

March to July 2016
Course Guide



Transform your life



Fircroft College
Of Adult Education

Residential courses for adults

"A safe, diverse and inspirational learning environment".

- Ofsted.



Why come to Fircroft?

Founded in 1909 with a social justice mission, Fircroft College has been changing lives for over a century. Fircroft occupies a beautiful former Cadbury family home set in six acres of peaceful gardens, just four miles from the centre of Birmingham. Staff are dedicated to helping and encouraging you to learn new skills, grow in confidence and achieve your goals.

Most courses at Fircroft are residential and take place over three days. You'll be amazed how much you can learn in such a short amount of time!

Being in residence is an important part of the Fircroft experience. It's an opportunity for you to meet and engage with a variety of people in a small yet welcoming learning community. Staying at Fircroft means you can really focus on learning and achieving, with the support of staff and fellow students.

Focus on your learning

You will have access to excellent learning resources, computer facilities and a modern library open 24 hours a day, all housed within a safe and secure environment with on-site night support. All bedrooms are private and en-suite. Kitchen staff will provide you with a choice of delicious, freshly-prepared meals and can cater for special dietary requirements.

Disability provision

All teaching rooms are fully accessible and the College has a number of specially adapted bedrooms. All reasonable adjustments to provision will be made to ensure students with a disability are not disadvantaged. Let us know if you have any specific needs and we will discuss these with you.

Many courses are fully funded and FREE for eligible students.

(See page 36 for details).

Call 0121 472 0116, **Email** shortcourses@fircroft.ac.uk, **Website** www.fircroft.ac.uk

Develop

Short courses at Entry 3 / Level 1 and Level 2

Start with these courses if you have few or no existing qualifications, if you feel you struggle in certain subject areas, or if you are new to learning and are looking for guidance.

Gateway to Learning P.08

The ideal starting point for adults returning to learning.

Functional Skills P.09 - 14

Improve your basic English, Maths and ICT skills.

Personal and Social Development P.15 - 17

Improve your confidence and personal well being.

Parenting Skills P.18

Building confidence and positive parenting styles for both parents and children.

Gardening P.19

Our popular and hands-on Gardening Programme for beginners.

Progress

Short courses at Levels 1 and 2

These courses are ideal if you have previous qualifications or have completed some lower level courses (Entry 3/ Level 1) and feel ready to progress, particularly if you are looking to move on to employment or further education and/or training qualifications.

Preparing for Work P.20 - 21

Gain the skills and confidence you need to help you find paid or voluntary work.

Developing Social Awareness P.22 - 23

Develop your awareness of social and cultural issues in this new course programme.

Stepping Stones P.24 - 26

An introduction to aspects of volunteering/ support work in the social care sector.

Skills for Further Study P.27 - 30

Helping you to develop the skills you need for life, work and further study.

Perform

Short courses and qualifications up to and including Level 5

These courses are mainly aimed at learners wishing to advance academically and/or at work.

Access to Higher Education Diploma P.31

A 30 week full-time Level 3 course aimed at students who want to go to university, but who don't currently have the right qualifications.

Key Skills at Work P.32 - 33

Covering many of the key skills you may need if you work or aspire to work in the public, voluntary or community sectors.

Professional Courses and Qualifications P.34

Non-residential courses and qualifications covering leadership, management and coaching.

Employer Training P.35

Fircroft College can now offer totally bespoke training to meet the needs of your organisation and your staff.

More information

Planning your learning	P.05 - 07
Fee information	P.36
How to apply	P.37 - 38
Frequently asked questions	P.39 - 40
All course dates at a glance	P.41 - 42

Call our short course office
on **0121 472 0116** for an
informal chat or email
shortcourses@fircroft.ac.uk

Planning your learning

Choosing the right courses will help you get the most out of coming to Fircroft College.

1

We aim to work with you and help you plan a personal programme of learning which will match your:

- Aims and aspirations
- Prior achievements/qualifications (if applicable)
- Starting point
- Capacity to learn, and
- Build an understanding of where to progress for further study or work.

2

Rather than applying for just one course, or several courses from different programmes, we strongly recommend that you choose one programme area and undertake all or most of those courses before you move on to your next programme area. This will help you to:

- Build up your knowledge in a particular area
- Get support from familiar faces (your tutor and fellow students)
- Take feedback from one course on to the next
- Access on-line resources between courses
- Apply what you learn, then come back and tell us what worked
- Get individual advice on your next steps.

3

We want to ensure that any learning you undertake at Fircroft is suitable for your current level of ability, and is not too easy or too challenging. If you are not sure where to start, there are a number of ways we can help you decide:

- By attending one of our monthly Open Days (see page 7).
- By contacting our Information Advice and Guidance Co-ordinator, for a one-to-one appointment (see page 7).
- By enrolling on our 'Gateway to Learning' course, (see page 8) which includes an assessment of your current literacy and numeracy skills as part of the course.
- You can now take an online assessment of your literacy and numeracy skills on our website at www.fircroft.ac.uk/short-courses/assessments/

Some people will start with Entry 3 courses and progress in time towards undertaking Level 1 and then Level 2 courses; others will be able to start at a higher level from the beginning.

Due to high demand, many of our short courses often fill up far in advance. If your first choice of course date is full you may be offered a place on an alternative date or added to a waiting list until a place becomes available. In the meantime, you might want to consider applying for alternative courses which you may find helpful.

For more information on our short course programme please call the short course office on 0121 472 0116, or email shortcourses@fircroft.ac.uk

Please only apply for courses at Fircroft if you are sure you are able to attend.

Planning your learning

Open Days

Open Days are a great opportunity for you to come and have a look around the College, speak to staff, and get advice and guidance about which courses might be most suitable for you.

These friendly and informal events start at 1.30pm and usually last until around 4.00pm.

Open Day dates:

- Tuesday 08 March 2016
- Tuesday 12 April 2016
- Tuesday 10 May 2016
- Tuesday 14 June 2016
- Tuesday 12 July 2016
- Tuesday 9 August 2016

To book your place at an Open Day

Call us on 0121 472 0116, visit www.fircroft.ac.uk/about-us/open-days or email opendays@fircroft.ac.uk

We can also arrange group visits for organisations who wish to bring a number of clients in at a time and date that suits them.

Visitors to our Open Days said:

"The tutor I spoke to was friendly and passionate about the course. She helped me choose the right path."

"I was worried that I may not be able to cope here but the tutors and support staff have reassured me. I can't wait to come here."

"The staff and tutors are friendly and welcoming, I can't wait to attend."

"Thank you for making me feel welcome and boosting my confidence."

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

As part of the process of helping you choose the right courses, we can offer one-to-one information, advice and guidance. We will look at what aims and goals you may have, your previous qualifications and experience, and what you want to achieve by coming to Fircroft. We will then plan a suitable programme of learning with you.

Benefits of undertaking an IAG meeting include:

- Personal one-to-one attention
- Access to an experienced IAG member of staff
- Opportunity to discuss your plans for the future
- Access to up to date information on courses and qualifications
- A personal plan of learning you can use to help you achieve your aims

To book an IAG meeting you can either contact our short course office on 0121 472 0116, or ask for our IAG Co-ordinator to contact you.

Gateway to Learning

Entry 3 / Level 1

Gateway to Learning

- 14 - 16 Mar** (Mon to Wed)
- 13 - 15 Apr** (Wed to Fri)
- 25 - 27 May** (Wed to Fri)
- 29 Jun - 01 Jul** (Wed to Fri)

If you are new to Fircroft, or returning to learning, we strongly recommend Gateway to Learning as a starting point. The course gives you the opportunity to think about what you want to do in the short to medium term, educationally or at work, and then set out a route to achieving your goals.

The course gives you the space and time to think through what your next steps are, with our support. As part of the course, you will undertake an assessment of your literacy and numeracy levels (if you haven't already done this). This will help us guide you on to the right type/level of courses to make sure you get the most out of your learning experience.

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.

Level 1 and 2

NEW!

Gateway 2 – Planning for Your Future

- 04 - 06 May** (Wed to Fri)
- 13 - 15 Jul** (Wed to Fri)

Planning for Your Future is a new course for students who have been studying at Fircroft for some time, and who are now ready to review and revise their individual learning plans. This course will give you the opportunity to reflect on your progress to look into the future.

You can explore your options for further study, for gaining new qualifications, or for developing a new career. So whether you intend to progress your learning at Fircroft, or whether you are looking to move on, this is an ideal course for you.

Functional Skills - English

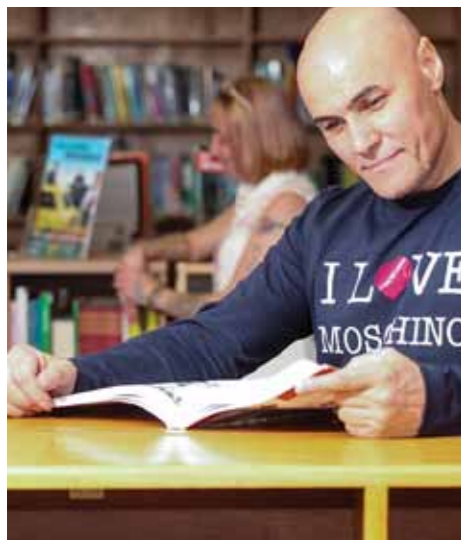
FEE GROUP

1

These courses are FREE for all learners.
Please see page 36 for details.

Functional Skills English courses give you the essential skills needed for everyday life, work and education. They can build your practical knowledge as well as helping you to gain Functional Skills qualifications.

You will have the opportunity to discuss the possibility of taking the full Functional Skills qualification once you have completed the courses at the corresponding level.



Entry 3 / Level 1

Confidence with Spelling

08 - 10 Apr (Fri to Sun)

06 - 08 Jun (Mon to Wed)

This course will help you to improve your spelling. The course covers ways of remembering the spelling of words that you may find awkward such as using spelling rules, patterns of letters within words and other memorising methods.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Punctuation and Grammar

30 Mar - 01 Apr (Wed to Fri)

25 - 27 Apr (Mon to Wed)

04 - 06 Jul (Mon to Wed)

On this course we explore the use of punctuation marks such as full stops and commas. We also look at what makes a good sentence. You will explore the basics of grammar and how to link ideas to make more complex sentences.

Entry 3 / Level 1 / Level 2

Read for Meaning

01 - 03 Apr (Fri to Sun) **Entry 3**

01 - 03 Jun (Wed to Fri) **Level 2**

22 - 24 Jun (Wed to Fri) **Level 1**

This course helps you to draw understanding from what you read. You will explore strategies for improving reading and comprehension, summarise information and identify the key points of a variety of texts.

Entry 3 / Level 1 / Level 2

Write for Meaning

09 - 11 May (Mon to Wed) **Entry 3**

18 - 20 May (Wed to Fri) **Level 2**

13 - 15 Jun (Mon to Wed) **Level 1**

This course focuses on writing clearly and logically. You will look at how to plan and produce a rough draft of your writing in order to produce a final piece. You will explore different writing styles and how you can adjust your style to suit a purpose, situation or mood.

Level 2

Punctuation, Grammar and Spelling

20 - 22 Apr (Wed to Fri)

This course allows you to develop your punctuation use including colons, semi colons and brackets as well as further developing your sentence structure in your writing. This will allow for further development of your punctuation and grammar skills. Ultimately, you will be able to build on the punctuation, grammar and spelling you may have learnt from your Entry 3 and Level 1 Punctuation and Grammar/Confidence with Spelling courses.

Functional Skills - Maths

These courses will help you build your practical maths skills and apply them to everyday situations. You could potentially progress to taking the full Functional Skills qualification once you have completed the courses at the corresponding level.

FEE GROUP

1

These courses are FREE for all learners. Please see page 36 for details.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Confidence with Numbers

10 - 12 Jun (Fri to Sun)

If you are unsure about using numbers and figures, this is the right place to start. This course will give you the confidence to add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers. You will learn new techniques for doing sums in your head and on paper, showing that you really can do Maths, even if you think you can't.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Fun with Fractions

17 - 19 Jun (Fri - Sun) **Level 1**

Fractions, decimals and percentages are all around us in our lives, but many people struggle to understand them. We will help you overcome this through practical demonstrations based on real life situations – this course makes fractions fun, lively and interesting!

Entry 3 / Level 1

Shape up! – Shapes, Area and Perimeters

11 - 13 Jul (Mon to Wed)

This course begins by focussing on the language and characteristics of everyday shapes before progressing onto practical uses of area and perimeter in everyday life; for example calculating the materials needed for home DIY projects.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Bringing Data to Life

11 - 13 Apr (Mon to Wed) **Level 1**

This course will show you how to devise survey questions, carry out a small survey, present results in graphs, charts and tables and then interpret the results in a meaningful way.

Functional Skills - ICT

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.

If you have never used a computer before, or have only used one occasionally and don't feel very confident about your skills, the ICT (Information and Communication Technology) programme of courses is ideal for you.

You'll receive support from your tutor and opportunities to practise what you've learnt. Ideally you will complete most or all of the courses in the programme, with each course you take building and developing your skills and knowledge.

If you are new to computers, we strongly recommend you start with the Beginner ICT course before continuing onto the other courses.

If you attend all courses you will have the opportunity to work towards the Functional Skills qualification.

Entry 3 Level

Beginner ICT

09 - 11 Mar (Wed to Fri)

The ideal course for complete beginners, you will understand the terminology and become more familiar with how to use computers. You will learn the basics and improve your confidence.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Word Processing Part 2

06 - 08 Apr (Wed to Fri)

Build on what you learnt on your first word processing course and find out more about what you can achieve with a bit more knowledge. We'll show you how to control the layout of your document, using word processing tools to make your text look visually better and easier to understand and share with others.

Entry 3 Level

Introduction to Using the Internet

27 - 29 Apr (Wed to Fri)

Want to find the latest deals on the internet? More information about your hobbies? Or how to book that bargain holiday? This course will teach you how to use the Internet with confidence.

Functional Skills - ICT



FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.



Entry 3 Level Using Email

20 - 22 May (Fri to Sun)

Emails are an important way of keeping in touch with friends and family. Learn how to create an email account, how to write, send and receive emails and how to share information like letters and photos by using attachments.

Entry 3 Level

Introduction to Using Spreadsheets

15 - 17 Jun (Wed to Fri)

You don't need to be great at figures for this course; we will teach you how to use the software to do the calculations for you. We will also show you how to use spreadsheet software to create charts and graphs – it's a great way to manage your money.

Level 1

Spreadsheets Part 2

22 - 24 Jun (Wed to Fri)

Build on what you have learnt on your first spreadsheet course and find out more about what you can achieve with a bit more knowledge. We'll show you how to use tools that will help with the maths needed on a spreadsheet, getting it to make calculations for you, as well as making the information easier to read and share with others.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Introduction to PowerPoint

29 Jun - 01 Jul (Wed to Fri)

Presentation software such as PowerPoint allows you to tell a story through pictures and text. Learn how to do this with a click of the mouse. PowerPoint can be used for a variety of purposes including presentations at interviews, clubs or family gatherings.



"Fircroft helped me to grow in confidence and meet new people. It reintroduced me into education which I hope to use in the future."

- Andrea Brown.

Personal and Social Development

These courses are aimed at improving your self-awareness, confidence and personal well-being. They can help you to understand and improve your own life situation and your relationships with others. They can also support decisions you make in looking for work, or new training opportunities.

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.

Entry 3 / Level 1 courses are ideal if you're new to learning or the subject area.

Level 2 courses offer an opportunity to develop yourself and apply theory to real-life situations.



Level 1 and 2

Developing Personal Confidence and Self Awareness

30 Mar - 01 Apr (Wed to Fri)

11 - 13 May (Wed to Fri)

22 - 24 Jun (Wed to Fri)

08 - 10 Jul (Fri to Sun)

Why is it that we can feel confident in some situations and not in others? This course will explore how confidence levels are influenced by experiences, thoughts and society. You will examine techniques for developing outer confidence while undertaking the longer-term job of working on your inner confidence.

Level 1

Coping with Stress

18 - 20 Mar (Fri to Sun)

22 - 24 Apr (Fri to Sun)

16 - 18 May (Mon to Wed)

08 - 10 Jun (Wed to Fri)

13 - 15 Jul (Wed to Fri)

You will learn about the symptoms, causes and effects of stress, and different ways of coping with stress such as positive beliefs, time balance, and basic assertive techniques. You will also practise relaxation techniques and understand the benefits of reducing tension and negative stress.

Level 1 and 2

Understanding Human Behaviour in Relationships

04 - 06 Apr (Mon to Wed)

20 - 22 May (Fri to Sun)

15 - 17 Jun (Wed to Fri)

08 - 10 Jul (Fri to Sun)

This course gives you the opportunity to examine your own behaviour and your relationships with partners, family members, friends and colleagues. You will examine how men and women behave, identify controlling and acceptable/unacceptable behaviour and devise ways of challenging inappropriate behaviour.

Level 1 and 2

Anger Management

04 - 06 Mar (Fri to Sun) **Men Only**

21 - 23 Mar (Mon to Wed) **Women Only**

15 - 17 Apr (Fri to Sun) **Men Only**

03 - 05 Jun (Fri to Sun) **Men Only**

20 - 22 Jun (Mon to Wed) **Women Only**

04 - 06 Jul (Mon to Wed) **Men Only**

You will examine what triggers anger and how well people are conditioned to deal with it, or not. Anger is a natural emotion but it can have a negative effect on ourselves and others. You will learn about self-awareness and better ways of expressing anger.

Personal and Social Development



Level 1 and 2

Health and Fitness for Life

08 - 10 Apr	(Fri to Sun)	Women Only
11 - 13 Apr	(Mon to Wed)	Men Only
01 - 03 Jul	(Fri to Sun)	Women Only
06 - 08 Jul	(Wed to Fri)	Men Only

Health and Fitness for Life helps you look at your personal health and well-being; your diet, exercise, fitness and sexual health. By the end of the course you will be able to reflect and identify any adjustments that may need to be made in any of these areas.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Improving Assertiveness and Decision Making Skills

18 - 20 Apr	(Mon to Wed)
18 - 20 May	(Wed to Fri)
17 - 19 Jun	(Fri to Sun)

Do you want to present yourself as confident and assertive? Do you understand the responsibility of decision making and accepting the consequences? You will explore how to improve the decisions you make, understand your rights and responsibilities and how to assert yourself more fully.

Parenting Skills

Parenting Skills courses at Fircroft College look to build confidence and positive parenting styles for both parents and children. The courses are based on practical techniques and aim to improve relationships across the whole family.

Level 1 and 2

Surviving the Teenage Years

11 - 13 Mar	(Fri to Sun)
27 - 29 Jun	(Mon to Wed)

Linked to the Parenting Skills course, this course focuses on the adolescent years in a child's life and the way in which the changes that are taking place impact on the whole family. You will also look at the parenting skills needed to manage the different relationships, behaviours and expectations once children reach this age.

Level 1 and 2

Parenting Skills

23 - 25 May	(Mon to Wed)
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This first course looks at the complex role of parents or guardians and how this relates to other family members in terms of their needs. You will focus on the skills needed to listen to children, understand stages of a child's development and how they learn, whilst at the same time knowing and identifying what your needs are and how to meet them as well.

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.

"Fircroft College has given me something to look forward to. It's given me hope"

- Traverse Morgan.



Gardening

The three-part gardening programme at Fircroft is an introduction to the skills and knowledge needed for gardening horticulture. It covers basic plant identification, propagation, plant care and pest control. This Entry 3/Level 1 programme provides an opportunity for people to develop their self-confidence and personal development, as well as acting as an impetus for further study and possible employment in a related area.

Fircroft College has six acres of beautiful gardens and the College's kitchen garden and outdoor learning space provides the perfect setting for this programme.

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Gardening Part 1 - Developing Gardening Skills

15 - 17 Apr (Fri to Sun)

This course focuses on the basic information all gardeners need to know to understand how plants grow and survive. You will be taken through a number of different tasks outdoors and in a greenhouse, seed sowing and preparing planting ground. You will learn how to identify different types of common plants, weeds, pests and diseases.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Gardening Part 2 - Increasing/Propagating Your Plants

13 - 15 May (Fri to Sun)

This course focuses on the basic information all gardeners need to know to understand how plants can be increased or "propagated". You will be taken through a number of different tasks outdoors and in a greenhouse to show you seed development and the reason for the sowing techniques used. You will learn the best way to increase a stock of plants depending on their type and growing habit and also the aftercare needed.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Gardening Part 3 - Composts and Soils

17 - 19 Jun (Fri to Sun)

This course focuses on the basic information all gardeners need to know to understand the basic ingredients of soils and composts. You will be taken through a number of different tasks outdoors and in a greenhouse to show you how to identify and select plants for different garden areas and the soil mixtures needed. You will learn how to mix basic soil and compost mixtures and how to test your soil using a ph test kit.

Preparing for Work

This programme of courses is designed to equip you with the advice, knowledge and skills that will help you find either paid or volunteering work, as well as ease your transition into the workplace. We will help you to overcome any fears or barriers you may have and give you the confidence you need to succeed in looking for employment and being employed.

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.

Entry 3 / Level 1

Writing Good CVs and Applications

04 - 06 Mar (Fri to Sun)

04 - 06 May (Wed to Fri)

This course will focus on looking at what goes into preparing a good CV and job application, in terms of the best structure, identifying the right content, explaining any gaps and getting across the positive message you want to give to potential employers or volunteering organisations. Attendance at other Preparing for Work courses will support the work in this particular course.

Level 1 and 2

Interviewing with Confidence

16 - 18 Mar (Wed to Fri)

03 - 05 Jun (Fri to Sun)

How do you get ready for an interview and manage any pre-interview nerves? This course will help you prepare effectively and improve your interview skills. You will build your confidence through understanding how interviews work and practising your skills. Prepare, practise and go for it!

Level 1 and 2

So You Want to be a Volunteer?

25 - 27 Apr (Mon to Wed)

If you're considering how volunteering could benefit you and your community, this is the ideal course! You'll explore how to find volunteering opportunities and how they can develop your skills and confidence, prepare you for paid work and help you meet new people and socialise, as well as helping you to contribute to society.

Preparing for Work

Level 1 and 2

Personal Money Management

11 - 13 May (Wed to Fri)

Learn how to manage your personal finances more effectively, save money and cut costs while still living a satisfying lifestyle. This course will offer simple budgeting techniques, look at how to understand credit and its true cost and how to prioritise your spending.

Level 1 and 2

Getting Ready to Work Again

13 - 15 Jun (Mon to Wed)

Have you been looking for work for a long time, or want to start looking? This course gives you the chance to review information, tools and techniques to help you plan your next job or job search, including useful websites and online applications. You will be encouraged to value your existing skills, knowledge and experience as well as identifying skills areas you may want to develop further. We'll also show how you can look after your own well-being while you look for work.



Developing Social Awareness **NEW!**

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.

This new programme of courses will develop your awareness of social and cultural issues, exploring your own perceptions and opinions as well as those of society. It will challenge stereotypes and prejudices and help you to develop a more informed view of our world. You will benefit most if you have undertaken all or the majority of the Personal and Social Development courses and are looking to progress on to Stepping Stones courses in the future. **Please be aware that these are not therapy courses.**

Level 1 and 2

NEW!

Recognising and Dealing with Bullying

06 - 08 May (Fri to Sun)

This course explores bullying and harassment from the perspectives of both the bully and the victim. It will unpack the behaviour, the impact and the emotional roller coaster that both parties may go through. It will explore interventions and support strategies that are available to both parties and look at ways of raising self-esteem.

Level 1 and 2

NEW!

Do You See What I See?

08 - 10 Jun (Wed to Fri)

In this course you will look at body image, a vital topic as it forges our perceptions of self-worth. Challenge stereotypes and understand why some cultures revere certain qualities which others disdain. Are we influenced by the media and in what ways? How do you view body image and what can be done to nurture a more positive, self-accepting view to increase esteem in others?

Level 1 and 2

NEW!

Taking a Risk

01 - 03 Jul (Fri to Sun)

This course explores situations that could pose a risk to yourself and others. Looking at situations where you may get pressured into taking risks. Exploring the positive and negative emotions that risk taking can generate. Compare strategies that could help manage risk taking in a range of situations.

Developing Social Awareness **NEW!**

Level 1 and 2

NEW!

Beliefs, Values and Their Influences

13 - 15 Jul (Wed to Fri)

In this course you will explore what values and beliefs are. The beliefs and values that you hold as well as those held by others. Understand their importance in finding out what influences what you know, how you act and the way you view society.



"Fircroft is a really relaxed and welcoming environment which is great for learning. It has inspired me to face new challenges and achieve my goals."

- Annabelle Todd.

Stepping Stones

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.

The Stepping Stones programme is series of courses aimed at developing the knowledge and understanding of volunteers, who are working towards becoming support workers. You would need to commit to undertaking all courses to gain the most benefit from this programme.

Stepping Stones courses are all taught at Level 2, so you would need to be ready and able to work at this level. Ideally you should already have some experience in a volunteering or support role and be looking to progress into this area of work. You would also benefit from having previously undertaken some of the courses in the Personal and Social Development area. Please note: all Stepping Stones courses start at 3pm (arrive at 2pm) except Issues of Identity.

Group 1 course

Introduction to Mentoring

06 - 08 May (Fri to Sun)

On this course you will look at the role of a mentor and how to build and develop a positive relationship with the client that you are supporting and working with.

Group 1 course

Introduction to Drug and Alcohol Awareness

23 - 25 May (Mon to Wed)

Alcohol and drug misuse is one of the areas that many people encounter but feel helpless to know what to say or do to support change. This course looks at alcohol and different types of drugs, their effects and an insight into some counselling skills that may help your clients to talk about these concerns.

Group 1 course

Understanding Mental Health

10 - 12 Jun (Fri to Sun)

This course aims to help you better understand the term 'mental health' and recognise methods for treating/managing mental illness and its effects. It also looks at the role played by care workers and agencies in supporting those suffering from mental illness.

Group One courses

Stepping Stones

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.



Group 1 course

Introduction to Counselling

01 - 03 Jul (Fri to Sun)

This course looks at what counselling means and will develop your communication and listening skills when talking with or supporting others.

Start off with the introductory Group One courses. Once you have completed the majority of Group One you can progress onto the Group Two courses.

We strongly recommend you aim to undertake the majority/all of these courses in order to gain the most benefit.

Group 2 course

Dimensions of Abuse

29 Feb - 02 Mar (Mon to Wed)

Abuse is something that many support workers will encounter but feel helpless in knowing what to say or do to support the individual. This course will give you a greater awareness and understanding of the different types of abuse or multiple abuses that your client may have had to live through or is still living through.

Group 2 course

Introduction to Coaching Skills

04 - 06 Apr (Mon to Wed)

Being able to understand and coach others through change is a very fulfilling role. This course looks at how powerful this approach can be in allowing the people that you work with to overcome blocks that have held them back in life, and will give you an awareness of the different tools needed when coaching.

Group 2 course

Understanding Gang Culture

20 - 22 Apr (Wed to Fri)

This course allows you to gain knowledge and awareness of gang culture, to help you support those that have been either directly or indirectly involved in gangs, or to help support families that have been impacted by gangs.

Group Two Stepping Stones courses will run again next academic year beginning September 2016 and will include the Issues of Identity and Advocacy Skills for Support Workers courses, as well as those listed here.

Group Two courses

Skills for Further Study

Skills for Further Study courses are aimed at students who are ready to work at Level 2 and will develop the skills needed for life, work and academic study. They can also provide some of the essential skills suitable for learners who wish to progress on to courses at Level 3 (particularly our **Access to Higher Education Diploma**) and possibly

higher education after that. Tutors at Fircroft College use a variety of materials relevant to each subject in order for you to apply the skills you learn and to make the learning interesting and enjoyable. If you are just setting out on your learning journey, then see pages 9-14 for our Functional Skills courses in English, Maths and ICT.

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.



Level 2

Essay Writing (2pm start)

16 - 18 Mar (Wed to Fri)

You will be introduced to the essay writing process; from understanding the initial question to the planning process, leading to essay requirements such as referencing and writing in the correct format. This course will equip you with the skills to write a short essay of your own.

Level 2

Word Processing

13 - 15 Apr (Wed to Fri)

There is now an expectation on higher level courses that you will word process your work. Rather than trying to learn two things at once, why not master word-processing before you move on. The course will cover formatting, spell-checking, use of templates and shortcuts and many other useful techniques.

Level 2

Action Planning For Your Own Development

27 - 29 Apr (Wed to Fri)

You've achieved so much during your learning and you are thinking about your future, what do you do next? This course will help you to create your own individualised progression portfolio. The portfolio will contain: a self-assessment profile, a current outline of your current CV, a plan of action and a list of career and/or university contacts (where appropriate) for you to follow up.

This hands-on course will involve some internet research, group work and one-to-one confidential tutor sessions to help you with realistic planning for your future. By the end of this stimulating course, you will have your own customised, step-by-step record of your way forward.

Level 2

Data Handling

16 - 18 May (Mon to Wed)

This course will help you to understand how to manage and interpret the simple research data required on a range of courses. We will show you how to collect data, present it using graphs and charts and then interpret the results and understand their significance.

Skills for Further Study

FEE GROUP

2

These courses are FREE for many learners.
Please see page 36 for details.

Level 2

NEW!

Introduction to Politics

25 - 27 May (Wed to Fri)

Studying Politics means finding out about power. In this course we ask, who has power in our society? How did they get this power, and how do they keep it? And we also ask, "how much power have I got, as someone who lives in 21st century Britain?"

You will also learn how to recognise different political perspectives, such as liberalism, conservatism and socialism, and you will be able to explore which of the major political perspectives makes the most sense to you.

Level 2

NEW!

Women Achievers

01 - 03 Jun (Wed to Fri)

This course takes a look at the contributions of female movers and shakers across the centuries. It covers the achievements of women, particularly in the arts, culture and politics. You are expected to identify a woman of your choice for research, discussion and a small presentation.

Level 2

Introduction to Literature

13 - 15 Jun (Mon to Wed)

How is it possible that words on a page can be organised in such a way to make you laugh, cry or even get angry? By exploring the writing styles and techniques of modern and respected authors, you will gain a good understanding of how they use techniques and styles to engage us as readers.

This is an exciting introduction to Literature; particularly if you are interested in the subject at Level 3. This course will develop your critical reading skills and you will gain a sound appreciation of the richness of English Literature.

Level 2

Introduction to History

20 - 22 Jun (Mon to Wed)

History isn't just about the past, it is about how the past has been presented. There are different views about historical events, some perhaps different from what you've heard before.

This course will give you an insight into what History is as well as introduce you to some debates on major events of the past. This course will be useful if you are considering taking this subject at Level 3 or just want to find out more about History.

Level 2

Introduction to Social Science

06 - 08 Jul (Wed to Fri)

How do societies work? Why do people have different views of the same issue? How do we become members of society? These are just some of the questions Sociology helps us to answer.

If you are considering studying at Level 3 and want to find out more about Sociology, this course will give you an introduction to what Sociology is and show you how to apply some basic concepts to different situations.

Level 2

NEW!

Creative Writing

11 - 13 Jul (Mon to Wed)

If you enjoy writing for pleasure or you haven't done much free writing but feel that you would like to, then this course could help you to unlock your creative potential! We will help you to find sources of inspiration and give you constructive feedback on short pieces of writing that you produce.

The course will draw on your reading and writing skills and you will have the opportunity to develop your writing skills even further, and entertain an audience at the same time.

Progress from Skills for Further Study onto our Access to HE Diploma

Access to Higher Education

Want to go to university but don't have the right qualifications?

The Access to Higher Education Diploma is a fast track nine month programme at Level 3 aimed at adult learners wishing to progress onto university. Pass rates on this course are consistently well above the national average. Tutors are dedicated to helping students succeed and aiding their progress onto the university course of their choice. Successful learners leave with an Access to HE Diploma from the Open College Network, accepted by a wide range of Universities.



Our 2015/16 Access to Higher Education students. Next stop: university!

Study options include History, Literature, Sociology, and Psychology, with former students going on to study for degrees and professional qualifications in areas including History, Social Policy, Politics, Literature, Journalism, Creative Writing, Youth Work, Counselling and Education. Many learners go on to successful careers in a range of vocations. No entry qualifications are required for the course, though applicants will be interviewed and assessed to see whether their English and Maths skills are at Level 2.

APPLY NOW FOR SEPTEMBER 2016 ENTRY - please visit our website or call us on 0121 472 0116 for more details, fee information and an application pack. **Although most places on this course are residential, there are also non-residential places available.**

We strongly recommend that applicants for the Access to Higher Education Diploma undertake at least some of the Skills for Further Study programme (pages 27 - 30). The programme specifically aims to develop the range of skills you'll be expected to use on the Access course.

Prepare for the Access to HE Diploma by enrolling on our Skills for Further Study courses

Key Skills at Work

FEE GROUP

3

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.

Fircroft College offers a range of short courses at Levels 1, 2 and 3 designed to support those either currently working/volunteering in the voluntary, community and public sectors, or those who aspire to do so and who want to gain specific skills and confidence needed to help make this goal a reality.

Whether you're looking for work or already in employment, Key Skills at Work courses give you the practical skills and knowledge you need to progress and succeed.

Level 2

Public Speaking and Presentation Skills (2pm start)

02 - 04 Mar (Wed to Fri) **Part 1**
18 - 20 Apr (Mon to Wed) **Part 2**

This two-part course equips you with the skills, confidence and useful techniques to help stand up and deliver effective presentations using a range of media, including PowerPoint.

Level 2

Bid Writing

14 - 16 Mar (Mon to Wed)
09 - 11 May (Mon to Wed)

You will learn basic fundraising techniques, concentrating on identifying the different sources of funds and how best to go about accessing them. You will also explore current funding options available to small voluntary organisations and the process of bid development and writing a good funding application/proposal.

Level 1, 2 and 3

Training the Trainer

06 - 08 Apr (Wed to Fri) **Part 1**
06 - 09 Jun (Mon to Thu) **Part 2**

This course gives you new skills and enables your organisation to introduce in-house training. This is a two-part course leading to Open College Network accreditation. Part 1 (at levels 1 and 2) looks at what makes a good trainer and how adults learn. Part 2 (at levels 2 and 3) focuses on delivering training with a strong emphasis on practical exercises, followed by review and individual support from Fircroft's own tutors.

Key Skills at Work

FEE GROUP

3

These courses are FREE for many learners. Please see page 36 for details.

Level 1 and 2

Customer Service Skills

22 - 24 Apr (Fri to Sun)

This course will look at the benefits of providing good customer service, the value of positive first impressions, verbal and non-verbal communication and how to show respect to each individual customer.

Level 2

Communication Skills at Work

13 - 15 May (Fri to Sun)

You will look at different methods of verbal and non-verbal communication in the workplace, and when to choose the right method. You will also practise using these skills during the course.

Level 2

Working in a Diverse Society

15 - 17 Jun (Wed to Fri)

We will help to prepare you to meet the challenges of diversity at work, by informing you of your rights as an employee, and explaining your responsibilities to those you work with and work for. We will look at issues of gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, and faith.

Level 2

Understanding Conflict Resolution

27 - 29 Jun (Mon to Wed)

This course looks at why conflict may occur in the workplace and different responses to it. You will explore how communication styles can affect a conflict, how they may be resolved and how using a third party can help.

Professional Qualifications (all non-residential)

Introduction to MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator)

NEW!

Gain new insights into your personality, using the world's most popular psychometric assessment. Identifying our preferences is a powerful way to understand our own behaviour and how to interact with people who are very different from us. The day (**11 Apr**) will show how this can improve our communication, decision-making and resilience. £95 includes individual Profile Report from MBTI Step 1 assessment online.

Experience one-to-one coaching at a time and pace to suit you, from a qualified member of our own staff. This could focus specifically on your development as a manager, or more generally on your personal effectiveness at work. Initial consultation followed by four individualised sessions for £160.

ILM Level 3

Award/Certificate in Coaching

Three taught sessions blended with on-line resources, real coaching practice and support. Be clear what is expected of a coach, try out different approaches in your own workplace and reflect on how effective they are. £495 fully inclusive. Dates to be confirmed.

For more information and to register your interest please contact Michael Conway-Jones on 0121 472 0116, email: michael.conway-jones@fircroft.ac.uk

ILM Level 3

Award in Leadership and Management

Two taught sessions (**09 May and 13 Jun**) blended with on-line resources. Practice the techniques you need to manage workplace projects, as well as ways to motivate the people delivering them. £249 fully inclusive.

The **ILM Level 5 Award in Leadership and Management** returns in Autumn 2016. Please contact Michael Conway-Jones to register your interest on 0121 472 0116, email: michael.conway-jones@fircroft.ac.uk

Employer Training

Fircroft College can now offer **totally bespoke training** to meet the needs of your organisation and your staff. The College has a long history of working with the voluntary and public sectors and we aim to help you benefit from the knowledge and expertise shared by Fircroft's team of experienced tutors.

We can help you decide if you need bespoke training, or discuss the best way of delivering our existing programme to your employees, in a timeframe and format that suits you.

Training can be residential or non-residential, at Fircroft College or another location and can vary in length depending on your requirements (minimum half day).

Professional training pricing - **£95** per participant per day, or **£55** per half day. Courses can also be accredited at an additional cost.

For more information please visit:

www.fircroft.ac.uk/specialist-support

If you have any questions or would like to book training with us, then please contact Sadie Cridland on 0121 472 0116, email sadie.cridland@fircroft.ac.uk



Our expertise in the voluntary sector

Fircroft College has a long-established reputation of working collaboratively with the voluntary sector in developing programmes to meet the needs of their staff, volunteers and clients. Examples of programmes we have delivered include: Lay Assessors, Quality Champions and Services Inspectors, Equality & Diversity and Mentoring, Coaching & Advocacy, to name just a few.

Fee information

		Group A Learners	Group B Learners	Group C Learners
Fee Group 1	Functional Skills (English and Maths)	FREE	FREE	FREE
Fee Group 2	Gateway to Learning Functional Skills (ICT) Personal and Social Development Parenting Skills Gardening Preparing for Work Developing Social Awareness Stepping Stones Skills for Further Study	FREE	£20	£45
Fee Group 3	Key Skills at Work Please note: Two-part courses are priced per part.	FREE	£40	£80

Professional Qualifications	See page 34 or contact us on 0121 472 0116 for details.
Employer Training	See page 35 or contact us on 0121 472 0116 for details.
Access to Higher Education Diploma	Please contact us on 0121 472 0116 for details

Group A Learners

Learners receiving JSA (Job Seeker's Allowance), ESA (Employment Support Allowance – in the work related activity group), or Universal Credit (if unemployed and mandated to undertake skills training).

Group B Learners

Learners receiving the following state benefits: Income Support, Council Tax Credit or Housing Benefit (excludes 25% reduction for single occupancy), Pension Credit Guarantee, ESA (not in work-related activity group) or Working Tax Credit (if household income is below £15,860 p.a.). This group also includes learners dependent of someone in receipt of benefits.

Group C Learners

All other learners.

All fees include tuition, learning resources/ materials, accommodation and meals.

If you have genuine difficulty paying certain course fees please ask about our Learner Support Fund. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to call us on **0121 472 0116**.

How to apply

Before you apply for short courses - tick list

- ✓ **Choose which courses or programme of courses you are interested in** using the Fircroft course guide or website, or by discussing this with a member of staff at the college.
- ✓ Please ensure that the course is at the right level for you. You can see what level you're currently working at by taking our initial assessment. **We are now asking all new students to take an initial assessment** – for some course areas (Functional Skills English and Maths, Skills for Further Study) you will not be accepted onto the course until you have done so. You can take an initial assessment online and receive the results instantly by going to www.fircroft.ac.uk/short-courses/assessments/ If you are still unsure what level you are at and if your chosen courses are suitable for you, please contact the short course office.
- ✓ **Check if you are eligible for free courses.** If not, most courses have a small course fee attached and we cannot proceed with your application until we have received this from you. Please check page 36 of our course guide for more details on course fees.

How to apply for short courses - step by step

- 1 Complete a B1 registration form** – You only need to fill in and return one **registration form** per academic year (which runs from 1st August to 31st July), no matter how many times you apply for courses, or how many courses you apply for.
- 2 Complete an A1 application form** – tell us which courses you want to do, and on which dates. You can apply for up to four courses on one form if you wish. **Alternatively,** instead of completing an A1 application form you can apply for courses on our website by browsing your course area of choice, clicking the 'apply online' button and following the step-by-step instructions. If you do apply online we will still require a completed B1 registration form, along with pre-course questionnaire and course payment (if applicable).

You can get paper copies of both of these forms by contacting us, or you can download them as pdf files from our website at www.fircroft.ac.uk/short-courses/how-to-apply1/ – these can then be printed out or completed using a PC/ laptop or tablet and emailed back to us.

- 3 Check if your course requires you to complete and return a pre-course questionnaire.** Pre-course questionnaires need to be completed and returned if you are applying for the Stepping Stones programme and the majority of Key Skills at Work courses and professional qualifications. These can be downloaded from our website or requested from the short course office.
- 4 Ensure all necessary paperwork as listed in points 1-3 is completed in full** – if you have missed any sections out, please be aware that this may hold up your application.
- 5 Have you completed an initial assessment?** See the application tick list on the opposite page.
- 6 Return all your paperwork, together with payment (if applicable) to:**

Short Course Office
Fircroft College, 1018 Bristol Road,
Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6LH.

Email: shortcourses@fircroft.ac.uk
Tel: 0121 472 0116

Please only apply for courses at Fircroft if you are sure you are able to attend.

Thank you.

We no longer require proof of benefit with your application - however you may be asked to present this at a later date.

If you have any questions or need any help with any aspect of the application process, contact our short course office on **0121 472 0116**.

Please note: due to high demand, many of our short courses often fill up far in advance. If your first choice of date is full you may be offered a place on an alternative date or added to a waiting list until a place becomes available.

Frequently asked questions

Who can come?

Anyone who is aged 19 and over, as of 31st July 2015. You must be a UK citizen, EU National or have indefinite leave to remain – currently live in England and have lived in the UK/EU for at least 3 years.

What qualifications do I need?

No previous qualifications are required and we've made it clear where courses assume some knowledge, experience or ability level. In addition, most course areas are open to learners with an existing higher level qualification (e.g. A Level, BTEC or degree). Please contact the short course office if you want to discuss this.

What does it cost?

Please see the 'Fee information' page in this guide (page 36). If you are claiming certain means-tested benefits, your courses could be FREE of charge.

What support can I get on the course?

You are expected to do some written work on most of our courses. Do not worry about this – you are given support to develop your writing skills. This supported learning helps you prepare for further study.

When do courses start and finish?

We ask students to arrive at 4pm on the first day with courses generally ending at around 3.30pm on the last day, except where stated.

What does the course lead to?

As well as new confidence and skills, you will gain a recognised certificate of accreditation from national awarding bodies. Personal and confidential information, advice and guidance about career paths and other courses at Fircroft College and elsewhere is available to all learners.

Can I smoke or drink at Fircroft?

Fircroft is an alcohol-free college and alcohol is not permitted in any part of the college, including the grounds. Smoking is not permitted except in designated outside areas, where there are bins and shelters provided.

What if the course date has passed or I am told the course I want is full?

Don't worry – many of our courses run several times a year. If the date of the course you wanted has passed, please still let us know you are interested as we can put you on the waiting list for the next available course. We sometimes run additional courses not publicised specifically for learners on waiting lists.

The next guide containing information on courses running from September 2016 will be available in July. You can also check our website for the latest information, or call us on **0121 472 0116** for advice and guidance.

What if I'm not sure what to do?

If you're not sure what you want to do, you can contact our Information, Advice and Guidance Co-ordinator on **0121 472 0116** for personal and confidential advice. You can also either come to one of our monthly Open Days (see page 7), or arrange a visit to come and have a look around. We're a small and friendly College, so just pick up the phone.



What if I've booked a place on a course but I can't come?

Please only apply for a course if you are sure you can attend.

We understand that circumstances can change and there may be an unavoidable reason why you cannot attend a course. In this situation please inform the short course office as soon as possible by calling **0121 472 0116** or emailing shortcourses@fircroft.ac.uk

By letting us know you cannot attend as far in advance as possible you will be helping the college and potentially making your place available for another learner.

Any other questions?

Contact the short course office:

**Tel: (0121) 472 0116
(ext 226 or 237)**

Fax: (0121) 471 1503

Email: shortcourses@fircroft.ac.uk

**1018 Bristol Road,
Selly Oak, Birmingham,
B29 6LH.**

Or visit our website at:

www.fircroft.ac.uk

www.facebook.com/fircroftcollege

[@fircroftcollege](https://twitter.com/fircroftcollege)

All course dates at a glance

March

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04 - 06 Mar	Anger Management - Men Only	P. 16
04 - 06 Mar	Writing Good CVs and Applications	P. 20
09 - 11 Mar	Beginner ICT	P. 12
11 - 13 Mar	Surviving the Teenage Years	P. 18
14 - 16 Mar	Gateway to Learning	P. 08
14 - 16 Mar	Bid Writing	P. 32
16 - 18 Mar	Interviewing with Confidence	P. 20
16 - 18 Mar	Essay Writing	P. 27
18 - 20 Mar	Coping with Stress	P. 15
21 - 23 Mar	Anger Management - Women Only	P. 16
30 Mar - 01 Apr	Punctuation and Grammar	P. 09
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April

01 - 03 Apr	Read for Meaning	P. 10
04 - 06 Apr	Introduction to Coaching Skills	P. 26
04 - 06 Apr	Understanding Human Behaviour in Relationships	P. 16
06 - 08 Apr	Word Processing Part 2	P. 12
06 - 08 Apr	Training the Trainer Part 1	P. 32
08 - 10 Apr	Health and Fitness for Life - Women Only	P. 17
08 - 10 Apr	Confidence with Spelling	P. 09
11 Apr	Introduction to Myers-Briggs Type Indicator	P. 34
11 - 13 Apr	Bringing Data to Life	P. 11
11 - 13 Apr	Health and Fitness for Life - Men Only	P. 17
13 - 15 Apr	Word Processing	P. 27
13 - 15 Apr	Gateway to Learning	P. 08
15 - 17 Apr	Gardening Part 1 - Developing Gardening Skills	P. 19

15 - 17 Apr	Anger Management - Men Only	P. 16
18 - 20 Apr	Public Speaking and Presentation Skills Part 2	P. 32
18 - 20 Apr	Improving Assertiveness and Decision Making Skills	P. 17
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20 - 22 Apr	Understanding Gang Culture	P. 26
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25 - 27 Apr	So You Want to be a Volunteer?	P. 20
25 - 27 Apr	Punctuation and Grammar	P. 09
27 - 29 Apr	Introduction to Using the Internet	P. 12
27 - 29 Apr	Action Planning for Your Own Development	P. 28
	May	
04 - 06 May	Gateway 2 - Planning for Your Future	P. 08
04 - 06 May	Writing Good CVs and Applications	P. 20
06 - 08 May	Introduction to Mentoring	P. 24
06 - 08 May	Recognising and Dealing with Bullying	P. 22
09 May	ILM Level 3 Award in Leadership and Management Part 1	P. 34
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09 - 11 May	Bid Writing	P. 32
11 - 13 May	Personal Money Management	P. 21
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13 - 15 May	Communication Skills at Work	P. 33
16 - 18 May	Data Handling	P. 28
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18 - 20 May	Write for Meaning	P. 10
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08 - 10 Jun	Coping with Stress	P. 15
10 - 12 Jun	Confidence with Numbers	P. 11
10 - 12 Jun	Understanding Mental Health	P. 24
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13 - 15 Jun	Introduction to Literature	P. 29
13 - 15 Jun	Getting Ready to Work Again	P. 21
13 - 15 Jun	Write for Meaning	P. 10
15 - 17 Jun	Introduction to Using Spreadsheets	P. 13
15 - 17 Jun	Understanding Human Behaviour in Relationships	P. 16
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22 - 24 Jun	Spreadsheets Part 2	P. 13
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Call 0121 472 0116,
Email shortcourses@fircroft.ac.uk,
Website www.fircroft.ac.uk

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04 - 06 Jul	Anger Management - Men Only	P. 16
06 - 08 Jul	Health and Fitness for Life - Men Only	P. 17
06 - 08 Jul	Introduction to Social Science	P. 30
08 - 10 Jul	Understanding Human Behaviour in Relationships	P. 16
08 - 10 Jul	Developing Personal Confidence and Self Awareness	P. 15
11 - 13 Jul	Creative Writing	P. 30
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13 - 15 Jul	Coping with Stress	P. 15
13 - 15 Jul	Gateway 2 - Planning for Your Future	P. 08
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