National Course Assessment

Amenity Horticulture
Intermediate 2
C06B 11

Practical Assignment

This Course Assessment for C06B 11(Amenity Horticulture Intermediate 2) is valid for diet 2009 and 2010 **only**. This Course will be removed from the NQ Catalogue after diet 2010. The Units making up this Course will be retained in the catalogue.

Contents

1. Practical Assignment overview

This national project specification provides details of the assessment tasks and the evidence which candidates are expected to produce. It contains a degree of choice in terms of the way the Practical Assignment is taken forward by centres so that it fits available resources and candidates' interests and personal strengths.

The Practical Assignment is not concerned exclusively with practical activity, but is designed to emphasise skills relating to the application of practical skills, and related knowledge and understanding to a situation that involves task management.

Candidates are provided with a brief and are expected to demonstrate attainment relating to:

♦   interpreting the brief
♦   gathering information to clarify the brief
♦   deciding on a product, or activity/event, or performance to develop
♦   selecting and managing materials/resources
♦   producing the product, or organising the activity/event, or delivering the performance
♦   evaluating the product or activity/event, or performance(through feedback)

Evidence requirements are as follows:

♦   a plan of action
♦   evidence of a product, or an organised activity/event, or a performance
♦   evidence which documents the processes underpinning the practical hands-on activity
♦   evidence showing an evaluation of the Practical Assignment

Copies of Units are available from the SQA Sales Section, telephone 0141-242 2168; fax 0141-242 2244; e-mail sales@sqa.org.uk

The Scottish Qualifications Authority Helpdesk is available on 0141-242 2214.

Note:

Please note that individual project specifications should be read in conjunction with the relevant *Arrangements for Project-based National Courses*. The *Arrangements* document provides an overview of the project-based National Courses for the given SGA. The guidance document, *Project-based National Courses: procedural guide for centres*, which gives full details of operational procedures, should also be used.

This specification forms part of Section F of the *Arrangements* document. It can be used until such a time that SQA advises centres that a new or revised version is available and should be used in its place.

2. Recommended entry

We strongly advise that candidates should have completed the Units in the National Course prior to embarking on the Practical Assignment. However, there may well be candidates who, for whatever reason, choose to undertake the Practical Assignment on a stand-alone basis. Any such candidates who have not completed or embarked upon the Units of the National Course *prior* to undertaking the Practical Assignment should have demonstrated attainment in (and/or attained) the following qualifications.

♦ National Unit: Use of Hand Tools in Horticulture (EE8E 11)

♦ National Unit: Introduction to Soft Landscaping (D0PV 10)

There are, however, no formal entry qualifications required for this Course although the above would be beneficial.

Candidates with limited horticultural experience might have considerable difficulties due to the breadth of the topics concerned and the need for good underpinning knowledge. This should be taken into account at candidate entry.

Candidates who achieve the National Course assessment will not be certificated for the Course until they have successfully completed the component Units.

3. Practical Assignment briefs

The assignment briefs from which candidates may choose are:

Brief 1

Assist with the planning, establishment and maintenance of an amenity planting of three distinct groups of plants, one of which should be trees and shrubs.

Brief 2

Assist with the production of a maintenance and renovation programme for an amenity planting of three distinct groups of plants, one of which should be trees and shrubs. Assist with the implementation of this programme.

The briefs allow candidates undertaking a programme of units in amenity horticulture to take a more holistic view of the duties and responsibilities of an amenity gardener.

The Course is suitable both for those underaking full time college-based programmes and for candidates attending on a work-based block or day release basis.

4. Outcome coverage

Course Structure		
Unit title	**Credit value**	**Unit number**
Soft Landscaping: Trees and Shrubs	1.0	D892 11
Soft Landscaping: General Plantings	1.0	D894 11
and one of the following: Introduction to Lawns and Lawn Care	1.0	D0MV 11 (88238)
Soft Landscaping: Herbaceous Perennials	1.0	D893 11
Soft Landscaping: Specialist Plantings	1.0	D895 11

All Practical Assignments for project-based National Courses cover a minimum of two thirds of the outcomes from the component units. For this project these are:

Unit: Soft Landscaping: Trees and Shrubs
1. Describe how trees and shrubs are used in landscape features.
2. Identify specimens from a range of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs.
3. Prepare a planting plan for an area of shrubs and/or trees.
4. Plant a selection of trees and shrubs.
5. Maintain a landscape feature planted with different trees and shrubs.

Unit: Soft Landscaping: General Plantings
1. Identify 20 plants relevant to general plantings.
2. Describe the conditions required by each of the plant groups.
3. Prepare a planting plan for a plant group.
4. Plant representative samples from more than one plant group.
5. Maintain plants from more than one plant group in appropriate landscape features.

And any one of the following Units:

Unit: Soft Landscaping: Herbaceous Perennials
1. Identify herbaceous plants suitable for use in borders, island beds, or as ground cover and describe their growth characteristics.
2. Prepare a conventional planting plan for a border or island bed.
3. Prepare a border for planting and plant a group of plants.
4. Maintain a herbaceous border or island bed during a period of growth.

Unit: Soft Landscaping: Specialist Plantings
1. Identify 20 plants relevant to specialist plantings and describe their uses in soft landscaping.
2. Describe the conditions required by each of the specialist groups.
3. Prepare a planting plan for a plant group.
4. Plant representative samples from more than one plant group.
5. Maintain plants from more than one plant group in appropriate landscape features.

Unit: Introduction to Lawns and Lawn Care
1. Outline factors which influence the establishment of lawns
2. Identify the different qualities of lawn and the reasons for selection
3. Establish a lawn on a selected site
4. Maintain an established lawn

The general Outcomes for this Course can be summarised as:

1. Identify groups of plants and specify the conditions suitable for their growth
2. Plan the establishment or maintenance of groups of plants
3. Establish groups of plants
4. Maintain groups of plants

It is strongly advised that candidates should have completed the assessments for the individual component units before undertaking this National Course assessment.

5. Subject/occupationally-related knowledge and skills

The Practical Assignment allows candidates to further develop and apply skills in:

- ♦   planning and organising, eg producing an overall maintenance plan for an amenity area
- ♦   the use of hand tools and simple powered equipment
- ♦   a basic understanding of plants and plantsmanship
- ♦   a basic understanding of landscape design and amenity plantings

It also allows candidates to further develop and apply knowledge of:

- ♦   the use of specific groups of plants in amenity planting schemes
- ♦   the holistic nature of the duties and responsibilities of an amenity gardener

6. Candidate evidence requirements and allocation of marks

General information

The three stages of the Practical Assignment for all Project-based National Courses at Intermediate 2 are:

♦ planning
♦ developing
♦ evaluating

Here we describe evidence requirements which apply to each of the three stages of the Practical Assignment for all Project-based National Courses at Intermediate 2. Where there are any specific evidence requirements relating to this Course, these are given later in this section.

Planning

Candidates must produce a 500 word (or equivalent) plan of action. The plan should include an introduction and a main body. Centres should ensure that candidates have, or are taught, the necessary skills to devise their own plan before they start the project.

For the introduction of the plan, candidates should:

♦ provide a rationale for selecting a particular brief
♦ interpret the brief
♦ gather information to clarify the brief
♦ define the aims and objectives of the Practical Assignment

For the main body of the plan candidates should:

♦ identify information sources
♦ identify materials and resources
♦ establish timescales for completion of stages of the Practical Assignment

The plan of action should be produced in a supervised environment although candidates may carry out the preparation beforehand. Candidates may communicate with each other when producing their plans of action but each plan must be tailored to the candidate's own project and the action points should relate to the work to be carried out by the individual candidate.

The work produced should always be the candidate's own. However, teachers/lecturers are expected to provide candidates with advice, guidance and constructive criticism as necessary when they are devising their plans. It is important to note that, as the plan underpins the rest of the project, centres should ensure that no candidate proceeds to the development stage until the candidate has devised a plan that is potentially workable. The level of support that candidates need to devise a viable plan of action will of course vary from candidate to candidate. Centres should indicate the level of support given to each candidates on the flyleaf for the project provided by the SQA. This should not inhibit centres from providing constructive comment, nor the candidate from acting on their own initiative and taking on board the advice. In some cases, however, if the level of support and intervention needed is more than that which would normally be seen as reasonable, the authenticity of the candidate's work may be called into

question. If the level of input needed from the teacher/lecturer is above normal (for example, the quality of the plan is such that it would mean that the project would be unworkable if the plan was not revised) then candidates cannot score more than 20 of the 40 marks allowed for the planning stage.

Developing

Candidates must provide evidence that:

♦ testifies to the quality of the hands-on practical activity
♦ documents the processes underpinning the activity

Specific evidence requirements for this Course are given later in this section.

All of the evidence should be produced in a supervised environment. Candidates may communicate with each other but should produce work which can be clearly attributed to the candidate as being his or her own.

Evaluating

Candidates must produce an evaluation report which should:

♦ provide a brief summary of what the assignment was about
♦ review and update the action plan in the light of experience
♦ assess the effectiveness of the action plan
♦ summarise any unforeseen events and how they were handled
♦ identify knowledge and skills which have been gained and/or developed
♦ assess the strengths, weaknesses and quality of any hands-on activity
♦ assess the effectiveness of the research methods used
♦ determine to what extent the assignment met the original brief

The evaluation report should be 500 words (or equivalent) at Intermediate 2. Candidates may carry out the preparation for the report beforehand.

Candidates at Intermediate 2 should be allowed up to one hour 30 minutes to complete an evaluation (including the summary).

Candidates should be allowed to take one side of an A4 page of notes (maximum of 200 words or equivalent allowed) which they have prepared, into the room with them. They should not be allowed to take a draft of the evaluation report into the room with them. The centre has the responsibility for ensuring that the notes brought in are the candidate's own work.

For this activity the accommodation should be arranged to reflect centre-invigilated conditions and candidates should not be allowed to communicate with each other in any way.

Specific evidence requirements and assessment arrangements for the Practical Assignment for Amenity Horticulture at Intermediate 2

This Practical Assignment is subject to type 1 visiting assessment.

Planning

Evidence:	Plan of action 500 words *or* equivalent (40 marks)
Conditions of National Course assessment:	Supervised
Who assesses it?	Centre and SQA — plan for sample of candidates to be sent to SQA for marking*

Developing

Evidence:	For hands-on activity: Working with plants and tools Completed amenity horticulture landscape feature (photographic and/or physical evidence) (See next page for further details) For processes underpinning the activity: Log-books/diaries/ work charts as appropriate (120 marks in total for this stage)
Conditions of National Course assessment	Supervised
Who assesses it?	Subject to type 1 visiting assessment

Evaluating

Evidence	Evaluation report — including summary 500 words *or* equivalent (40 marks)
Conditions of National Course assessment:	Centre-invigilated
Who assesses it?	Centre and SQA — report for sample of candidates to be sent to SQA for marking*

It is important that candidates know that they will be penalised for submitting evidence that significantly exceeds the stated word count.

*   Centres should refer to *Project-based National Courses: procedural guide for centres* for full procedural details of type 1 visiting assessment.

Specific additional information and requirements

Amenity Horticulture: planning stage   (total 40 marks)

This should comprise a short introduction (150 words) and the forward plan for the assignment (350 words). The plan must make reference to the following:

♦   site surveys
♦   planting plans
♦   landscape plans
♦   maintenance plans

Note: total word count of 500 words (or equivalent) for planning stage.

Amenity Horticulture: development stage   (total 120 marks)

Evidence	Marks allocated
Hands-on activity (working with plants and hand tools)	50
Planting plans/site surveys/landscape plans/maintenance plans	50
Log books/diaries/work charts	20

Evidence for the hands-on activity and evidence for underpinning processes could include:

♦   checklists
♦   class registers
♦   resource requisitions and receipts
♦   plant/seed requirements for each plant group specified.
♦   photographic evidence of work in progress (before and after shots)
♦   site surveys
♦   work diaries/schedules

Planting plans, site survey records and landscape plans should be drawn in pencil. CAD plans would also be acceptable. Plans should conform to a recognized system of symbols and representation, eg British Standards construction drawing methods. Plans should contain the following information:

♦   site dimensions
♦   scale
♦   orientation
♦   key to plant names

Each plan should be accompanied by a plant list.

Maintenance plans should conform to a recognized format and cover a period of one season of growth. Labour and materials requirements should be stipulated on the plan.

Evidence of the completed amenity horticultural landscape feature should also be available for the Visiting Assessor.

All practical tasks should be carried out to a commercially acceptable level of competence.

Amenity Horticulture: evaluating stage **(total 40 marks)**

This should comprise an evaluation report of approximately 250 words accompanied by completed plans used for the amenity planting and work charts and completed project management tools and/or work schedules (approximately 250 words).

Note: total word count of 500 words (or equivalent) for evaluating stage.

7. Marking and grading for Practical Assignments with visiting assessment

The assessment evidence for this Practical Assignment is subject to visiting assessment by SQA. Centres are strongly advised to read *Project-based National Courses: procedural guide for centres* for further information about the processes and procedures for visiting assessment.

Visiting Assessors will be trained by SQA to apply national standards. As candidate evidence becomes available exemplars will be issued to centres as guidance.

Centres must mark all three stages of the Practical Assignment for each individual candidate and decide on the mark, band and grade they think should be given to that candidate. SQA will provide detailed marking instructions for centres. The SQA Visiting Assessor will mark all three stages for a sample of candidates.

As the Practical Assignment will be marked by centres, centres do not need to provide estimates for Practical Assignments with Visiting Assessment. Nor should there normally be any need for appeals as the SQA Visiting Assessor and the centre should have negotiated and resolved any differences of opinion during the visiting assessment process.

The Internal Assessor uses the same processes for deciding on marks, grades and bands as any SQA Visiting Assessor. The final assessment decision must be based on accurate assessment of all the available candidate evidence. No candidate will be certificated for these Practical Assignments until the assessment decision is in line with national standards.

The total mark for the Practical Assignment is 200 (this makes it easier to discriminate effectively between performances of candidates across the three stages of the assessment). These marks will be allocated as follows in *Table A*.

Table A

Practical Assignment Stage	Assessment Evidence	Mark Allocation
Planning	Plan of action	40
Developing	Evidence arising from the hands-on practical activity and from documenting the underpinning processes involved	120
Evaluating	Evaluation report	40

SQA will provide detailed marking instructions in addition to the information given earlier in this specification. SQA will also provide a form (Attendance Register, Form Ex 6) for submission of marks.

The internal assessors must:

♦ Mark each stage of the project using the marking instructions provided by the SQA.

♦ Maintain a detailed record of the marks given for each of the three stages (for internal moderation purposes and for SQA Visiting Assessor).

♦ Add the marks for each stage for the candidate to give a total mark out of 200.

♦ Divide that total mark by 2 to give a percentage.

♦ Convert the overall % mark for each candidate into a grade and band using *Table B*.

% Mark range	Grade		Band
85–100	A	(upper)	1
70–84	A	(lower)	2
65–69	B	(upper)	3
60–64	B	(lower)	4
55–59	C	(upper)	5
50–54	C	(lower)	6
45–49	Fail	(near miss)	7
40–44	Fail		8
Less than 40	Fail		9

♦ Check the grade given to candidate against the grade descriptions given in *Table C*, using the grade descriptions as a touchstone. The final grade should reflect the grade descriptions.

♦ Provide marks, bands and grades for each candidate.

Although it is possible for a candidate to be given a band 7, 8 or 9 which would be classified as 'fail', this would not appear on the certificate. If a band 7 is given the centre should ensure that it gives feedback to the candidate for remediation purposes.

Grade Descriptions for a Practical Assignment at Intermediate 2

Table C

A	B	C
Content and scope appropriate for Intermediate 2		
Looking at the evidence as a whole:	**Looking at the evidence as a whole:**	**Looking at the evidence as a whole:**
A Practical Assignment at Grade A: • produces high quality, clearly inter-related documented and process or product-related evidence for the three essential phases of planning, developing and evaluating • is an exercise to which candidates have brought an accurate, innovative and enthusiastic interpretation of the practical assignment brief • is tightly structured, relevant to the content of the Units and displays a high level of subject/occupational expertise • applies integrated and consolidated knowledge, understanding and skills effectively and consistently from the Course Units to situations and/or design specifications with varying degrees of complexity	**A Practical Assignment at Grade B:** • produces good quality, inter-related documented and process or product-related evidence for the three essential phases of planning, developing and evaluating • is an exercise to which candidates have brought an accurate and fairly innovative and enthusiastic interpretation of the practical assignment brief • is well structured, relevant to the content of the Units and displays a good level of subject/occupational expertise • applies integrated and consolidated knowledge, understanding and skills fairly effectively and consistently from the Course Units to situations and/or design specifications with varying degrees of complexity	**A Practical Assignment at Grade C:** • produces adequate, fairly well inter-related documented and process or product-related evidence, for the three essential phases of planning, developing and evaluating • an exercise to which candidates have brought an acceptable interpretation of the practical assignment brief • is reasonably well structured, relevant to the content of the Units and displays an adequate level of subject/occupational expertise • applies integrated and consolidated knowledge, understanding and skills from the Course Units with some lack of continuity and consistency

Internal moderation

The Internal Moderator should:

♦ Oversee the internal moderation process to ensure consistency of judgement or *reliability of assessment*. This process will vary according to the nature of the evidence and the number of Assessors and sites. It is likely to involve agreement trials and/or Marker standardisation. The Internal Moderator should normally be a specialist in the subject.

♦ (It may be helpful in the first few years of these project-based National Courses to do a cross-subject moderation of samples of like parts such as the plans of action and evaluation reports. Such additional cross-subject internal moderation is however not mandatory.)

♦ Ensure that all candidates have been fairly treated. For example, some candidates may have produced more fully integrated projects than others but have similar overall marks/bands; this may lead to a reconsideration of marking of the individual components for some candidates.

♦ Oversee the finalisation of marks, bands and grades and submission of candidate evidence for sample candidates.

(See *Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education* or *Guide to Assessment and Quality Assurance for Secondary Schools,* SQA October 2001 for further information relating to internal moderation. A guide to good practice for internal moderation is also under development.)

Submitting candidate evidence to SQA

Specific information on this part of the process is available to centres in *Project-based National Courses: procedural guide for centres.* Where materials have to be sent to SQA for marking, you will be provided with any necessary packaging materials.

The following must be sent to SQA for this Practical Assignment for a sample of candidates:

♦ plan of action
♦ evaluation report

Note: In addition, centres will be expected to submit all notes used by the sample of candidates during write-up sessions.

8. Ensuring evidence is authentic

The following methods should be used to ensure that the evidence produced by a given candidate is all their own work. These methods are for use outwith any situation where the candidate's work will be produced under supervised or invigilated conditions already stipulated by the SQA (eg the plan of action and the evaluation).

Development stage
This will largely be carried out as a team activity with the teacher/lecturer evaluating the activity. Practical work should be supervised at all times. Observations of practical work should be regularly recorded on checklists and candidates should keep a record of all practical work carried out. The candidate will however have to produce some part of the product, eg one particular area of ground, which is all his/her own work and this will be subject to both internal and visiting assessment. Visiting assessment should be used to verify this and the supporting evidence for authenticity should be generated via direct questioning and observation.

9. Investigating tools

Candidates are expected to make use of the following information sources during the Practical Assignment:

Information sources

♦ books, eg *The Bedding Plant Expert, The Lawn Expert, etc* Dr D G Hessayon*, Hillier Garden Planning, Right Plant, Right Place,* N Ferguson etc
♦ British Standards construction drawing methods
♦ seed catalogues
♦ plant catalogues
♦ computer-based resources, including Internet
♦ video
♦ site visits and study tours
♦ technical/professional/trade journals, eg *Horticulture Week*
♦ television programmes

References supplied by candidates

Please note that it is legitimate for candidates to quote from information sources such as articles (in print or stored electronically) or books. Such quotations must be placed within quotation marks followed by the reference, including the chapter and or section and page number. Texts referred to should be included in the bibliography.

The following format for references should be used:

Books
Author's surname, followed by forename or initials, title of book (in italics or underlined), place of publication, name of publisher, year of publication.

For example:
Barton, T, *Fieldwork for Geographers,* London: Edward Arnold, 1985

Articles
Author's surname, followed by forename or initials, title of the article (in inverted commas), title of the periodical (underlined or in italics), volume number, part number, year of publication, page number(s).

For example:
Sugden, DE, 'Perspectives on the Glaciation of Scotland', *SAGT Journal No. 17,* 1988, pp 4-10.

Maps and Diagrams
Sources should be given on each map and diagram and should be stated in the same format as for books and articles, as appropriate.

For example:
Microsoft Encarta 1997

Internet
If a website has been used then the address (URL) must be disclosed.

For example:
www.sqa.org.uk

It is important to note that unacknowledged copying will be penalised, usually by cancellation of the candidate entry.

10. Materials and resources

Candidates are expected to select from the following materials and resources as appropriate:

♦ an area of ground suitable for the establishment of an area of mixed amenity planting, or an established area/areas suitable for a programme of maintenance and renovation.

It must be stressed that adequate and suitable ground and facilities are imperative for this to be a realistic job. If no suitable ground is available at the delivering centre then a suitable site must be found elsewhere. For example, candidates could be involved in work on local community schemes such as sheltered housing complexes, old people's homes or community council projects.

♦ drawing boards and simple technical drawing equipment
♦ basic surveying equipment
♦ a wide range of hand tools
♦ simple powered machinery
♦ plants, seeds and sundries
♦ fertilizers

11. Core Skills

It is possible that successful attainment of this Course would lead to the automatic certification of particular Core Skills or Core Skill components. A final statement will be provided at a later date by the Scottish Qualifications Authority once full validation procedures are complete.

It should be noted that this project, in common with other project-based Courses, follows the planning/developing/evaluating cycle. As a result of this it is likely that successful completion of the project will lead to automatic certification of the Problem Solving Core Skill at Intermediate 2. The final Core Skills statement, as above, will confirm this.