

## Learning Support Assistant

Learning support assistants work in primary or secondary schools, giving help and support to children who have additional learning needs.

### The Work

You could be:

- working with the teacher in class, or with individual pupils, to help with school work and to build their confidence and independence
- supporting pupils who have social, emotional or behavioural problems, learning difficulties, limited hearing or eyesight, difficulties with mobility, or other physical disabilities, and perhaps assisting with therapy sessions
- building up, and keeping, a good relationship with individual pupils and with groups
- helping pupils who have difficulty communicating with others – including those whose first language is not English
- helping pupils who have difficulty with reading, writing or counting
- helping pupils learn to use computers and assisting them with other practical subjects
- helping teachers prepare for lessons, collecting the materials needed and helping keep records
- helping supervise games and outings, and perhaps supervising the playground at the interval and the dinner hall at lunchtime
- helping keep the classroom tidy.

### Pay

The figures below are only a guide as actual pay rates vary, depending on which local authority you work for.

Many posts advertised are part time. However, local authorities advertising full time salary scales have been ranging between around £19,000 and £24,500 a year.

### Conditions

- You would work in classrooms with young people aged 3-18. Some children might need long term help, others might need help for only a short time.
- Working hours are usually 9.00am to about 3.00pm.
- Most jobs are term time only, so you will not be paid during school holidays.
- A lot of work is part time.
- You will be mostly in a classroom but sometimes outdoors in the playground.
- You might have to move equipment.
- You must keep information about the pupils confidential.

### Getting In

- You do not always need formal qualifications, but up to 4 subjects at National 4 or 5 including English and

Maths may be preferred.

- Some entrants have the NC (SCQF Level 6) or PDA (SCQF Level 6) in Educational Support Assistance.
- For entry to the NC you will need 4 subjects at National 5 including English, and entry to the PDA is 5 subjects at National 5 including English, or equivalent.
- An additional skill such as sign language can be useful.
- You usually need experience with children, whether paid work, voluntary activities or bringing up your own children.
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.
- You would need to have, or gain, registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).
- You might need a first aid certificate or be willing to undertake the training.

## What Does It Take

You need to be able to:

- get on well with children and build good relationships with them
- respect confidentiality in relation to the children
- build good working relationships with teachers and parents
- work as part of a team
- keep accurate records.

You need to have:

- good communication skills, both spoken and written
- patience and perseverance
- confidence and accuracy in spelling, punctuation and basic arithmetic
- a caring nature
- a firm approach when necessary
- lots of energy.

## Training

- If you do not have a qualification you can study part time, while working, for a PDA Education Support Assistance (SCQF Level 6), HNC (SCQF Level 7) or HND (SCQF Level 8) in Additional Support Needs.
- You might undergo first aid training, if you don't already have a certificate.

## Getting On

- You might take extra qualifications and then apply to train as a teacher.
- In England you can train to become a Higher Level Teaching Assistant, but this job is not available in Scotland.

## More Information

Most jobs for learning support assistants are in mainstream primary and secondary schools, but some jobs are in

additional support for learning (ASL) or additional support needs (ASN) schools. Apply to your local authority or look for vacancies in your Jobcentre Plus.

## Contacts

### Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

Tel: 0345 60 30 891

Website: [www.sssc.uk.com](http://www.sssc.uk.com)

Website (2): [learn.sssc.uk.com/careers](http://learn.sssc.uk.com/careers)

X: @SSSCnews

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/thesssc](http://www.facebook.com/thesssc)

## Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

### Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.