



Higher National Graded Unit specification

General information for centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HND Countryside Management. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification. Centres wishing to use another type of Graded Unit or assessment instrument are required to submit proposals detailing the justification for change for validation.

Graded Unit title: Countryside Management: Graded Unit 3

Graded Unit code: F4BS 35

Type of Graded Unit: Examination

Assessment Instrument: Closed-book Examination

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Purpose: This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HND Countryside Management to:

- ◆ provide an introduction to the practical management of informal recreation and biodiversity in the countryside
- ◆ further develop ecological and environmental knowledge
- ◆ further develop Core Skills
- ◆ deal with ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices under guidance

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: It is recommended that the candidate should have completed or be in the process of completing the following Units relating to these specific aims prior to undertaking this Graded Unit:

- ◆ *Data Collection and Handling Methods* F3X3 35
- ◆ *Ecological Surveying* F433 35
- ◆ *Education for Sustainable Development: Principles and Practice* F434 35
- ◆ *Habitat Management* F3SM 35
- ◆ *Interpretive Principles* F3SR 35
- ◆ *Terrestrial Ecosystems* DP4X 35
- ◆ *History and Archaeology: An Introduction* F3SN 34

Core Skills: There are no Core Skills embedded in this Graded Unit specification.

General information for centres (cont)

Assessment: This examination-based Graded Unit is closed-book examination. It will consist of an examination of 3 hours.

Administrative Information

Graded Unit code: F4BS 35

Graded Unit title: Countryside Management: Graded Unit 3

Original date of publication: August 2008

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History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

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Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates

Graded Unit title: Countryside Management: Graded Unit 3

Conditions of assessment

The assessment is based on a closed-book examination lasting 3 hours.

The assessment is based two separate, consecutive closed-book examinations, each of 1.5 hours duration and lasting a combined total of 3 hours.

If a candidate does not achieve a pass or if a candidate wishes to upgrade, this must be based on a significantly different examination from that given originally. A candidate's grade will be based on his/her achievement on the new assessment event using a significantly different examination, if this results in a higher grade.

The examination should be unseen and the assessment should be conducted in controlled and invigilated conditions.

At all times, the security, integrity and confidentiality of examinations must be ensured.

Instructions for designing the assessment task

The examination should be designed to assess the candidate's critical knowledge and understanding of the topics relating to the specific aims which this Graded Unit is designed to cover. The questions and corresponding marks should be designed in accordance with the ranges indicated in the table that follows. However, the overall total mark for the examination is 100.

The assessment is based on two separate, consecutive closed-book examinations, each of 1.5 hours duration. Both examinations must cover all key topic areas. The first examination must consist of a paper incorporating restricted response, multiple choice type questions. The second paper should be made up of extended response questions. A list of key topics and weightings is provided in the table which follows.

The format of the examination should be designed to conform to the following:

- ◆ each examination must be closed-book and supervised and last 1.5 hours.
- ◆ the examination papers must contain a choice of at least two questions from each Key Topic.
- ◆ the aggregate marks available for the question or questions in each topic area must conform to the weightings given in the table which follows.
- ◆ each question should have an associated mark.
- ◆ a blend of question types is to be used for each topic area. One examination paper should involve restricted response and multiple choice questions for each of the key topic areas. The other examination should involve extended response questions.
- ◆ candidates are expected to attempt all required questions in each section of the examination papers.
- ◆ a mark must be achieved in each section of each examination paper.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Topic areas for examination questions

Key topics	Level of demand	Percentage weighting for each topic
Ecological principles (environmental factors, adaptation, trophic levels, predation, competition)	Evaluate ecological principles and discuss the need for awareness in countryside management plans	20%
Conservation/habitat management (succession, disturbance, structure, site size, conflicts of interest)	Critical analysis of current conservation/habitat management methods and possible conflict in land use plans	20%
Interpretation/education (audience, interpreter, range of media, resources)	Evaluation of the value of interpretation as a means of educating the public re countryside issues and using visitor data as a planning	20%
People management (visitor needs, survey techniques, site characteristics, policy frameworks)	Discussion of conflicts between open access and the public's right/need to roam/experience the	20%
Land use development and impacts (landscape, archaeology, planning, tourism, recreation)	Examination of ways of providing solutions to minimise the impact of land use developments in recreation and tourism and the need to protect sensitive and sites of significance	20%

Each examination will be marked out of 100%. Assessors will aggregate the marks achieved by the candidate to arrive at an overall mark for the examination. Assessors will then assign a grade to the candidate for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries:

- ◆ A = 70% — 100%
- ◆ B = 60% — 69%
- ◆ C = 50% — 59%

To pass the examination and achieve the Graded Unit, the candidate must achieve a mark of 50% or above.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Guidance on grading candidates

Candidates who meet the minimum Evidence Requirements will have their achievement graded as a C (competent), A (highly competent), or B (somewhere between A and C). The grade related criteria to be used to judge candidate performance for this Graded Unit is specified in the following table:

Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent exam script which consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ interprets and understands the question in a way that demonstrates insight and clear understanding of issues and relationships ◆ comprehensively addresses all aspects of the question ◆ demonstrates a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of relevant information ◆ offers logically structured and coherently expressed responses, demonstrating consistent use of correct terminology ◆ has a clear structure throughout and uses language and terminology of a consistently high standard in terms of level, accuracy and technical content ◆ provides solutions to problems which are realistic and attention is paid to practicality and viability ◆ argues and shows links between discussions and conclusions, demonstrating comprehensive knowledge and understanding as well as analysis and evaluation skills ◆ provides evidence of possible alternative approaches and arguments as well as an understanding of different interpretations 	<p>Is a co-ordinated exam script which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ interprets the question in a way that enables the candidate to meet the minimum Evidence Requirements ◆ addresses the main issues of the question ◆ demonstrates analysis and evaluation ◆ offers responses that convey relevant points ◆ uses language and terminology appropriately, in terms of level, accuracy and technical content ◆ contains solutions to problem which are feasible and give due regard to practicality and viability ◆ argues and justifies conclusions with some links to discussions ◆ demonstrates an approach containing different interpretations

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Support notes

This Graded Unit consists of three hours of closed-book examination covering five key topics. The examination is held as two separate events, both undertaken under the same closed-book conditions and both containing a spread of questions covering the key topic areas. The questions associated with each key topic should be focussed on knowledge and skills that candidates should be expected to be able to readily recall, integrate and apply. The purpose of the examination is, in part, to prove the candidates' ability to integrate information gleaned from the Units that comprise the course, but also it provides the opportunity for candidates to achieve a grade for the examination that reflects the depth and scope of their knowledge and understanding.

The defined mandatory Units should preferably be scheduled for the first and second terms so that candidates have time to consolidate and deepen their knowledge and understanding by private study and background reading before the examination towards the end of the academic session.

It is recommended that candidates should have experienced an examination type assessment event during the delivery of the award so that they feel comfortable with the format. There should be discussions with candidates on examination technique which should include the timing, the significance of the verbs used in questions, the need to ascertain the scope of the question, and planning responses. Feedback on sample responses (formative assessment) will sharpen their examination techniques.

The examination should be completed under normal examination conditions ie at a defined time advertised well in advance, in a quiet venue with effective invigilation facilities. Candidates should be provided with clear information regarding examination resist.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative assessment arrangements. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

General information for candidates

This is a single credit Graded Unit (examination) at SCQF level 8. It is designed to assess your ability to recall, integrate and apply the essential knowledge and understanding required to meet the principal aims of the Countryside Management HND. The assessment consists of two closed-book examinations lasting a total of 3 hours, held towards the end of the course. The first examination must consist of a paper incorporating restricted response, multiple choice type questions. The second paper should be made up of extended response questions. The examinations draw their topics from the mandatory Units of the Countryside Management programme:

- ◆ *Data Collection and Handling Methods* F3X3 35
- ◆ *Ecological Surveying* F433 35
- ◆ *Education for Sustainable Development: Principles and Practice* F434 35
- ◆ *Habitat Management* F3SM 35
- ◆ *Interpretive Principles* F3SR 35
- ◆ *Terrestrial Ecosystems* DP4X 35
- ◆ *History and Archaeology: An Introduction* F3SN 34

The examination consists of questions in five areas related to key aspects of the above Units. These areas are: ecological principles, conservation/habitat management, interpretation/education, people management and land use development and impacts.

Each question has the marks for the question identified and the total number of marks available per section. Assessors mark each section of the examination paper taking into account the criteria outlined. The marks for the examination are then aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the examination. Assessors then assign an overall grade to the candidate for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries.

A = 70% — 100%

B = 60% — 69%

C = 50% — 59%

Candidates who fail the examination and are offered a resit opportunity must undertake a substantially different question paper.