

## SQA Advanced Qualifications

# Examination-based Graded Unit Specification

### General information

This graded unit has been validated as part of the SQA Advanced Diploma in Wildlife and Conservation Management: Graded Unit 3 at SCQF level 8. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification.

**Graded unit title:** Wildlife and Conservation Management: Graded Unit 3

**Graded unit code:** J6MY 48

**Type of examination:** Open-book

**Publication date:** November 2022

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Graded unit purpose

This graded unit is designed to provide evidence that the learner has achieved the following principal aims of the SQA Advanced Diploma in Wildlife and Conservation Management: Graded Unit 3:

- ◆ Develop knowledge of core ecological principles in order to undertake practical methodologies.
- ◆ Respond to simulated conservation scenarios with a range of techniques and methods to manage human impacts on natural assets.
- ◆ Investigate the current action within conservation, outdoor access and land management to assess the value of such action.
- ◆ Develop knowledge of principles of data collection, analysis and display using statistical and mapping techniques.
- ◆ Develop knowledge of new processes, data, technology and management systems within conservation scenarios.
- ◆ Apply communication skills to a range of tasks aimed at communicating conservation topics to different audiences both simulated and real-world.

## **SQA Advanced Graded Unit Specification**

### **Credit points and level**

1 SQA Credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8).

### **Recommended entry to the graded unit**

Prior to undertaking this graded unit, it is recommended that the learner should have completed (or be in the process of completing) the following units relating to the above principal aims:

- ◆ Data Collection and Handling Methods
- ◆ Ecological Surveying
- ◆ Education for Sustainability: Principles and Practice
- ◆ Habitat Management
- ◆ Applied Interpretation
- ◆ Terrestrial Ecology
- ◆ Sustainable Tourism and Rural Communities

### **Core Skills**

There are no Core Skills embedded in this graded unit specification.

### **Assessment support pack**

The assessment support pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable, and practicable instrument of assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. ASPs are available on SQA's secure website.

### **Equality and inclusion**

This graded unit has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods, or considering alternative evidence.

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

## **Designing the examination and assessing learners**

**Graded unit title:** Wildlife and Conservation Management: Graded Unit 3

### **Assessment**

This graded unit will be assessed by the use of an open-book examination developed by centres. The examination should provide the learner with the opportunity to produce evidence that demonstrates that he/she has met the aims of this graded unit.

The assessment is an examination lasting three hours.

The examination should be designed to assess the learner's critical knowledge and understanding of the topics relating to the specific aims which this graded unit is designed to cover.

The examination will be marked out of **100**. Only whole marks should be used.

The questions and corresponding marks should be designed in accordance with the key topics (ie the critical knowledge and skills to be covered in the examination), level of demand (eg description, explanation, analysis, application), and relative mark allocation for each key topic outlined in the table below.

<b>Key topics</b>	<b>Level of demand</b>	<b>% mark allocation for each key topic</b>
<i>Ecological principles</i> (Environmental factors, adaptation, trophic levels, predation, competition)	Evaluate ecological principles and discuss the need for awareness in wildlife and conservation management plans	20%
<i>Conservation/habitat management</i> (Succession, disturbance, structure, site size, conflicts of interest)	Critical analysis of current conservation/habitat management methods and possible conflict in land use plans	20%
<i>Interpretation/education</i> (Audience, interpreter, range of media, resources)	Evaluation of the value of interpretation as a means of educating the public re countryside issues and using visitor data as a planning	20%
<i>People management</i> (Visitor needs, survey techniques, site characteristics, policy frameworks)	Discussion of conflicts between open access and the public's right/need to roam	20%
<i>Land use development and impacts</i> (Landscape, archaeology, planning, tourism, recreation)	Examination of ways of providing solutions to minimise the impact of land use developments in recreation and tourism and the need to protect sensitive sites and sites of significance	20%
<b>Total marks for examination</b>		<b>100</b>

## **SQA Advanced Graded Unit Specification**

### **Conditions of assessment**

The examination is open-book.

The examination should be unseen and the assessment should be conducted in controlled and invigilated conditions.

At all times, the security, integrity, and confidentiality of the examination must be ensured.

Reasonable assistance is the term used by SQA to describe the difference between providing learners with some direction to generate the required evidence for assessment and providing too much support which would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable assistance is part of all learning and teaching processes.

In relation to the assessment of examination-based graded units, assessors may provide advice and guidance on examination technique and clarification on the meaning of command words which may appear within an examination paper, prior to the formal examination.

Remediation is not allowed in examination-based graded unit assessments.

Any learner who has failed their examination-based graded unit or wishes to upgrade their award must be given a re-assessment opportunity or, in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. This must be done by using a substantially different examination.

The final grading given must reflect the quality of the learner's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Learners must be awarded the highest grade achieved, whether through first sitting or through any re-assessment.

The assessment is based on two separate, consecutive closed-book examinations, each of 1.5 hours duration. Both examinations must cover all key topic areas. The examinations should be made up of one extended response paper and the second an essay-style question. A list of key topics and weightings is provided in the table above.

The format of the examination should be designed to conform to the following:

- ◆ Each examination must be open-book and last 1.5 hours.
- ◆ The examination papers must contain a choice of at least two questions from each key topic.
- ◆ Each paper has the same weighting, with grades decided holistically using the grade-related criteria.
- ◆ A blend of question types is to be used for each topic area.
- ◆ One examination paper should involve extended response, whilst the other examination should consist of essay-style questions.
- ◆ Learners are expected to attempt all required questions in each section of the examination papers.
- ◆ A mark must be achieved in each section of each examination paper.

### **Assessing and grading learners**

Learners who meet the minimum evidence requirements will have their achievement graded as an A, B, or C. The grade-related criteria to be used to judge learner performance for this graded unit is specified in the following table:

Grade-related criteria	
Grade A	Grade C
<p>A seamless, coherent piece of work or exam script which consistently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ interprets and understands the question in a way that demonstrates insight and clear understanding of issues and relationships</li> <li>♦ demonstrates a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of relevant information</li> <li>♦ offers logically structured and coherently expressed responses, demonstrating consistent use of correct terminology</li> <li>♦ is clear and well-structured throughout, with language and terminology used of a consistently high standard in terms of level, accuracy, and technical content</li> <li>♦ consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills, linking concepts and ideas, and relating answers explicitly to the question</li> <li>♦ provides evidence of possible alternative approaches and arguments as well as an understanding of different interpretations</li> <li>♦ convincingly argues and shows links between discussions and conclusions, demonstrating comprehensive knowledge and understanding as well as analysis and evaluation skills</li> </ul>	<p>A co-ordinated piece of work or exam script which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ interprets and understands the question in a way that enables the learner to meet the basic criteria required</li> <li>♦ demonstrates limited analysis, evaluation, and explanation of the question and other relevant information</li> <li>♦ offers uneven responses that convey limited understanding, although some relevant points are made</li> <li>♦ is satisfactorily structured, with language and terminology used adequately, although not always consistently, in terms of level, accuracy, and technical content</li> <li>♦ consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills but may lack continuity and consistency and fail to show clear links to concepts and ideas</li> <li>♦ is likely to show only one approach and limited understanding of different interpretations</li> <li>♦ argues and justifies conclusions in an acceptable way but these conclusions may lack reasoned understanding, may not link well to discussions, and may show limited knowledge</li> </ul>

The marks achieved by the learner in the examination should be aggregated to arrive at an overall mark for the examination. Assessors will then assign an overall grade to the learner for this graded unit based on the following grade boundaries:

A = 70%–100%

B = 60%–69%

C = 50%–59%

These grade boundaries are fixed and should **not** be amended.

If a learner does not achieve a pass or wishes to upgrade, then this must be done using a substantially different examination. In these circumstances, the highest grade achieved should be awarded.

## **Support notes**

**Graded unit title:** Wildlife and Conservation Management: Graded Unit 3

### **Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment of this graded unit**

This graded unit consists of three hours of open-book examination covering five key topics. The examination is held as two separate events, both containing a spread of questions covering the key topic areas. The questions associated with each key topic should be focussed on knowledge and skills that learners should be expected to be able to readily recall, integrate and apply. The purpose of the examination is, in part, to prove the learners' ability to integrate information gleaned from the units that comprise the course, but also it provides the opportunity for learners to achieve a grade for the examination that reflects the depth and scope of their knowledge and understanding.

The defined mandatory units should preferably be scheduled for the first and second terms so that learners have time to consolidate and deepen their knowledge and understanding by private study and background reading before the examination towards the end of the academic session.

It is recommended that learners should have experienced an examination type assessment event during the delivery of the award so that they feel comfortable with the format. There should be discussions with learners on examination technique which should include the timing, the significance of the verbs used in questions, the need to ascertain the scope of the question, and planning responses. Feedback on sample responses (formative assessment) will sharpen their examination techniques.

The examination should be completed under normal examination conditions i.e. at a defined time advertised well in advance. Learners should be provided with clear information regarding examination resist.

### **Opportunities for developing core and other essential skills**

There are no Core Skills embedded in this graded unit specification.

## **Administrative information**

### **History of changes to this graded unit**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Description of change</b>	<b>Date</b>

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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](#).

## **General information for learners**

**Graded unit title:** Wildlife and Conservation Management: Graded Unit 3

This is a single credit graded unit (examination) at SCQF level 8. It is designed to assess your ability to recall, integrate and apply the essential knowledge and understanding required to meet the principal aims of the SQA Advanced Diploma in Wildlife and Conservation Management. The assessment consists of two open-book examinations lasting a total of three hours, held towards the end of the course. The examinations should be made up of one extended response paper and the second an essay-style question. The examinations draw their topics from the mandatory units of the Wildlife and Conservation Management programme:

- ◆ Data Collection and Handling Methods
- ◆ Ecological Surveying
- ◆ Education for Sustainability: Principles and Practice
- ◆ Habitat Management
- ◆ Applied Interpretation
- ◆ Terrestrial Ecology
- ◆ Sustainable Tourism and Rural Communities

The examination consists of questions in five areas related to key aspects of the above units. These areas are: ecological principles, conservation/habitat management, interpretation/education, people management and land use development and impacts.

Each paper is weighted equally. Assessors mark each section of the examination paper taking into account the criteria outlined. The marks are assessed holistically by means of the grade-related criteria table, and assigned using the following grade boundaries.

A = 70%–100%  
B = 60%–69%  
C = 50%–59%