

National Unit Specification: General Information

UNIT Landscape Assessment (Intermediate 2)

NUMBER D872 11

COURSE

SUMMARY

The unit is designed to meet the needs of candidates following a range of programmes and is particularly suitable for the land-based sector. On completion of the unit candidates will be able to describe and assess landscapes and the factors affecting their development. They will also have a knowledge of landscape protection.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Collect and describe information about the main elements of a given landscape.
- 2 Describe how a given landscape has developed.
- 3 Describe the cultural, physical, ecological and aesthetic significance of a given landscape.
- 4 Describe the designations and legislation relating to landscape protection and the protection of buildings in the countryside.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following:

- Standard Grade Biology, Chemistry, Geography, Physics or Science at grade 3 or 4.
- Intermediate 1 Managing Environmental Resources or its component units.

CREDIT VALUE

1 Credit at Intermediate 2.

Administrative Information

Superclass: QA

Publication date: December 1998

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

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Additional copies of this specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The cost is £2.50.

CORE SKILLS

Information on the automatic certification of any core skills in this unit is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

National unit specification: statement of standards

UNIT Landscape Assessment (Intermediate 2)

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Collect and describe information about the main elements of a given landscape.

Performance Criteria

- a) The description of the physical character of a given landscape is complete using recognised terms.
- b) The description of the natural and semi-natural habitats of the given landscape is complete and in line with current guidelines.
- c) The description of land use within the given landscape is complete and in line with current guidelines.
- d) The description of the built features of the given landscape is complete and in line with current guidelines.

Evidence Requirements

Evidence of an appropriate level of attainment must be generated with items covering all performance criteria. A report of an investigation into the main elements of a given landscape is required and must be the individual work of the candidate. The report must be based on an investigation in which the candidate has demonstrated an acceptable level of participation. The collection of the information may involve group work.

OUTCOME 2

Describe how a given landscape has developed.

Performance Criteria

- a) The identification of the ways in which geological processes have influenced a given landscape is accurate according to available evidence.
- b) The identification of the ways in which climatic changes since the last ice age have influenced the given landscape is accurate according to available evidence.
- c) The description of the ecological history of the given landscape is estimated to an acceptable standard.
- d) The identification of cultural and human influences which affected the development of the given landscape is accurate with respect to local and national records.
- e) The description of the relationships between the physical, ecological and cultural factors is comprehensive for the given landscape.

Evidence Requirements

Written and/or oral evidence of the candidate's ability to describe the factors, and the relationship between the factors, involved in the development of a given landscape.

National unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Landscape Assessment (Intermediate 2)

OUTCOME 3

Describe the cultural, physical, ecological and aesthetic significance of a given landscape.

Performance Criteria

- a) The current physical significance of a given landscape is described accurately using accepted terminology.
- b) The current ecological significance of the given landscape is described accurately using accepted terminology.
- c) The current cultural significance of the given landscape is described accurately using accepted terminology.
- d) The current aesthetic significance of the given landscape is described accurately using accepted terminology.

Evidence Requirements

Written and/or oral evidence of the candidate's ability to describe the various aspects of the significance of the given landscape.

OUTCOME 4

Describe the designations and legislation relating to landscape protection and the protection of buildings in the countryside.

Performance Criteria

- a) The description of designations and legislation relating to landscape protection is accurate.
- b) The explanation of the role of local planning authorities and government agencies in development proposals within the landscape is appropriate to given situations.

Note on range for the outcome

Designations: current local; national; European; international.

Evidence Requirements

Written and/or oral evidence of the candidate's ability to explain the designations and legislation relating to the protection of landscape and buildings in the countryside.

National unit specification: support notes

UNIT Landscape Assessment (Intermediate 2)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. None of the sections of the support notes is mandatory.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT

- 1 The main elements of features of local landscapes should be concerned with the overall impression the land makes on the observer. The physical character or landform could include mountains, hills, cliffs, valleys, plains, plateaux etc. as appropriate, together with standard terms routinely used to describe them. Elements such as soil colour and the extent and form of surface water could be included.

The natural and semi-natural habitats could include woodland, heathland, grassland and wetland with further appropriate details. Land uses could include forestry, farming, horticulture etc. as broad classes with further description as appropriate. Other features could include various boundary habitats and isolated trees.

Built features could include towns, villages, houses, factories, farms, archaeological sites and field patterns, car parks, roads, railways, bridges, walls, fences; electricity pylons etc.

- 2 The development of local landscapes could be considered jointly with the description of the features present (Outcome 1). General principles of geology and climate could be used as an introduction to relevant local considerations such as rock type, glaciation, weathering, rainfall etc. The ecological changes since the last ice age could be described in overall terms with respect to natural climax vegetation. The cultural and human influences from the extensive clearing of this climax vegetation until the present day could indicate the progressively more complex relationships between the factors resulting in our present day landscape.

- 3 Assessment of landscape at different times of day, in different weather and seasons and the importance of view points could be explained. The use of the same criteria to judge different aspects of the significance of landscapes could also be explained.

Criteria concerned with judging the cultural significance of a given landscape should consider the built features, their appropriateness, variety and diversity. Terms such as scale, harmony and texture may be used. Physical significance may be considered by criteria such as size, scale, colour, enclosure etc. Ecological significance may be considered by criteria such as rarity, naturalness, diversity etc. Many criteria may be used to assess aesthetic significance including colour, sound, movement, smell, beauty, tidiness, harmony.

National unit specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Landscape Assessment (Intermediate 2)

- 4 The various designations involved in landscape protection (for example, National Parks, Country Parks, National Scenic Areas, Areas of Outstanding National Beauty, Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Coastal Heritage Areas), the legislation relating to their establishment and the administrative authorities responsible for enforcing the legislation should be described with reference to local examples where possible. The protection of the countryside by local government agencies through planning law should be explained. The ways in which listed buildings, ancient monuments, conservation areas and individual trees are protected by local and central government agencies could be described.

GUIDANCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES

Although some formal teaching sessions may be required to introduce the concepts and criteria involved in landscape assessment, most of this unit should involve a strongly candidate-centred approach.

Use should be made of photographs, slides and videos to consider seasonal and other changes not fitting readily within the scope of a modular framework. Visits to local sites should be made as much as possible. A significant proportion of the work could be done in the field using selected viewpoints and other standard approaches.

The candidates could work in groups in the field and exchange and collate information in classroom discussion groups.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

Centres may use the instruments of assessment which are considered by teachers/lecturers to be the most appropriate. Integrated assessment in the form of assignments and written reports could be used where appropriate.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements* (SQA, 1998).