

## **Group Award Specification for:**

**SQA Advanced Certificate in Wildlife and  
Conservation Management**

**Group Award code: GT8E 47**

**and**

**SQA Advanced Diploma in Wildlife and  
Conservation Management**

**Group Award code: GT8F 48**

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# **1 Introduction**

This document was previously known as the Arrangements Document. The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver, and manage the qualification
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification
- ◆ inform course managers, teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers, and Higher Education institutions of the aims and purpose of the qualification
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners that the qualification is suitable for and the progression opportunities

The SQA Advanced Certificate/Diploma in Wildlife and Conservation Management (WCM) have been developed to provide an up to date and vocationally relevant qualification.

Successful completion of the SQA Advanced Certificate and SQA Advanced Diploma will provide learners with the opportunity to seek employment in the broader wildlife and conservation management sector, for example as conservation advisor, environmental field centre assistant, national park officer, countryside ranger, biodiversity project officer or wildlife conservation assistant (ie SNH, RSPB). The SQA Advanced Certificate supports progression onto the WCM SQA Advanced Diploma.

## 2 Qualifications structure

### 2.1 Structure

The SQA Advanced Certificate in Wildlife and Conservation Management (WCM) at SCQF level 7 requires the learner to achieve 96 SCQF credit points to gain the award (12 SQA credits). The WCM progression route to SQA Advanced Diploma should consist of 48 SCQF credit points (6 SQA unit credits) from the mandatory units, and the remaining 48 SCQF credit points (6 SQA unit credits) from the optional units (Table 1). The mandatory section contains 48 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7, and includes an 8 SCQF point graded unit at SCQF level 7.

<b>Table 1: SQA Advanced Certificate Wildlife and Conservation Management Qualification Structure</b>					
<b>4 code</b>	<b>2 code</b>	<b>Unit title</b>	<b>SQA credit</b>	<b>SCQF credit points</b>	<b>SCQF level</b>
<b>Mandatory units: 48 SCQF credit points required (6 SQA unit credits)</b>					
J6LX	47	Biodiversity Conservation	1	8	7
J6M5	47	Ecology and Ecosystems	1	8	7
J6MD	47	Geology and Geomorphology	1	8	7
J6ML	47	Rural Land Use	1	8	7
J6M8	47	Environmental Awareness	1	8	7
J6MW	47	Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 1	1	8	7
<b>Optional units: 48 SCQF credit points required (6 SQA unit credits)</b>					
J6MG	47	Interpretation and Visitor Management Techniques	2	16	7
J6M0	47	Classification and Identification of Organisms	1	8	7
J6MH	47	Leadership of Countryside Activities	1	8	7
J6MK	47	Planning and Development: An Introduction	2	16	7
J6MF	48	Heritage Studies	1	8	8
J6LY	47	Biology: An Introduction	1	8	7
J6MS	47	Wildlife Management	1	8	7
HP6L	47	Information Technology: Applications Software 1	1	8	7
J6LV	47	Animal Care: Wildlife	1	8	7
J6MR	47	Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation	1	8	7

For a learner to achieve the SQA Advanced Diploma in WCM they must successfully complete all of the mandatory units (Table 2), including one graded unit at SCQF level 7, and two graded units at SCQF level 8 (120 SCQF credit points/15 SQA credits). Learners must also achieve 120 SCQF credit points/15 SQA credits from the available optional units.

<b>Table 2: SQA Advanced Diploma Wildlife and Conservation Management Qualification Structure</b>					
<b>4 code</b>	<b>2 code</b>	<b>Unit title</b>	<b>SQA credit</b>	<b>SCQF credit points</b>	<b>SCQF level</b>
<b>Mandatory units: 120 SCQF credit points required (15 SQA unit credits)</b>					
J6LX	47	Biodiversity Conservation	1	8	7
J6M5	47	Ecology and Ecosystems	1	8	7
J6MD	47	Geology and Geomorphology	1	8	7
J6ML	47	Rural Land Use	1	8	7
J6M8	47	Environmental Awareness	1	8	7
J6MW	47	Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 1	1	8	7
J6M4	48	Ecological Surveying	1	8	8
J6M2	48	Data Collection and Handling Methods	1	8	8
J6M7	48	Education for Sustainability: Principles and Practice	1	8	8
J6MN	48	Sustainable Tourism and Rural Communities	1	8	8
J6LW	48	Applied Interpretation	1	8	8
J6MP	48	Terrestrial Ecology	1	8	8
J6ME	48	Habitat Management	1	8	8
J6MX	48	Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 2	1	8	8
J6MY	48	Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 3	1	8	8
<b>Optional units 120 SCQF credit points required (15 SQA unit credits)</b>					
J6MG	47	Interpretation and Visitor Management Techniques	2	16	7
J6M0	47	Classification and Identification of Organisms	1	8	7
HP6L	47	Information Technology: Applications Software 1	1	8	7
J6MH	47	Leadership of Countryside Activities	1	8	7
J6MK	47	Planning and Development: An Introduction	2	16	7
J6MF	48	Heritage Studies	1	8	8
J6LY	47	Biology: An Introduction	1	8	7
J6MS	47	Wildlife Management	1	8	7
J6LV	47	Animal Care: Wildlife	1	8	7
J6MR	47	Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation	1	8	7
J1E4	47	Business Management: An Introduction	1	8	7
J6M1	47	Conservation Skills	1	8	7
J6MA	48	Freshwater Environments: Management and Protection	1	8	8
J6MJ	48	Marine Environments: Management and Protection	1	8	8
HT3R	49	Personal Development Planning	3	24	9
J6MM	47	Soil Management	1	8	7
HP4X	47	Work Placement	1	8	7
J6MB	48	Geodiversity Conservation	1	8	8
J6MC	47	Geographic Information Systems	1	8	7
J6M9	48	Forestry: Woodland Conservation	1	8	8
J6M3	47	Data Management for Ecological Surveying	1	8	7

## **3 Aims of the qualifications**

The principal aim of the SQA Advanced Certificate in Wildlife and Conservation Management at SCQF level 7 is to:

- ◆ develop learners with knowledge and skills in common areas of: ecological/conservation principles, wildlife management, sustainability, landscapes and land uses, and the connection to nature by society.
- ◆ produce learners who are confident communicators, who have a good understanding of the issues in wildlife conservation and have the transferable skills to meet new challenges in the industry.

The principal aim of the SQA Advanced Diploma in Wildlife and Conservation Management at SCQF level 8 is to:

- ◆ provide individuals with generic and specific knowledge and understanding, competencies, skills and abilities in wildlife and conservation management to enable them to progress into subject-specific job roles which may have management responsibilities, or to pursue independent careers or progress to higher academic levels.

### **3.1 General aims of the qualifications**

1. To provide educational and industry relevant skills-based training for potential and current employees in the Wildlife and Conservation Management industries.
2. To enable an articulated progression route to higher level of learning from National Certificate to Honours degree.
3. To raise levels of awareness, skills and knowledge and encourage a holistic approach to wildlife and conservation management.
4. To develop transferable skills that enable learners to perform and communicate effectively in the workplace.
5. To promote adaptability in the learner's approach to wildlife and conservation management.

### **3.2 Specific aims of the qualifications**

6. Develop knowledge of core ecological principles in order to undertake practical methodologies.
7. Respond to simulated conservation scenarios with a range of techniques and methods to manage human impacts on natural assets.
8. Investigate the current action within conservation, outdoor access and land management to assess the value of such action.
9. Develop knowledge of principles of data collection, analysis and display using statistical and mapping techniques.
10. Undertake group project work and understand the key skills required to successfully manage a project and recognise the strengths and weaknesses in teamwork.
11. Develop knowledge of new processes, data, technology and management systems within conservation scenarios.
12. Apply communication skills to a range of tasks aimed at communicating conservation topics to different audiences, both simulated and real-world.

### **3.3 Graded units**

The three graded units were chosen to allow learners to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired during their studies and their ability to integrate the content from the different units. In Year 1 all the learners are asked to carry out a case study. For this they will be given some information relating to either a countryside or urban green space site, and they will be asked to develop proposals based on this information, plus any additional material that they are able to gather during a site visit or online. They are given clear written guidance on how to complete this task and will be supported through the assessment by means of workshop sessions and additional site visits as required. As this is the first time that they have been asked to carry out such a complex task and complete a formal report, it is important that the requirements of the assessment are appropriate and clear.

For the SQA Advanced Diploma there are two graded units, with one being an investigation and the second an examination. The investigation follows similar lines to the first year unit, but requires much more of the learners in terms of gathering information and data, analysing this and drawing more in-depth conclusions. At this level they will be expected to use an even wider range of knowledge and to draw together information from the mandatory units from the first two years.

The examination in the second Year 2 graded unit will include both extended and essay type responses, and will test their ability to produce well-structured work under the pressure of a time limit. The questions will require the learners to bring together the knowledge and skills that they have acquired and to demonstrate an understanding of a range of aspects of either wildlife and conservation management or environmental management, depending on the SQA Advanced Diploma undertaken.

These graded units were chosen to reflect the abilities that would be expected of someone working in the wildlife and conservation and/or environmental management industry. Employees have to bring together a range of different subject areas in order to produce well thought out recommendations regarding both the management of countryside sites for wildlife and conservation, and the environmental management of these sites with regard to environmental sustainability and sustainable resource use. They also have to demonstrate an ability to recognise the potential conflicts that arise between different users, and to arrive at acceptable compromises. It is considered that the type of graded units chosen will fully test these abilities.

## 4 Recommended entry to the qualifications

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience, or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team as guidance only.

Learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge, and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ One Higher level pass at SCQF level 6 for SQA Advanced Certificate entry
- ◆ Two Higher level passes at SCQF level 6 for SQA Advanced Diploma entry
- ◆ An appropriate group of National Units at SCQF level 5/6. These might include, for example, *Trees in the Environment*, *Investigating Animal Wildlife*, *Wildlife Conservation 1* and *The Physical Landscape of Scotland* among others
- ◆ Appropriate vocational qualification might include an SVQ at level 3 in a relevant subject
- ◆ Other combinations of National Qualifications, vocational Qualifications and qualifications from other awarding bodies may be acceptable at equivalent SCQF levels
- ◆ Learners with suitable paid or voluntary work experience may be accepted for entry provided that the enrolling centre is satisfied that they are able to cope with and likely to benefit from undertaking the award (interview/personal statement required).

Where English is not the first language of a prospective learner, it is recommended that the learner possess *English for Speakers of Other languages* at an appropriate level. If using a test such as IELTS or equivalent, an entry score of 5.5 or above would provide a sound linguistic basis for the learner to attempt this level of course. Learners would be asked to produce a certificate to verify this.

### 4.1 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information would be used to identify whether additional learning support needs should be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level, or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	Level 5	Reports; extended response questions; posters, blogs, and presentations
Numeracy	Level 4	Descriptive statistics and data analysis; scientific calculations; graphical presentation of findings
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Level 5	Collecting, collating and presenting evidence/data; presentations/essays/reports
Problem solving	Level 4	Practical activities in real life environments/project work
Working with others	Level 4	Group working; practical group work



## **5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs**

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the unit standards with those defined in National Occupational Standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop more generic skills, known as Core Skills, through this qualification.

## 5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to units

Unit title	General aims					Specific aims						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Biodiversity Conservation	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	
Ecology and Ecosystems	X	X	X		X	X			X		X	
Geology and Geomorphology	X	X	X									
Rural Land Use	X	X	X		X			X				
Environmental Awareness	X	X	X		X							
Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 1	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Ecological Surveying	X	X	X	X	X	X			X		X	
Data Collection and Handling Methods	X	X			X	X			X		X	
Education for Sustainability: Principles and Practice	X	X	X	X	X					X		X
Sustainable Tourism and Rural Communities	X	X	X		X							
Applied Interpretation	X	X		X	X					X		X
Terrestrial Ecology	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	
Habitat Management	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	
Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 2	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 3	X	X	X		X			X	X			
Interpretation and Visitor Management Techniques	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Classification and Identification of Living Organisms	X	X				X						
Leadership of Outdoor Activities	X	X		X	X	X	X			X		X
Planning and Development: An Introduction	X	X	X				X	X			X	
Heritage Studies	X	X					X	X				X
Biology: An Introduction	X	X									X	
Wildlife Management	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	

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Unit title	General aims					Specific aims						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Information Technology: Applications Software	X	X		X	X				X		X	X
Animal Care: Wildlife	X	X				X						
Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation	X	X				X						
Business Management: An Introduction	X	X										
Conservation Skills	X	X		X	X	X	X			X		X
Freshwater Environments: Management and Protection	X	X	X			X	X	X			X	
Marine Environments: Management and Protection	X	X	X			X	X	X		X	X	
Personal Development Planning	X	X		X	X					X		
Soil Management	X	X									X	
Work Placement	X	X		X	X							
Geodiversity Conservation	X	X						X				
Geographic Information Systems	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	
Forestry: Woodland Conservation	X	X	X			X	X	X			X	
Data Management for Ecological Surveying	X	X				X		X	X		X	

## 5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade standards

Unit title	National Occupational Standard																
	CS70	EnC33	EnC35	AnC36	AnC66	CS3	CS18	H69	CS45	EnC2	CS42	EnC4	EnC5	CS 36	EnC31	EnC7	EnC1
Biodiversity Conservation	X		X														X
Ecology and Ecosystems			X					X				X	X				
Geology and Geomorphology			X					X				X	X				
Rural Land Use	X		X							X							X
Environmental Awareness			X							X							
Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 1	X	X	X			X			X	X	X	X	X				X
Interpretation and Visitor Management Techniques	X		X			X			X			X	X		X		X
Classification and Identification of Living Organisms		X		X								X	X				
Leadership of Outdoor Activities						X	X		X	X	X			X	X		X
Planning and Development: an introduction	X		X														X
Heritage Studies	X		X								X						
Biology: an introduction		X	X														
Wildlife Management	X	X	X	X	X						X	X	X				X
Information Technology: Applications Software																	

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Unit title	National Occupational Standard																
	CS70	EnC33	EnC35	AnC36	AnC66	CS3	CS18	H69	CS45	EnC2	CS42	EnC4	EnC5	CS 36	EnC31	EnC7	EnC1
Animal Care: Wildlife		X															
Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation				X		X											
Ecological Surveying		X	X		X	X		X				X	X				
Data Collection and Handling Methods			X									X	X				
Education for Sustainability: principles and practice						X			X	X					X		X
Sustainable Tourism and Rural Communities	X		X							X							X
Applied Interpretation									X						X		
Terrestrial Ecology		X	X	X	X			X			X	X	X	X		X	
Habitat Management		X	X	X	X			X			X	X	X	X		X	
Business Management: An Introduction																	
Conservation Skills						X	X		X	X	X			X			
Freshwater Environments: management and protection	X		X									X	X				X
Marine Environments: management and protection			X									X	X				X
Soil Management			X					X				X	X				
Work Placement						X	X			X	X			X			X
Geodiversity Conservation	X																X

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Unit title	National Occupational Standard																
	CS70	EnC33	EnC35	AnC36	AnC66	CS3	CS18	H69	CS45	EnC2	CS42	EnC4	EnC5	CS 36	EnC31	EnC7	EnC1
Geographic Information Systems	X											X	X			X	
Forestry: Woodland Conservation	X	X	X								x	X	X	X		X	X
Data Management for Ecological Surveying		X	X		X							X	X			X	

### List of selected National Occupational Standards:

LANCS70 — Identify and assess rural land use

LANEnC33 — Apply species identification skills

LANENC35 — Produce a research report

LANAnC36 — Release animals into their natural habitat

LANAnC66 — Plan and monitor the establishment and management of animal populations

LANCS3 — Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security

LANCS18 — Construct structures

LANH69 — Assess and improve the condition of soil on land-based sites

LANCS45 — Plan and manage a land-based project or event

LANEnC2 — Consult and work with the local community

LANCS42 — Manage sites in the land-based and environmental sector

LANEnC4 — Conduct field surveys

LANEnC5 — Analyse data from field surveys and report findings

LANCS 36 — Carry out work to create or manage habitats

LANEnC31 — Produce interpretive media

LANEnC7 — Use geospatial data in environmental surveys

LANEnC1 — Promote responsible public use of outdoor sites

### 5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualifications

Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
	Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
Biodiversity Conservation	X	X	X		X			X	X	X		
Ecology and Ecosystems	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Geology and Geomorphology	X	X					X	X	X	X	X	
Rural Land Use	X	X	X			X	X	X	X			
Environmental Awareness	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		
Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Interpretation and Visitor Management Techniques	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		
Classification and Identification of Living Organisms	X	X				X	X		X			
Leadership of Outdoor Activities	X	X	X			X	X		X		X	X
Planning and Development: An Introduction	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		
Heritage Studies	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		
Biology: An Introduction	X	X				X	X	X	X			
Wildlife Management	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		
Information Technology: Applications Software	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
Animal Care: Wildlife	X	X	X			X	X		X			
Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation	X	X				X	X	X	X			
Ecological Surveying	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Data Collection and Handling Methods	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		

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Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
	Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
Information Technology: Applications Software	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
Animal Care: Wildlife	X	X	X			X	X		X			
Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation	X	X				X	X	X	X			
Ecological Surveying	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Data Collection and Handling Methods	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Education for Sustainability: Principles and Practice	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sustainable Tourism and Rural Communities	X	X				X	X	X	X	X		
Applied Interpretation	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Terrestrial Ecology	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Habitat Management	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wildlife and Conservation Management Graded Unit 3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Business Management: An Introduction	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Conservation Skills	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X
Freshwater Environments: Management and Protection	X	X				X	X	X	X	X		
Marine Environments: Management and Protection	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Personal Development Planning	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		
Soil Management	X	X				X	X	X	X			
Work Placement	X	X	X			X		X		X	X	X



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Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
	Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
Geodiversity Conservation	X	X				X	X	X	X	X		
Geographic Information Systems	X	X			X	X	X	X	X			
Forestry: Woodland Conservation	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Data Management for Ecological Surveying	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

## 5.4 Assessment strategy for the qualifications

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Biodiversity Conservation	Case study			
Ecology and Ecosystems	Short answer questions	Practical and report		
Geology and Geomorphology	Investigation			
Rural Land Use	Report	Restricted/extended response questions		
Environmental Awareness	Case study/questions	Report/personal action plan	Case study/questions	
Interpretation and Visitor Management Techniques	Site assessment portfolio			
Classification and Identification of Living Organisms	Portfolio			
Leadership of Outdoor Activities	Report	Action plan	Practical	
Planning and Development: An Introduction	Case study report		Presentation	Case study report
Heritage Studies	Case study report		Presentation	
Biology: An Introduction	Short answer questions		Extended response questions	
Wildlife Management	Portfolio			
Information Technology: Applications Software	Project/case study			
Animal Care: Wildlife	Short answer questions	Presentation		
Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation	Portfolio of evidence requirements/practical tasks			
Ecological Surveying	Assessment portfolio — written or oral presentation			
Data Collection and Handling Methods	Practical tasks, restricted response questions			

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Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Education for Sustainability: Principles and Practice	Report or portfolio		Presentation	
Sustainable Tourism and Rural Communities	Short answer and extended response question	Case study		
Applied Interpretation	Site assessment and practical task.			
Terrestrial Ecology	Short answer and extended response question		Investigative report	
Habitat Management	Investigative logbook			
Business Management: an introduction	Oral presentation or wiki or blog or report			
Conservation Skills	Restricted response	Practical task and report		
Freshwater Environments: Management and Protection	Case study		Short answer and extended response question	
Marine Environments: Management and Protection	Restricted/extended response questions	Case study	Restricted/extended response questions	
Personal Development Planning	Reflective account			
Soil Management	Short answer questions	Case study		
Work Placement	Portfolio of evidence			
Geodiversity Conservation	Logbook		Extended response questions	
Geographic Information Systems	Practical task	Portfolio of evidence		
Forestry: Woodland Conservation	Operational plan for site			
Data Management for Ecological Surveying	Field survey and project report			

## 6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

### SQA Advanced Certificate/Diploma in Wildlife and Conservation Management

The SQA Advanced qualifications in Wildlife and Conservation Management are designed to equip learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills required for success in future employment or further study.

They are specific qualifications which also aim to provide learners with transferable skills that will enable them to meet changing circumstances, whether these arise from a shift in their own sphere of employment, or promotion to supervisory or management roles.

The qualification builds on the SQA Advanced Certificate Wildlife and Conservation Management framework, implemented as year one of this qualification resulting in learners having, and developing, a wide knowledge over a range of relevant issues. Such issues include land use strategies, biodiversity conservation issues, wildlife management, ecology, sustainable tourism and visitor management, geodiversity conservation and interpretation issues together with relevant legislation and policy.

The curriculum design provides an awareness and understanding of essential knowledge and skills required by those wishing to pursue a career in the wildlife and conservation management sectors and this is reflected in the applied and practical nature of the units studied. The intention is to develop learners' ability to problem solve, identifying and applying individual skills in their chosen specialisation within this very diverse sector, thereby enhancing future employability.

In order to make the course as relevant as possible a wide range of delivery methods are used. There is extensive use of guest lecturers and site visits/field trips which bring learners in touch with practitioners and the working environment. This also helps to ensure that the course is relevant in terms of current practice. While lectures are a significant part of course delivery these are supported by on-line material, presentations, role play and simulations. Upon completion of the SQA Advanced Diploma learners should have an understanding of site conservation and wildlife management, together with monitoring and evaluation skills including management of human activity to minimise impacts and on site conflict of users.

### 6.1 Sequencing/integration of units

Delivery of this qualification would normally extend over two years of full-time study, but can be taken on a part-time basis over an extended period. It will be delivered by means of lectures, blended learning, field trips, practical classes, tutorials. Learners will have the opportunity to develop the Core Skills of *Communication, Numeracy, Information Technology, Problem Solving and Working with Others*. The inclusion of a broad range of options from across the wildlife and conservation management spectrum allows the development of abilities and interests leading to preferred progression or career paths. Assessments may take the form of open/closed-book tests (in class or e-assessment), practical assessments, assignments, reports, presentations and projects. The overall assessment strategy is to encourage a holistic approach to assessment which means that the assessment of some outcomes within units, or across some units, may be combined.

There are three graded units within the SQA Advanced Diploma Award. Graded Unit 1 is undertaken in the first year of the SQA Advanced Diploma. This will take the form of an investigation in which learners will apply the knowledge, understanding and practical skills that

## SQA Advanced Certificate/Diploma

they have developed throughout the first year units. This graded unit is at SCQF level 7 and is worth 1 SQA Advanced credit.

In the second year of the SQA Advanced Diploma learners will undertake two graded units at SCQF level 8, each worth one SQA Advanced credit. One will be a three hour examination, to assess and grade ability to retain and integrate knowledge and understanding. The other will be an investigation which will assess the learner's ability to apply knowledge, understanding and practical skills to research a particular topic.

There is no prescribed sequence for delivery of units, although centres should try to deliver units that form part of the SQA Advanced Certificate or SQA Advanced Diploma Graded Units as early as possible to allow learners the most time to prepare.

Individual units contain the required knowledge and skills if delivered on a stand-alone basis, as a result across an overall group award there is likely to be duplication of content.

Centres delivering the SQA Advanced Certificate and/or SQA Advanced Diploma should minimise duplication of assessment. Every effort should be made to identify cross-over between outcomes and units and plan assessments to take account of this. The use of projects and/or a portfolio approach to producing evidence can be helpful in reducing over-assessment (see previous section) and can help learners to integrate the knowledge and skills they have developed.

While not intended to be exhaustive the table below identifies opportunities for integration of assessment across units:

<b>Unit title</b>	<b>Integration opportunity</b>
Biodiversity Conservation	Wildlife Management
Ecological Surveying	Data Collection and Handling Methods
Classification and Identification of Living Organisms	Animal Care: Wildlife Ecology and Ecosystems
Leadership of Outdoor Activities	Applied Interpretation Conservation Skills
Work Placement	Developing Skills for Personal Effectiveness
Geographic Information Systems	Data Management for Ecological Surveying
Ecological Surveying	Data Management for Ecological Surveying

## 6.2 Recognition of prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal, and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full group award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

The recognition of prior learning may not be used as a method of assessing in the following types of units and assessments:

- ◆ SQA Advanced graded units
- ◆ course and/or external assessments
- ◆ other integrative assessment units (which may or not be graded)

## **SQA Advanced Certificate/Diploma**

- ◆ certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the unit
- ◆ where there is an existing requirement for a license to practice
- ◆ where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ where there are regulatory, professional, or other statutory requirements
- ◆ where otherwise specified in an assessment strategy

More information and guidance on the recognition of prior learning may be found on our website: [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA unit(s) may contribute to this group award. Additionally, they also outline how this group award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

### **6.2.1 Articulation and/or progression**

#### **Progression from SQA Advanced Certificate in Wildlife and Conservation Management**

Learners achieving the SQA Advanced Certificate in Wildlife and Conservation Management may be able to progress to the following courses having attained 15 SQA credits (120 SCQF credits):

- ◆ SQA Advanced Diploma in Wildlife and Conservation Management

#### **Progression from SQA Advanced Diploma Wildlife and Conservation Management**

Learners achieving the SQA Advanced Diploma in Wildlife and Conservation Management may be able to progress to the following courses having achieved 30 SQA credits (240 SCQF credits):

- ◆ Year 3 of BSc Wildlife and Conservation Management delivered by SRUC and validated by the University of Glasgow
- ◆ Year 3 of BSc Environmental Management delivered by SRUC and validated by the University of Edinburgh
- ◆ Year 2 or 3 of Wildlife and Conservation degrees offered by universities elsewhere in the UK

The other progression routes detailed above to qualifications at other Higher Education establishments further broaden possible career pathways. Learners are advised to liaise directly with the HE establishments prior to each year's intake of learners as unit credits that count towards entry requirements can vary and applications will be considered on an individual basis.

### **6.2.4 Credit transfer arrangements**

Credit transfer is a decision for centres and can be given where there is broad equivalence between the subject-related content of the units, ie the knowledge and/or skills are covered in the unit for which credit is being awarded. Centres should give some consideration to currency of achievement when awarding credit transfer.

There is no transition framework for the SQA Advanced Diploma in Wildlife and Conservation Management but learners can be given credit transfer for individual units. Credit transfer can be given where there is broad equivalence between the subject related content of the unit or combination of units.

### **6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment**

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments within this SQA Advanced Diploma but not for all of the programme. 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.

### **6.4 Supporting materials**

A list of exiting ASPs is available to view on SQA's website.

### **6.5 Resource requirements**

In addition to the requirement for suitably experienced and qualified staff to deliver and assess the qualification centres will also require access to computer laboratories with GIS capability and field sites for practical conservation and ecological survey tasks.

## 7 General information for centres

### Equality and inclusion

The unit specifications making up this group award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

### Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within these group awards should be internally verified using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).



## 8 Glossary of terms

**Embedded Core Skills:** The assessment evidence for the unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

**Finish date:** The end of a group award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the group award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ Candidates may not be entered for the group award.
- ◆ The group award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS).

**Graded unit:** Graded units assess learners' ability to integrate what they have learned while working towards the units of the group award. Their purpose is to add value to the group award, making it more than the sum of its parts, and to encourage learners to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

**Lapsing date:** When a group award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ The group award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue.
- ◆ The group award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date, at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived.
- ◆ No new centres may be approved to offer the group award.
- ◆ Centres should only enter candidates whom they expect to complete the group award during the defined lapsing period.

**SQA credit value:** The credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching, and assessment.

**SCQF:** The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF, visit the SCQF website at [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk).

**SCQF credit points:** SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one SQA Advanced unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

**SCQF levels:** The level a qualification assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. SQA Advanced Certificates and SQA Advanced Diplomas are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8, respectively. SQA Advanced units will normally be at levels 6–9 and graded units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

**Subject unit:** These contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

**Signposted Core Skills:** These refer to opportunities to develop Core Skills in learning and teaching, but are not automatically certificated.

## 9 History of changes

It is anticipated that changes will take place during the life of the qualification, and this section will record these changes. This document is the latest version and incorporates the changes summarised below. Centres are advised to check SQA Connect to confirm that they are using the most up-to-date qualification structure.

**NOTE:** Where a unit is revised by another unit:

- ◆ No new centres may be approved to offer the unit which has been revised.
- ◆ Centres should only enter candidates for the unit which has been revised where they are expected to complete the unit before its finish date.

Version number	Description	Date

### Acknowledgements

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland’s colleges have made to the development of SQA Advanced Qualifications.

### Further information

Call SQA’s Customer Contact Centre on 44 (0) 141 500 5030 or 0345 279 1000. Alternatively, complete our [Centre Feedback Form](#).

## **10 General information for learners**

This section will help you to decide whether this is the qualification for you by explaining: what the qualification is about; what you should know or what you should be able to do before you start; what you will need to do during the qualification; and opportunities for further learning and employment.

The SQA Advanced Certificate and SQA Advanced Diploma in Wildlife and Conservation Management have been designed to provide you with an opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills required to work effectively in the conservation sector.

You will have the opportunity to study a range of vocationally relevant areas including:

- ◆ Biodiversity Conservation
- ◆ Ecology and Ecosystems
- ◆ Ecological Surveying
- ◆ Education for Sustainability: Principles and Practice
- ◆ Habitat Management
- ◆ Interpretation and Visitor Management Techniques
- ◆ Conservation Skills

Depending on where you study and your particular interests there are also a range of more specialist units that will allow you to deepen and develop your knowledge and skills, for example:

- ◆ Wildlife Management
- ◆ Freshwater Environments: Management and Protection
- ◆ Marine Environments: Management and Protection
- ◆ Geographic Information Systems
- ◆ Forestry: Woodland Conservation

The SQA Advanced Diploma will be assessed by a wide range of methods, including practical work, reports, presentations, written or recorded responses and portfolio building. There may also be opportunities to undertake e-assessment.

In order to achieve the SQA Advanced Diploma you will also need to complete two graded units (in addition to the graded unit you achieved for your SQA Advanced Certificate), that will allow you to demonstrate that you can integrate and apply the knowledge and skills you have developed throughout the SQA Advanced Diploma. Graded Unit 2 will require you to undertake a project-based investigation, including planning the investigation, undertaking it and evaluate it once complete. Graded Unit 3 is an open-book exam, split in two 1.5 hour papers, including both extended response and essay style questions.

Upon completion of the SQA Advanced Diploma you will be well equipped to seek employment within the conservation and wider land-based industries or to progress to further degree level study.