadlines applied:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latest date for return of completed portfolios to the Training Unit for this Certification Period</th>
<th>Award &amp; Estimates Entered</th>
<th>Visit of External Authenticator</th>
<th>Authenticated Results Entered</th>
<th>Certificates Issued</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st September 2009</td>
<td>10th October 2009</td>
<td>Between 11th October and 29th November 2009</td>
<td>30th November 2009</td>
<td>20th January 2010</td>
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Please indicate level of previous education by ticking the appropriate boxes

- Primary School Education
- Junior/Intermediate Certificate
- Leaving Certificate
- Applied Leaving Certificate
- Post Leaving Certificate
- FETAC Course

Please give name of module(s) and level of FETAC course undertaken

- National Certificate
- Diploma
- Degree
- Postgraduate qualification
- Other

Please specify if you have ticked other: [ ]
APPENDICES

- Application/Registration Form for Training Examples
- Learner Pre-Course Preparation Questionnaire Example
- Learner Contact Details Sheets Examples
- Learner Self-Evaluation / Reflection Examples
- Return of Assignment/Portfolio/Learner Journal Examples
- Post Course Evaluation Questionnaire Examples

*All of the above will be filled out by you the learner before and during your course*

- Early Leaver Form Example
- Combining QQI Modules - Examples (1-4)

*PPS Numbers are needed in order to process your certificate this cannot be left blank, this will be confidential and we do our utmost to protect our learners details.*

So as you can see from the above table, Certificates were only issued in February, August, September and January.

Centres and the Tutors concerned will be notified of the latest date for submission of portfolios by the Training Unit in advance of the deadlines. We will also advise you and the tutors of approximate dates that Certificates are issued so that you are aware.

If you have not paid your course fees in advance of the deadline, your portfolio will not be entered for Certification or verification in that round and you may have to wait a further 3-4 months to be included in the next round of entries.

Payment of course fees does not guarantee a pass. The grade achieved and assigned by the tutor will be dependant on the quality of the course work, assignments, skills demonstrations and other work submitted by you, the learner. The learner is responsible for ensuring that they have prepared adequately for any assessments or for any assignments submitted. There are no refunds for course fees where an individual does not achieve a pass grade. We will however give you an opportunity to resubmit course work or assignments or to redo skills demonstrations but there may be some additional certification and verification costs involved in re-submitting. However, these will be kept to an absolute minimum.
LEARNER RESPONSIBILITIES & CODE OF CONDUCT

- Learners must treat other colleagues, classmates, learners or tutors with respect.
- Learners should allow others time to speak and offer their opinion even if that opinion is different from theirs.
- Learners should encourage each other at all times and offer support where it is required.
- No one person should dominate a training session with their opinions.
- Allow other learners to finish what they are saying without interruption.
- Attend training sessions on time.
- Turn off mobile phones or turn them to silent whilst training is underway. Wait until break-time to return calls.
- If a Learner has a problem or an issue with a Tutor or Learner they should inform the Tutor at the break or at the end of class so that it can be addressed. The classroom is not the place to have these discussions as it will interfere with the learning of others.
- Learners are asked to behave courteously, respectfully and responsibly at all times. At no time should a Learner bring themselves or Family Carers Ireland into disrepute.
- Learners must submit assignments and must attend for skills demonstrations or assessments at the times or dates allocated.
- Any behaviour which impairs the ability of other Learners to concentrate or carry out their duties or tasks or disrupts teaching, work practice or study will be dealt with by the Tutor immediately. This may result in the Learner being asked to leave the class and the course.
- Any bullying or harassment of any learner, tutor or any other person associated with the course will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under The Carers Association Bullying & Harassment Policy. This includes racial, sexually or disability offensive behaviour or comments.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We strive to offer you the Learner the very best training that we can. We hope that your Learning experience is positive and we would love to hear about it so that we can thank our staff or Tutors.

However, we accept that on occasion, there may be times that our training does not meet your expectations or that we make a mistake of some sort and we would like an opportunity to put it right.

You can make a Complaint in the following way:-

**In person** – Speak to your Tutor directly after class and give them an opportunity to address it appropriately with you.

**By phone** – to the Training Unit on 057-9322920 or to Anne Jacob, Training Unit Learning & Development Officer on 086-172 8559

**By post** – Send us a letter to the Training Unit, Family Carers Ireland, Market Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.

**By email** – email us at mbracken@familycarers.ie or ajacob@familycarers.ie

We will respond to you as a matter of urgency and will keep you informed as to the progress of any investigation. You may prefer to make your comments anonymously but if you want a response from us, we will need your contact details.
Many new agencies and organisations have arisen in recent years to provide care in the home to those who can afford to pay for care or to those who have secured home care packages from the HSE. These private organisations often employ trained individuals to provide care assistance in the home and therefore are a good source of potential employment for those interested in paid work in the sector.

**Special Needs Assistant**

A Special Needs Assistant is usually assigned to a child with a disability within the classroom situation to assist a child in attending and participating fully in mainstream school. They will provide one-to-one assistance that may be required as well as any personal care tasks. The Special Needs Assistant will usually be instructed on the child’s disability; the level of support required and will operate under the direct ion of the Teacher with the support of the parents of the child.

**Personal Assistant**

A Personal Assistant usually provides assistance to an adult individual with a disability to allow them to live as independently as possible. Usually the Personal Assistant is directed by the person with the disability as to what help or support is required.

- Computers must not be used for any other activity other than those directed by the Tutor.
- Any abuse of assessment regulations will be deemed as misconduct.
- Abuse of alcohol, or other substances of abuse, possession or supply will result in immediate suspension and possible expulsion from the course as we cannot guarantee the safety of our Learners in such instances.
- Foul or Abusive Language are totally unacceptable and will result in consequences for any Learner who engages in such action.
- Smoking in a non-smoking area is expressly prohibited.
- No learner must tamper with safety equipment as it could result in injury to another learner, tutor or staff member.
- Any theft of property or other dishonest or illegal act which could adversely affect another learner, tutor, staff member or Family Carers Ireland is prohibited and will result in consequences for the learner.
- Learners will be expected to make good any damage or loss they intentionally cause as a result of their recklessness or negligence either to The Carers Association, to any Learner or member of staff.
- Any other activity which causes danger, loss or offence to another individual or breaches the spirit of these guidelines can be regarded as misconduct and addressed accordingly.
- Assignments must be presented in a neat and presentable layout. Assignments are not to be submitted in Polypockets or folders and please do not use staples. Your tutor will have treasury tags for you to place on your assignments. Dividers will also need to be used to divide each assignment.
Consequences of Misconduct

Any act or omission which adversely affects the rights of any staff member or learner or which disrupts teaching or violates our Code of Conduct will constitute a breach of discipline. This is taken very seriously by Family Carers Ireland Training Unit. Disciplinary action may result in a fine, suspension for a fixed period or permanent expulsion from the training course depending on the severity of the breach of conduct. Our decision will be final and may lead to non-certification of the Learner and forfeit of all tuition fees paid.

EQUALITY POLICY FOR LEARNERS

The Training Unit of Family Carers Ireland is committed to providing equal access to all Learners regardless of gender, marital status, family status, disability, religion, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin or membership of the Travelling Community.

We do have to maintain the integrity of QQI Awards however so we will expect equivalent performance in assessments for equivalent academic awards from all Learners.

Learners are also expected to comply with our code of conduct, rules, regulations and policies stated in this Learner Handbook and to ensure that they must play a part in contributing to an environment of respect and equality.

We strive to provide tutors, learners and staff with an environment free from discrimination or harassment and to ensure that our policies, procedures, structures or services create no disadvantage or disincentive to any learner. We value and celebrate individual differences and want to ensure that every individual is treated equally.

Our training environment is a place where culture, experiences and differences are recognised, encouraged and supported. Classroom activities and instruction will encourage diversity. Teaching materials must not use discriminatory language. Wherever possible, tutors will reflect the diversity that exists in our country and should reflect caring within a multi-cultural society.

Regular feedback from Learners is welcomed and encouraged to ensure that the training meets their needs. If any Learner feels that they have not been treated equitably, they should contact the Training Unit immediately.

Statistics would show that at some stage or another we will need to be looked after ourselves or will end up caring for our loved ones. Having care related skills therefore is extremely important whether we choose to embark on a career in care or not.

So where do the people who participate on our training courses progress to and where are the employment opportunities?

Family Carers

A Family Carer is a person who provides Care in the Home, for a loved one often without financial remuneration to do so. They can provide care for a child or adult with special needs, to an older person, to someone with a terminal illness or to an individual with a disability. Sometimes the Family Carer cares for more than one person in the home and may have to provide care seven days a week, to be on call 24 hours a day with little or no support. This can be rewarding but often it is exhausting, isolating and very stressful particularly in relation to finances. We never know when this may be one of us. Many Carers participate on our training to give them information on how to access supports and information they require, to assist them in learning the skills necessary to provide care and also to assist them in coping with the psychological, physical and emotional demands of the caring role.

Respite Workers

A respite worker is a person who is employed and paid to provide the Family Carer with a break from caring responsibilities. They are trained to take over from the Carer and to be competent in carrying out personal care tasks. Respite Workers are employed by Family Carers Ireland employs Respite Workers from time to time as vacancies arise. All Learners on our Programmes are encouraged to submit Curriculum Vitae to our Resource Centre Managers for when these vacancies arise.

Home Helps

Home Helps are employed by the HSE and are generally paid to assist the Family Carer in undertaking certain tasks within the home that they may not get to do because of their caring commitments or may provide assistance to the Family Carer in undertaking certain tasks that they may not be able to do by themselves such as Patient Moving and Handling. The Home Helps may also support a person with a disability or someone frail and/or ageing who may wish to remain in their own home but require some assistance with certain tasks in order to be able to live independently.

Care Attendants or Healthcare Assistants

A Care Attendant, Nursing Assistant or Aide or Healthcare Support Assistant supports the delivery of patient/client care usually under the supervision and direction of a Registered Nurse.

Healthcare Assistants can work in a variety of care facilities in the public, private and voluntary care sector. The care facilities tend to vary from the acute, general, maternity and children's hospitals and residential nursing homes that are public, voluntary or private. They may also work in the community, in day care facilities, day hospitals or health centres.
Family Carers Ireland is a registered QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) and City and Guilds Centre. We have systems and procedures in place to ensure that we are providing the very best training and learning experience for every learner who participates on our courses.

We offer a range of QQI Modules to suit the Learner and can deliver any of the Modules required to gain a Healthcare Qualification to support individuals and Carers working in a paid or unpaid capacity in the care sector.

Courses are being developed and designed in a range of other areas to meet the needs of Carers and others interested in working in the care sector.

Please contact us at any time for advice on working towards a Major Award or on how to select appropriate modules for your area of interest. We will be pleased to assist you in any way we can.

You can contact Training Unit staff in the following way:-

- By post: The Training Unit, Family Carers Ireland, Market Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
- By email: training@familycarers.ie
- By phone: 057 - 9322920

There are very few growth areas in employment at the moment but one sector which is on the increase at the minute is that of the care sector. As a population, we are living longer. When people live longer there is an increased incidence of age related conditions and that often requires some level of care.

In addition, there is an increased focus on disability and the need for support in providing care as many parents of special needs children and adults will testify to. There are other individuals also who need care such as those who are terminally ill and those who have acquired a medical condition or brain injury who may require very specific and specialist care short-term or long-term. These conditions are often totally unrelated to the frailty that old age can bring although when many people think of caring for others they automatically assume it relates to old age.

### TRAINING COURSES ON OFFER

**TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT**

Learners must have reached the statutory school leaving age. There is no upper age limit on entry to our Courses.

**Gender**

Learners both male and female are warmly welcomed. The Care sector employs both males and females.

**Personal Skills**

Learners need to have excellent communication skills, a warm, outgoing, friendly personality and be enthusiastic and have a clear speaking voice.

**A Clean Record**

It is worth pointing out that to work in this sector will require a learner to submit their details to obtain Garda Clearance. Failure to obtain Garda Clearance will result in an inability to secure employment in care. If a Learner has any doubts, he or she should contact the Training Unit for confidential advice on the matter.

**Previous Experience**

No previous experience is necessary but proven interest in the sector is required with a willingness to attend training and work hard as directed by the Tutor.

**Education or Training Level**

The Training Unit of Family Carers Ireland will be happy to discuss this individually with any Learner in complete confidence. As a general rule, QQI Level 5 is equivalent to Leaving Certificate Level. There is reading and writing involved in preparing for assignments but Learners can be assisted by recording their work on a Dictaphone or by transcribing their written work in their own words if required. The Carers Association can also refer the Learner to Adult Literacy Services if required.

**Recognition of Prior Learning**

Guidelines will be developed in the future with the support of QQI.

**Allocation of Places on Training Courses**

Places are allocated on a first come, first paid, first served basis. Family Carers Ireland reserve the right to refuse admission to its training courses.
BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY

Allegations or complaints of Bullying & Harassment are taken very seriously within Family Carers Ireland. In the event of a Learner or Tutor feeling that they were being bullied or harassed, the Training Unit should be contacted immediately.

Any action taken will be in line with Family Carers Ireland Bullying & Harassment Policy. Copies of this can be obtained either from The Training Unit at training@familycarers.ie or by contacting the Training Unit Manager or HR Manager on 057-9322920.

HEALTH & SAFETY

All Learners and Tutors need to be able to enjoy a safe learning environment. The venue in which any of our courses are being carried out will have been assessed for suitability.

Learners and Tutors need to be aware that they also have a duty under the Safety, Health and Welfare Act to assist Family Carers Ireland in maintaining a safe place in which to enjoy training and also a specific legal duty not to interfere with anything that may compromise their own safety or the safety of others in the learning environment.

Any act which compromises the Health and Safety of any person will be taken as a serious offence and could be subject to further action being taken against the person or people involved.

If a Learner or Tutor feels that there is a specific risk to health and safety the Training Unit Manager or HR Manager within Family Carers Ireland should be contacted immediately by email to training@familycarers.ie or by phone to 057-9322920.

In the event of an Accident or Incident, the Accident / Incident Report Form must be completed immediately and sent to The Training Unit Manager or HR Manager in Family Carers Ireland. The HR Manager and Training Unit Manager should also be informed by phone on 057-9322920.

Learner Facilities
We strive to ensure that all our facilities are appropriate for training and that the learners and tutors have everything they need. We provide light refreshments to our Learners. We provide handouts, materials appropriate to the course content and guidelines in the form of Learner Handbook and assignment briefs that may be useful to the Learner throughout the Course. If a Learner feels that there is more we can do, we are happy to receive that feedback.

Learning Difficulties
Alternative assessment arrangements can be made (in as far as we can) to allow for Learners with a disability or learning difficulty. The Learner should make known his/her need for support as soon as possible to the Training Unit.

Regular Feedback from Tutor
Your Tutor will give you ongoing feedback to advise you on your progress particularly in relation to assignments. Please listen to this feedback and take on board the feedback you are receiving. It is designed to give you the very best opportunity to obtain the best grade possible. It is also an opportunity for you to ask for additional support if you require it although please request this as and when you need it as we are there to help and support you.

External Authenticator
An External Authenticator is appointed by Family Carers Ireland with significant experience and expertise in the field to Authenticate or verify and check results of learners to ensure consistency and quality and to ensure that learners and being marked and graded in a consistent manner. Sometimes the Authenticator will adjust Tutor marks up or down depending on the findings. The External Authenticator will advise changes that need to be made or will suggest improvements to how training is being delivered. It is another way that students are supported and that the quality of training is ensured.

QQI Monitoring
QQI will conduct monitoring visits at intervals to ensure that we are meeting the needs of learners, that we are upholding the integrity of QQI Awards and standards and that we are doing what we said we would do to support learners. The Monitoring Visits will support us in becoming better at what we do and will identify areas for improvement.
Learner Self-Evaluation / Reflection
Learners are encouraged to reflect on individual sessions and the overall context of a module to ascertain what has been learnt and what proved most challenging. These can be included in the Learners Portfolio for review by the External Authenticator and by the Training Unit.

Return of Assignment / Portfolio / Learner Journal
This record of a Learner submitting their work is extremely important. Learners must only return completed assignments, portfolios or coursework to the designated tutor and must sign to state it is their own work and the tutor must also sign to acknowledge receipt of the portfolio and give the student a copy of the receipt for their records. No responsibility can be taken for work handed in to any other person other than the course tutor or for work which is not signed for by the tutor and the student. All Learners should keep a copy of work handed in for their records.

Post Course Evaluation Questionnaire
We would request that all Learners complete a Post Course Evaluation for each course they attend. Again the information in this will be used to support tutors where required, to ensure that Learners and Tutors feel supported and valued and to ensure that training delivered is of a consistently high standard.

Other Evaluation
The Training Unit may also request other feedback from learners in the form of an overall questionnaire or survey which will be used to inform a review of our procedures. All feedback is welcomed. Sometimes this will be done using Survey Monkey particularly for those with email addresses. All responses are confidential in these cases to allow Learners and others to give honest feedback that can be used to improve our services. We would really appreciate your feedback so that we can make our training better and more meaningful.

From time to time, we may look at other methods of evaluation as deemed appropriate.

Self-Evaluation
All QQI providers have to evaluate their services periodically and usually there is an in-depth evaluation after the first year of operation and every few years after that. We would ask for your co-operation in obtaining this feedback. This Self-Evaluation is usually carried out by an independent person with experience in reviewing systems and procedures of this nature and who can look at the feedback from all learners, from tutors, from the External Authenticator and any QQI Monitoring Visits to recommend changes or improvements.

ASSESSMENT OF QQI COURSES

The learning on QQI Courses is assessed in a variety of ways and some of these ways can be combined on a particular module for example there may be both written work and practical. The nature of the assessment and the percentage of marks allocated will depend on the Module being assessed. Some ways that modules are assessed are as follows:-

Written Assignments / Projects
Written work or projects are evidence of what you have learned on the course and how you have applied that learning or intend to apply that learning in the future. Your tutor will give you a date for submitting any written work which will need to be assessed. Please ensure that you submit your written work by the date given. In exceptional circumstances, the tutor may agree an alternative date for submission by a particular Learner but this will only apply in genuine exceptional circumstances.

Written assignments can be typed or handwritten. If typed, please use double spacing with a left hand margin of approximately one to one and a half inches. If submitting a handwritten assignment, the writing must be clear and legible. Please only write or type on one side of the paper, please number each page and ensure your name is on each sheet. Please do not waste money on expensive folders or binding as these will be removed for ease of filing. Please staple your pages together in the top left hand corner. Please ensure that you keep a copy for yourself in case an assignment was to go missing. Please ensure that you submit your portfolio or assignment to no one other than your own tutor and to obtain written proof from them that you have submitted it.

Please bear in mind the confidentiality of clients and of places of work or work experience. Do not name residents, patients, staff or colleagues in written work. Do not include references to the name of any institution in your assignments or do not include any rosters or written policies or procedures in your work. This is to respect and maintain confidentiality at all times which is a critical part of your work in healthcare.

Your tutor will ask you to sign to say that the written assignments or projects were all your own work and were not copied from anyone else or reproduced from the internet or any other source. Please refer to the section on Plagiarism for further information on consequences of copying or representing written work of others as your own.

Where group projects or assignments have been done, every student will have to submit evidence of their contribution to the group assignment.

It is very important that you do not interfere with, copy, damage or destroy another Learners work or try to access files belonging to another student. This may lead to a student being asked to leave the course without certification.
Practical Assessments, Skills Demonstrations & Role Plays

Your tutor will advise you of the time, date and location of any skills demonstration which is going to be assessed. It is extremely important that you attend as otherwise your certification may be delayed as you wait for another assessment date on another course to arise.

All Learners should prepare seriously for the Skills Demonstration as it usually accounts for a significant proportion of marks. It is important that you imagine yourself to be in a real-life situation and that you communicate with the individuals involved as if they were the person you are caring for, your Line Manager or other person identified in the Role Play.

You should include any actions in advance of commencing contact with the person that you would normally undertake in a real-life scenario such as explaining what it is you are about to do and handwashing as appropriate.

Often the Skills Demonstration requires you to write up the task. Please ensure that you do so with as much detail as possible in a step by step approach as you would have done in carrying out the task.

Role Plays can be used as a means of assessing learning but also as a means of putting theory into practice. It is important to participate positively in these activities as directed by the tutor. Learners who feel that they do not wish to participate will not be able to be assessed properly and therefore are unlikely to achieve certification. Learners who feel nervous should make their feelings known to the tutor so that they can be reassured and supported. Great encouragement is also given to the Learner by other colleagues in the class and every Learner should respect and support their colleagues as they would like to be supported themselves. Comments which are unsupportive or demeaning will be taken as a serious breach of conduct and will be dealt with accordingly.

Written Examinations

Your tutor will advise you of the time, date and location of any written examinations if applicable. You will need to be seated and ready to start in advance of the examination time.

From once the examination has started, you will not be allowed to enter the room as this would distract other learners. If you leave the examination, you must hand up any examination papers and any written work, computer disks or other material prior to leaving the room.

You will not be allowed any mobile phones, paper or notes into the examination room. You will not be allowed any communication with other learners in the room during the examination. You will need to listen carefully to the tutor’s instructions before, during and after the examination.

New Modules & New Courses

We will continually look at gaps in course provision and strive to address any gaps we see by developing new modules or courses as appropriate. If you feel that there is a need for a Course that has not been met, please contact the Training Unit and we will investigate it for you.

We have already developed a new QQI Level 5 Module which addresses the whole area of providing care in the home with our Care Skills Module (5N2770). This was developed because we felt there was no module which specifically addressed this issue and which also highlighted awareness of Family Carers and the Stress of Caring in general. 90% of all Care is provided in the home.

When we develop any new courses or Modules we commit also to developing materials to support the Learner as we did with our Practical Home Care Skills Manual.

Application / Registration Form for Training

This is used to register learners for the training and to ascertain the Learners level of education, their experience of caring and whether or not the learner has any particular needs. These are to ensure that all training meets your needs.

Learner Pre-Course Preparation Questionnaire

The Learner Pre Course questionnaire assists us in checking your understanding of the training methods and assessment methods used to verify learning as well as giving us an insight into your expectations, concerns and what you hope to get out of the course. This gives the tutor an opportunity to address these issues from the very outset.

Learner Contact Details

This should be completed by the tutor on the first day of class. The name entered on this form will reflect the name required on the QQI Certificate. Date of Birth and PPS Numbers are critical for registering students for QQI Certification. Contact details will also be used to advise change of venue or class-time or to advise if a session had to be cancelled in unforeseen circumstances.
Your learning experience is very important to us. We want to support you in any way we can. We have a number of supports available to you and would like you to contact us if you feel that there is something else we can do to help you. Please do so by talking to your Tutor directly or by contacting us in the Training Unit at any time. We also have a number of ways that we collect information about our training which enables us to ensure that the training we offer is quality focused. Some of these require your support in order to be meaningful and in order for us to continuously improve.

The following supports and quality assurance mechanisms are already in place:-

**Learner Handbook**
We have produced this handbook to address some of the questions most asked by Learners on our Courses or in response to information that we think you might need. It is not an exhaustive list but it covers most things. We would actively encourage you to contact us if there is something that we have not covered and we will be pleased to advise you on your query but also we will use your feedback to update the Handbook to make it more relevant to you, the Learner.

**Tutor Handbook**
In the same way that Learners have a Handbook, so to do the Tutors. In many ways it is very similar to yours but covers Tutor responsibilities and other topics in more detail. If you wish to have a copy, please request it from the Training Unit. Every tutor that we use has been met individually by the Training Unit staff to ascertain their skills, knowledge, capability and suitability to deliver QQI Accredited Training to our Learners in the way that we expect.

If for any reason, you are unhappy with your Tutor, please contact the Training Unit and we will address the matter confidentially and to the satisfaction of all. In the same way, we would encourage Learners to give us positive feedback where it is warranted as we very much wish to be able to acknowledge excellent training too.

The Training Unit will periodically attend training sessions in an observer capacity to ensure that training is being delivered in line with our Quality Assurance procedures and to the standard expected. This in no way indicates that there is a problem with the tutor but is part of our procedures to ensure that the Learner has the very best training experience but also to support our excellent tutors in every way possible.

**Centre Manager Handbook**
Many of our Resource Centres around the Country will start to deliver QQI Training in 2010 and beyond. We will provide them with Learner Handbooks to issue to Learners, Tutor Handbooks to issue to Tutors and instructions as to how to organise training in their areas. If you are unhappy in any way about how training was organised or indeed wish to give us positive feedback we will be delighted to receive it.

Behaviour that is inappropriate or distracting to other learners could result in the person being asked to leave the examination and mean that that person may have to re-take the examination at some other location or time in the future.

**Work Experience**
Work Experience is a very important part of the QQI Learning Experience so much so that it is a mandatory module on every Major Award. When you go out on work experience or on a work placement, it is a great opportunity to put your learning and skills into practice. It is also an opportunity to prove your value to a potential employer. Many jobs are never advertised, about 70% in fact, so how are they filled? Often these are filled from word of mouth, from work experience candidates who really stood out whilst on work experience and from referrals. Use the work experience as a selling opportunity for your skills and personality. Work hard, be on time, dress appropriately and do everything well!

Bear in mind that whilst you are on Work Experience you are not only representing yourself but also are representing your Tutor and Family Carers Ireland. We will be judged on the quality of our training by how you behave. Please adhere to our Code of Conduct. We will take any complaints or breaches of conduct most seriously and it may result in a Learner being asked to leave the course.

You will generally be under the supervision of a registered nurse or other senior staff whilst on work placement. You should only take on responsibility in areas that you have been deemed competent in by the workplace supervisor. If in doubt, ask! If for any reason you are unable to attend your work placement you should first of all notify your workplace supervisor and then your class tutor. Ask for feedback regularly on your progress, on ways you can improve. Ensure that your work placement assessment has been completed before you conclude your placement.

**Learner Journal or Learner Record**
Sometimes you will be asked by your Tutor to keep a Learner Journal to record evidence of your learning on the course. It is important to maintain these journals as you go through the course and update them daily or weekly after the course or after a day of work experience. You should outline tasks you carried out, what you learned, what you would do differently if you had to do it again and other relevant commentary.

**Repeating Assessments**
If an individual fails an assessment for any reason, we will meet with the tutor concerned to review any difficulties or challenges that the learner faced. We may meet with the Learner to advise what is required in order to meet the standard for the Module. If we feel an independent assessment is required by the Training Unit or another tutor to double check the outcome, we may decide to do this in the interest of fairness to the Learner. However, it is important to note that not all Learners may achieve the required standard and it is the responsibility of the Learner to meet the standard. We can offer support and reassessment but if the individual still fails to meet the standard, then we have to uphold the integrity of the Award and the standard required. We will of course allow the Learner to Appeal the decision in the normal manner.
Where an individual Learner does not achieve a pass grade and has been facilitated in every way possible to achieve a pass, there will be no refund of fees as payment of fees does not guarantee a pass. The Learner is responsible for meeting the required standard.

COLLECTION OF PORTFOLIOS AFTER APPEALS DATE

A lot of work is undertaken by Learners in preparation for Module Assessment and some Learners may wish to have their portfolios/ assignments returned to them. When the Statement of Results has been issued we will give you two weeks to appeal your result. If you do not wish to Appeal your result but wish to have your portfolio returned to you, you must request it from the Training Unit in writing within the two week period. The portfolio will then be returned to you to the address specified on the letter or to your nearest Centre. Portfolios not requested within the two week period will be carefully disposed of.

CANCELATION POLICY

If a Learner leaves a Training Programme before it has concluded, within the first few weeks of the start date and completes an Early Leaver Form, they may be entitled to a pro-rata percentage of course fees back with a deduction for any expenses we may have incurred.

If for any reason, a Learner’s circumstances change and they are no longer able to attend training at the time, venue or date originally specified, we will first of all try to accommodate the Learner on another more suitable course. If this is not possible, we will refund a pro-rata percentage of fees less any expenses incurred.

If we are at fault and we change venue, times or dates and can not accommodate the Learner on another more suitable course. If this is not possible, we will refund a pro-rata percentage of course fees.

PROCEDURES REGARDING LEARNER APPEALS AND PLAGIARISM

Appeals

Learners are entitled to appeal their results to QQI. The appeal must be put in writing to the Training Unit and must take place within two weeks of the issue of the statement of results. Upon receipt of a request from a student to appeal, the Training Unit Manager will contact the Learner and the tutor concerned to discuss the grounds for the appeal and to explain the Learners Results. If the Learner is still dissatisfied with outcome, he/she may request that the result is appealed directly to QQI. In this case, the Appeals Application Form will be completed and submitted immediately. An appeal is subject to the payment of a fee to QQI for each Module appealed. In the event of the result being favourably adjusted, the fee will be reimbursed.

The following procedures are applied in all appeal cases:-

- The external Authenticators report is checked for any comments on the specific case
- The Training Unit will be required to forward the relevant assessed evidence i.e. the complete
- Learners portfolio of evidence
- The evidence is re-assessed independently by another External Authenticator
- The final result is returned to QQI and to The Training Unit the Learner is then notified

Only evidence that has been previously presented by the learner in their portfolio can be part of an appeal. No new evidence can be considered or submitted as portfolios are judged on the evidence of the work submitted.

It is the responsibility of each Tutor to ensure that all appropriate assessment evidence as required by the module descriptor is available for the appeal. Any evidence not available will be assumed not to have been completed.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism happens when a Learner presents other people’s writing, words or ideas as their own. This is a form of cheating as basically you are copying, stealing or borrowing someone else’s work and claiming it to be your own. To avoid plagiarism, learners should reference the source of their work. Learners and tutors should keep in mind the following points:-

- Any source of work, published or unpublished, should not be copied without a proper acknowledgement
- Copying a written source with only minor changes should be acknowledged
- Learners cannot submit other people’s work as their own. This includes extracts from books, articles, research papers, whether these have been published or not
- Any information taken from a website must be acknowledged
- When submitting work, Learners must sign to say that the work being handed in is their own.

Procedure for Dealing with Plagiarism

If a Tutor suspects that plagiarism has occurred they will inform the Learner of their concern. The Training Unit must also be informed. The work will be returned to the Learner. At this point the Learner will be given an opportunity to re-submit their work with appropriate changes and references as required. Alternatively, the Learner can have their work reviewed by a member of the Training Unit staff who will conduct an interview with the Learner to ascertain whether or not the Tutors concerns are legitimate. The decision taken will be final. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious breach of regulations and students could be asked to leave the course without certification.