



Higher National Graded Unit specification

General information for centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HND in Horticulture with Plantsmanship. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification. Centres wishing to use another type of Graded Unit or assessment instrument are required to submit proposals detailing the justification for change for validation.

Graded Unit title: Horticulture with Plantsmanship: Graded Unit 3

Graded Unit code: F2D5 35

Type of Graded Unit: Examination

Assessment Instrument: Closed-book Examination

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**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.*

Purpose: This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HND in Horticulture with Plantsmanship:

- ◆ has gained a sound knowledge base of the appropriate sector that is integrated and up-to-date
- ◆ is able to solve problems, undertake analysis, synthesis and evaluation within the confines of existing basic understandings of the sector
- ◆ is able to apply plantsmanship skills in the cultural, economic, management and scientific context
- ◆ has developed knowledge of taxonomy, ecology, distribution, conservation, cultivation and management of plants.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: It is recommended that the candidate should have completed or be in the process of completing all of the Units in the Group Award prior to undertaking this Graded Unit.

Core Skills: There are no Core Skills embedded in this Graded Unit specification.

General Information for centres (cont)

Assessment: This examination-based Graded Unit is a closed-book examination. It will consist of a written examination of three hours.

The examination will be two sections with Section A lasting one hour and Section B lasting two hours. A break between the sections will be allowed, provided that Section B remains unseen until after the break.

Section A will consist of objective type questions. Candidates will be required to attempt all questions in Section A. Section B will consist of six extended response questions of which four should be attempted by candidates.

Administrative Information

Graded Unit Code: F2D5 35

Graded Unit Title: Horticulture with Plantsmanship: Graded Unit 3

Original date of publication: August 2007

Version: 01

History of Changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

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Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates

Graded Unit title: Horticulture with Plantsmanship: Graded Unit 3

Conditions of assessment

The assessment is based on a **closed-book written** examination lasting three hours.

If a candidate does not achieve a pass or if a candidate wishes to upgrade, this must be based on a significantly different examination from that given originally. A candidate's grade will be based on his/her achievement on the new assessment event using a significantly different examination, if this results in a higher grade.

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 examinations must be ensured.

Instructions for designing the assessment task:

The examination should be designed to assess the candidate's critical knowledge and understanding of the topics relating to the specific aims which this Graded Unit is designed to cover. The questions and corresponding marks should be designed in accordance with the ranges indicated in the table that follows. However, the overall total mark for the examination is 100.

The format of the examination should be designed to meet the following requirements:

- ◆ the examination paper should be in two sections.
- ◆ Section A should last one hour and should consist of objective type questions. This section is worth 40 marks.
- ◆ Section B should last two hours and should consist of six extended response questions of which four should be attempted by candidates. Each question should be worth 15 marks.
- ◆ candidates will be required to attempt all questions in Section A and four questions of section B.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Graded Unit title: Horticulture with Plantsmanship: Graded Unit 3

Key topics	Level of demand	Percentage weighting for each topic
Section A		
Plant classification	Explain, describe, justify	10%
Plant ecology and conservation	Explain, describe, justify	10%
Plant health and integrated crop management	Explain, describe, justify	10%
Soil fertility and nutrient availability	Explain, describe, justify	10%
Section B		
Plant classification and systematics	Explain, evaluate, analyse	15%
Plant Collections	Explain, analyse, evaluate	15%
Plant ecology and conservation	Explain, evaluate, apply	15%
Plantsmanship	Explain, evaluate, justify	15%

To ensure a suitably integrated approach, some questions will cover more than one topic. In these cases, precise attribution of marks to a particular topic may not be possible. The weightings above are therefore approximate and should be seen as strong guidelines on the proportion of the total marks which will be allocated to each topic.

The examination will be marked out of 100. Assessors will aggregate the marks achieved by the candidate to arrive at an overall mark for the examination. Assessors will then assign a grade to the candidate for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries:

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

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Graded Unit title: Horticulture with Plantsmanship: Graded Unit 3

Candidates who meet the minimum Evidence Requirements will have their achievement graded as a C (competent), A (highly competent), or B (somewhere between A and C). The grade related criteria to be used to judge candidate performance for this Graded Unit is specified in the following table:

Grade A	Grade C
Is a seamless, coherent piece of work or exam script which consistently:	Is a coordinated piece of work or exam script which:
◆ Interprets and understands the question in a way that demonstrates insight and clear understanding of the issues	◆ Interprets and understands the question in a way that enables the candidate to meet the basic criteria required for topic and level of demand
◆ Gives reasoned explanations, which are always supported by evidence	◆ Gives explanations but does not always provide good supporting evidence
◆ Offers logically structured and coherently expressed responses and consistently uses correct terminology	◆ Responses are factually correct and uses correct terminology, although use is not always consistent
◆ Demonstrates a comprehensive analysis of relevant information, by using underlying principles	◆ Identifies strengths and weaknesses and advantages and disadvantages in any analysis
◆ Demonstrates an understanding of the relationship between a situation and a range of solutions and can justify the choice of one solution over another	◆ Demonstrates an understanding of a situation and is able to offer a justifiable solution
◆ Draws logical conclusions firmly based on evidence presented in answers	◆ Draws conclusions but these may be only partly supported by evidence presented in answers

Support notes

This Unit is designed to sample across a range of the mandatory and optional Units of the HND Horticulture with Plantsmanship award and to assess the candidate's ability to integrate knowledge from these Units. While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours. Skills in answering objective type and extended response questions involving analysis, evaluation and justification should be developed.

Section A will mostly assess factual knowledge. Section B will mostly assess conceptual and procedural knowledge. Questions in Section B particularly should assess the integration of the candidate's knowledge and understanding over two or more Units listed in the *Recommended Prior Knowledge and Skills* section.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

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Section A

This section will consist of objective type questioning. Online assessment is possible for this section. Typically, 40 multiple choice questions (worth one mark each) could be given, each with four possible answers. However, other question types can be selected, for example, candidates could be asked to rank a list of possible answers. The number of questions may therefore vary depending on the anticipated time to complete the answers. This section should not take longer than one hour to complete.

The questions in this section should mainly assess description, explanation and justification of factual knowledge.

Section B

The extended response questions may be divided into several parts and each part given a separate mark. Questions in this section should assess integration and application of knowledge, and focus on evaluation, analysis and justification.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative assessment arrangements. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

General information for candidates

Graded Unit title: Horticulture with Plantsmanship: Graded Unit 3

This Unit is designed to demonstrate that you can integrate, evaluate and apply knowledge from a range of mandatory Units for the award of HND Horticulture with Plantsmanship. The award is designed to develop your knowledge of taxonomy, ecology, distribution, conservation, cultivation and management of plants to enable employment at management/self employment level.

It is recommended that you should have completed or be in the process of completing all of the Units in the Group Award prior to undertaking this Graded Unit.

The examination paper will be in two sections. Candidates will be required to attempt all questions in Section A and four questions of section B.

Section A (1 hour) will consist of objective type questions, for example, multiple choice type questions. This section is worth 40 marks.

Section B (2 hours) will consist of six extended response questions of which four should be attempted by candidates. Each question is worth 15 marks.

The Graded Unit is a compulsory element of the Group Award and will be awarded at the following grades:

Grade A = 70%–100%

Grade B = 60%–69%

Grade C = 50%–59%