



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Soft Landscaping (SCQF level 4)

Unit code: H1XB 10

Superclass: SE

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Summary

This Unit is designed to develop the candidate skills in soft landscaping. Candidates will select tools and equipment, plant out and care for a range of plants.

The Unit is for candidates with little or no experience of horticulture. These are likely to be school leavers but it is also envisaged that adult returners or those seeking a career change may be interested in the Unit.

The Unit is an optional Unit in the National Certificate in An Introduction to Horticulture (SCQF level4) but can also be taken as a freestanding Unit.

Outcomes

- 1 Identify a range of tools and equipment used in soft landscaping and state their uses.
- 2 Prepare a small area to be planted.
- 3 Plant out a small area.
- 4 Carry out aftercare of a planted area.

Recommended entry

Entry is at the discretion of the centre.

Credit points and level

1 credit at SCQF level 4(6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4*).

**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.*

General information (cont)

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Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes of this Unit specification.

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

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 a range of tools and equipment used in soft landscaping and state their uses.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify a range of tools and equipment used in soft landscaping.
- (b) State the use of each tool or item of equipment.
- (c) Identify any personal protective equipment required for using tools and equipment.

Outcome 2

Prepare a small area to be planted.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Clear the area of any debris.
- (b) Identify any utilities located in the area.
- (c) Cultivate area.
- (d) Apply fertiliser/organic matter.
- (e) Level area ready for planting.

Outcome 3

Plant out a small area.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Assist in marking area out as per plan.
- (b) Lay plants out in the area as per plan.
- (c) Prepare planting holes.
- (d) Plant plants.
- (e) Leave area in tidy condition.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 4

Carry out aftercare of a planted area.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Weed the area.
- (b) Water area to ensure soil moisture content is at the optimum level.
- (c) Apply mulch.
- (d) Prune a plant or shrub.
- (e) Control pests and diseases where required.
- (f) Clean and store tools and equipment safely after use and report any damage.

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Written or oral recorded evidence will be required for Outcome 1.

Performance evidence will be required for Outcomes 2, 3 and 4. All evidence must be generated under supervised open-book conditions in a horticultural area. All practical activities must be carried out in accordance with health and safety legislation and PPE must be worn where necessary.

Outcome 1

Candidate should identify a minimum of eight tools and items of equipment used for soft landscaping and state the use of each.

These could include the following:

- ◆ spade
- ◆ fork
- ◆ garden rake
- ◆ rotovator
- ◆ wheelbarrow
- ◆ shovel
- ◆ edging iron
- ◆ landscaping rake
- ◆ turfing spade
- ◆ hand trowel/fork

Personal protective equipment will include a minimum of three items from:

- ◆ boots
- ◆ eye protection
- ◆ ear protection
- ◆ gloves

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

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Outcome 2

The candidate is required to assist in preparing an area for soft landscaping. This must include the following:

- ◆ correctly identifying the presence of utilities in the area
- ◆ clearing debris
- ◆ cultural control of weeds
- ◆ cultivating area either by hand or by mechanical means
- ◆ levelling the area
- ◆ applying fertiliser or organic matter to area
- ◆ preparing a tilth for seeding or turfing
- ◆ disposing of debris in an appropriate manner
- ◆ assisting in marking area out as per plan
- ◆ laying plants out in the area as per plan
- ◆ preparing planting hole

Outcome 3

Planting plants: The candidate will assist in planting an area this should include at least three of the following plantings:

- ◆ tree planting
- ◆ shrub planting
- ◆ turfing
- ◆ seeding
- ◆ herbaceous
- ◆ bedding

Leave area in tidy condition according to instructions given.

Outcome 4

The candidate will assist in carrying out aftercare, including the following tasks:

- ◆ controlling weeds in the area
- ◆ irrigating the area
- ◆ controlling pest and disease in the planted area
- ◆ pruning at least one plant or shrub according to instructions given
- ◆ replacing dead or missing plants
- ◆ applying a mulch according to instructions
- ◆ pruning at least one plant or shrub according to instructions given
- ◆ applying fertiliser/organic matter according to instructions given
- ◆ washing tools/equipment including:
 - application of rust repellent/oil
 - checking for damage
 - reporting any damages
 - storing tools and equipment correctly and safely according to instructions

National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Soft Landscaping (SCQF level 4)

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 Unit is aligned to aspects of the National Occupational Standards set by the Sector Skills Council, LANTRA:

- CS1 Maintain the Safety of Self and Others in the Workplace
- CS13 Assist with the Maintenance of Grass Surfaces
- CS14 Assist with Maintaining Structures and Surfaces
- CS15 Assist with the Preparation of Equipment
- CS48 Assist with Planting and Establishing Plants
- CS49 Assist with Maintaining Plants

This Unit is designed to suit all candidates and centres with an area suitable for soft. It should be taught as an introduction to landscaping. Candidates should be given as wide a range of experiences as possible in a very practical setting.

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

While some formal teaching sessions may be required to introduce the basic principles of soft landscaping, the Unit should be taught as practically as possible with teaching and learning taking place in the work area.

Ideally this Unit should be taught developing an area from a bare barren site to soft landscaping as part of a group exercise, though care must be taken to ensure that candidates are assessed individually to cover all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. The area should be of a realistic size keeping in mind the notional length of the Unit and the ability of the candidates. All candidates should contribute to the successful completion of the project.

If this Unit is delivered in conjunction with other SCQF level 4 Units as part of the NC in An Introduction to Horticulture, there may also be opportunities to integrate the assessment of this Unit with other practical Units in the award.

By adopting the above learning and teaching approaches and/or through the Outcomes and corresponding Evidence Requirements, the Unit should provide candidates with an opportunity to develop the following essential skills for life, learning and work:

Employability — through developing practical skills to industry standards and working on time limited tasks.

Citizenship — the Unit could provide opportunities to demonstrate citizenship skills if, for example, the Unit is delivered as part of a community project. The candidate would also be gaining a greater understanding of the care of landscaped areas for community use.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Sustainability — the Unit could develop skills in sustainable development as it focuses on aspects of environmental improvement and maintenance.

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

Due to the practical nature of this Unit, it lends itself to assessment of performance activity supported by practical observation checklists, with the assessor observing and recording candidates carrying out the various task as detailed in the Evidence Requirements. There are clear opportunities to integrate assessments of this Unit across the four Outcomes. Where possible this will allow candidates to achieve Outcome 1 prior to carrying out Outcomes 2 and 3 and achieve Outcome 4 after carrying out the tasks for Outcome 2 and 3.

Photographic evidence could be used as evidence, with each candidate building up a simple portfolio containing 'before', 'during' and 'after' photographs.

Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

This Unit is not suitable for 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 social software. 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)*.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will be introduced to the basics of soft landscaping

Candidates will:

- ◆ identify, assess the relevance and consider the significance of a range of factors that would affect the planting of selected plant types
- ◆ work co-operatively with others to ensure landscaping is carried out to an acceptable standard
- ◆ interpret guidelines on planting, mulching and fertilizing particular crop types
- ◆ interact with others in the aftercare of a planted area

This means that as candidates are doing this Unit they will be developing aspects of the Core Skills in *Communication*, *Problem Solving* and *Working with Others*.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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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

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Minor correction to Unit summary	04/07/2016

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