



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Gamekeeping: Role of the Gamekeeper (SCQF level 5)

CODE F6AS 11

SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to introduce candidates to the gamekeeping industry where they will gain an appreciation of the different types of sporting estates, the range of game that they work with and the annual cycle of events and activities on a sporting estate, in relation to the role of the gamekeeper. Candidates will have an opportunity to enhance their knowledge and skills and assist in a range of practical activities associated with gamekeeping.

This Unit is suitable for candidates who want to develop or further develop their skills in gamekeeping.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Identify and describe the main features and activities of estates within the United Kingdom.
- 2 Construct, maintain or repair a surface or structure, in relation to a gamekeeper's seasonal calendar.
- 3 Assist with the maintenance or establishment of a habitat on a sporting estate.
- 4 Assist with the preparation and provisions of food and water for birds and mammals on a sporting estate.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

Administrative Information

Superclass: SH

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CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at SCQF level 5 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*).

**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.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills in this Unit.

The Unit should provide opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the following Core Skills:

- ◆ *Communication* (SCQF level 4)
- ◆ *Problem Solving* (SCQF level 5)
- ◆ *Working with Others* (SCQF level 4)

These opportunities are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit Specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

OUTCOME 1

Identify and describe the main features and activities of estates within the United Kingdom.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify the main physical features of upland and lowland estates.
- (b) Identify the seasonal activities carried out on lowland and upland estates in relation to gamekeeping.
- (c) Identify sporting activities within lowland and upland estates in relation to gamekeeping.
- (d) Describe the main roles of the gamekeeper in relation to sporting estates.

OUTCOME 2

Construct, maintain or repair a surface or structure, in relation to a gamekeeper's seasonal calendar.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Plan and prepare appropriate equipment required for a given task..
- (b) Plan and prepare resources for a given task.
- (c) Carry out the given task and demonstrate health & safety measures at all times.

OUTCOME 3

Assist with the maintenance or establishment of a habitat on a sporting estate.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Visually assess a given area, for environmental and conservational development..
- (b) Assist with the maintenance of any flora present.
- (c) Assist with the introduction of flora, and required structures.
- (d) Demonstrate safe working practices.

OUTCOME 4

Assist with the preparation and provisions of food and water for birds and mammals on a sporting estate.

- (a) Assist in the preparation of a range of feed types.
- (b) Provide feed in an appropriate manner.
- (c) Observe normal or abnormal behaviour of a bird or mammal prior to, during and after feeding.
- (d) Demonstrate safe working practices.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Performance evidence supported by assessor observation checklists together with written and/ or oral evidence gathered under closed-book conditions is required to show that all Outcomes and Performance Criteria have been achieved. Evidence will be produced at appropriate points throughout the Unit.

In relation to Outcome 1 written and/ or oral evidence

Candidates will:

Identify a minimum of three physical or geographical features for both upland and lowland estates, including, for example; mountain, hill, moorland, heath, woodland, arable, marginal land and riparian. Identify a minimum of four general seasonal activities including; vermin control, game bird rearing/release, habitat management, deer control and estate maintenance.

In association with seasonal activities four sporting activities should be identified, and the role of the gamekeeper described in relation to them including stalking, shooting and fishing.

All evidence will be associated with either a lowland or upland estate.

In relation to Outcome 2 Performance evidence will include:

Candidates should compile a list of tools, materials, personal protective equipment and transport (saw, spades, measuring tapes, hammer, nails, staples etc) with suitable appropriate materials, access, timescales and constraints planned for. They will carry out the construction, maintenance or repair of a given surface or structure as is appropriate to local conditions and season and demonstrate safe working practices.

In relation to Outcome 3 Performance evidence will include:

Candidates will carry out a visual assessment of a given area, for maintenance or creation of a specified habitat. The candidate should consider the practicality of the proposed task, identify any constraints, identify flora present and or select the appropriate fauna in relation to species present. Particular emphasis should be given to general maintenance and flora types that will provide food and shelter.

In relation to Outcome 4 Performance evidence will include:

Candidates will be required to prepare feedstuff, feed and observe the feeding regimes of both a bird and mammal on a minimum of two occasions whilst demonstrating safe working practices.

The Assessment Support Pack for this Unit provides sample assessment material. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This is an optional Unit in the National Progression Award (NPA) in Rural Skills at SCQF level 5 but can also be taken on a free-standing basis.

This Unit is designed to introduce the candidate to gamekeeping giving him/her an appreciation of the identification and annual cycle of events on a sporting estate, in relation to the gamekeeper on a sporting estate. The gamekeepers role would also include the wider context of roles associated with both stalkers and ghillies.

It is important that the practical aspects of the learning, takes place within the relevant environment within a sporting estate. Partnerships with land based colleges, training providers or employers are likely to provide the most appropriate settings.

It is important that the deployment of appropriate learning environments is preceded by a valid risk assessment, particularly identifying any protective personal equipment which the candidate may require.

A suitable list of topics and themes for each Outcome are shown below:

Outcome 1

Recognition of lowland and upland estates are distinguished by the contours, topography, habitat types, and flora and fauna types. For example the change in substrate from limestone (lowland) to the harder granite type associated with (upland) parts of the United Kingdom. This directs the candidate to the landscape features. The learner should identify features associated with lowland and upland sporting estates, and the how they influence flora and fauna within them. In an upland environment reference should be made to the more rugged terrain, mountains, steeper contours, moorland, scrubland, Caledonian pine forests and lesser fertile soil. The candidate should also learn about typical lowground estate features, making reference to commercial forestry, mixed arable ground, wetland, coastal, flatter contours, flood plains, riparian ground, and rich fertile soil types.

Candidates should also relate to the gamekeepers seasonal and sporting activities on upland and lowland estates. Reference should be given to vermin control, game bird rearing/release, habitat management, deer control, heather burning, estate maintenance and grouse management. A knowledge understanding of the rationale relating to seasonal activities and timing within the year, this may relate to predation by other birds and mammals, weather, breeding, damage and impact on other species. The learner should also develop an understanding for sporting activities within upland and lowland estates, their benefits to the infrastructure, environment, conservation interests and seasonal timing. For example reference should be made to the benefits of hotels, shops, employment, and the benefits of other relating flora and fauna.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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A basic knowledge and understanding of the open and close seasons for birds and mammals, and the rationale relating to them. For example breeding/mating, moulting of feathers, recovery and raising of broods or offspring. Species should include red and roe deer, red grouse, black grouse, pheasant, grey partridge, greylag goose and mallard duck.

Outcome 2

The learner must assist in the construction, repair or maintenance of a hide (duck or pigeon), grouse butt, high seat, or pen section which would relate to gamekeeping duties and sporting activities. Learning should relate to the knowledge and functions of the chosen construction, the need to be concealed, and the desired location in relation to sitting. Consideration should be given to wind direction, surrounding flora, natural resources, access, quarry type, personnel, health & safety, and personal protective equipment. The learner should also understand the use and functions of appropriate tools, to assist in the construction of the hide or butt. This should cover the more common types wood/bow saw, rule/measuring tape, shovel, spade, laupers, hammer, pinch bar, fencing pliers and chisel types. Materials used in the construction should be sourced within the environment, or nearby suppliers and should include the following tree brashings, reeds, heather, grass, stone, fence wire, and slab wood. Consideration should be given to the advantages/disadvantages of selected materials, fastening methods and design.

It is also a requirement that the learner should also account for transportation of materials, in relation to soil or tracks and paths, accessibility and locality. Consideration should be given to environmental issues relating to the construction for example drainage, erosion, pollution and appearance.

Outcome 3

The learner will assist in the assessment of a chosen site, woodland, moorland, wetland or scrubland. Particular emphasis should be given to the value of the site in relation to flora and fauna present. An understanding for the benefits of flora types, and how they may influence or encourage the population of fauna present. This may relate to tree species (larch, Scots pine, Norway spruce) being beneficial for red squirrels, black grouse and capercaillie. The establishment or maintenance of wetland areas for waders and wildfowl and the introduction, maintenance, or establishment of cover crops for lowground nesting birds such as pheasants, partridge, curlew, lapwing and skylarks. It is a requirement that a level of understanding is gained in relation to food, shelter, and security from natural predators, water availability within habitats, and the importance of their needs for species present.

Where flora types are to be introduced species should relate to their ability to produce a food source. Favoured species should include, rowan, holy, snowberry, laurel, crab apple, beech, hazel, birch and alder. The learner should also be aware of the invasive species types (sycamore, rhododendron, bracken) and their ability to shade light and impact on other beneficial species. Where there is a healthy population of flora species, the learner must implement coppicing or brashing and develop a level of understanding of the benefits to flora (creates vigorous growth).

Appropriate measures should be taken to protect any newly introduced species, tree guards, rabbit netting, deer fencing and stock proof fencing. Consideration should be given to fauna species that will impact on flora species (deer, rabbit, hare, and voles). The learner should also develop an awareness of signs of damage caused by the impacting species.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Outcome 4

The learner should develop an awareness of the different types of the different feed used for both birds and mammals. This should include wheat, barley for lowground gamebirds, and wildfowl. Reference should also be given to high protein pellet types given to assist regulated growth, during the rearing of gamebirds or duck and the disadvantages discussed in relation to costs and storage. An understanding for additional supplements to assist with the consumption and digesting of food (grit), and the benefits to the species (aids digestion, medication against parasitic worms). Consideration should also be given to feed types for ponies, working dogs and farmed or wild deer. The learner should identify recognition of haylage, silage, turnip, fodder beet and the dry feed types and mineral blocks.

The context should also extend to the advantages and disadvantages of the different presentations in terms of cost, convenience and nutritional balance. Presentations should include hopper feeders, hand feeding, automatic feeders, ring feeders, net feeders, floor feeding and gritting stations. Consideration should also be given to the advantages and disadvantages of the different presentations and regularity.

Observation of birds or mammals in terms of normal and abnormal behaviour before, during and after feeding is essential to the welfare of the species. The learner should develop an awareness of what is normal (lively, vigorous and alert) and abnormal behaviour (body movements, lethargy and inability to respond to danger). The context of this should also extend to the physical appearance of the bird or mammal, with emphasis given to the coat, feathers, stance, nasal and eye discharge etc.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

It would be useful for all of the Outcomes to have some classroom based theoretical / guidance input prior to undertaking the practical activities, with particular reference to the issues of health and safety. It is important that the candidate can identify appropriate safe practices, including the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) before undertaking any of the practical tasks. This may be done by using a coaching approach to risk assessment at the beginning of practical sessions.

Outcome 1 and any further theoretical aspects within Outcome 2, 3 and 4 may benefit from a project-based approach with group work, allowing candidates to research the different seasonal and sporting activities within upland and lowland estates, flora and fauna types within them, and the different food types and presentations, thus promoting an independence of learning and working with others.

Outcome 2, 3, and four practical tasks are probably best approached from a practical demonstration, practice review methodology allowing for experimental learning. Some research into flora types and feed types may be required where a practical approach is not possible due to resource issues.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

There will be good opportunities for candidates to develop *Communication*, *Problem Solving* and *Working with Others* Core Skills during the wide ranging practical activities, team working and group discussions carried out.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1. A suitable instrument of assessment would be restricted response questions.

Outcome 2, 3, and 4. A set of practical exercises supported with assessor observation checklists.

Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

DISABLED CANDIDATES AND/OR THOSE WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements