



Higher National Unit specification

General information

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: H7BC 34

Superclass: SF

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Version: 01

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed for learners who intend to enter the landscape or amenity sectors of the horticultural industry. It provides learners with knowledge of career routes and opportunities within horticulture and landscaping and encourages them to develop the key skills required for these sectors. Learners will acquire skills to minimum identified levels using professionally accepted techniques and standards. Where learners have prior practical experience instruction will be provided if skills are not to an appropriate standard. Learners with prior experience will be encouraged to expand their knowledge of the range of landscape materials and techniques currently used in the industry.

Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Investigate skill requirements for major horticultural and landscaping sectors.
- 2 Construct a range of landscape features.
- 3 Cultivate and maintain a range of plants in nursery, field or amenity/landscape situations.

Credit points and level

2 Higher National Unit credits at SCQF level 7: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

Recommended entry to the Unit

Learners would benefit from having an appreciation of plants and landscaping materials and their role in enhancing the environment. It would also be beneficial if learners have some work experience but it is not essential. Where learners have had previous practical horticulture or landscape experience the Unit will provide opportunity to reflect on career opportunities, practice new skills and/or develop existing skills.

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for this Unit specification.

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

Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification 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 our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

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.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Learners should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Investigate skill requirements for major horticultural and landscape sectors.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ The role of staff within the main horticulture and landscape sectors
- ◆ Key skill requirements within each sector

Outcome 2

Construct a range of landscape features.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Concrete mixing and laying
- ◆ Constructing free standing features, including:
 - Fencing
 - Walling
 - Dry stone Walling
 - Pergola
 - Plinth or Pillar
- ◆ Laying paving, including:
 - Block
 - Slabs
 - Cobbles
 - Asphalt
- ◆ Health and Safety Requirements
- ◆ Relevant legislation
- ◆ Environmental/Sustainability impacts

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

Outcome 3

Cultivate and maintain a range of plants in nursery, field or amenity/landscape situations.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Plant cultivation techniques
- ◆ Preparation of soil
- ◆ Non-chemical weed control methods
- ◆ Relevant Health and Safety
- ◆ Environmental/Sustainability impacts

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills across all Outcomes by showing that they can:

For Outcome 1:

- ◆ investigate the types of enterprise/organisation in the horticultural and landscape sectors within which they fall.
- ◆ outline the role for horticulture and landscape staff within each enterprise/organisation.
- ◆ identify the major horticultural and landscape skills that would be required to work successfully in each sectors of horticulture and landscape visited.

Evidence for the knowledge in this Outcome may be presented as a report based on visits to horticultural and landscape enterprises/organisations covering the major sectors. Learners will need evidence to show that they can, with reference to particular situations provide an accurate and clear explanation of the aims of enterprises investigated the role of horticulturists and landscapers within the enterprises and the skills required for a horticulturist or landscaper to work effectively within the enterprise. The report should be built up on visits to employers within the main horticulture and landscape sectors, amenity/landscape, production and retail horticulture.

Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

For Outcome 2:

- ◆ mix and lay concrete.
- ◆ construct two of the following free standing hard landscape features:
 - Fencing
 - Walling
 - Dry stone Walling
 - Pergola
 - Plinth or Pillar
 - Other appropriate free standing hard landscape features
- ◆ lay two of the following paving materials:
 - Block
 - Slabs
 - Cobbles
 - Asphalt
 - Other appropriate paving materials
- ◆ comply with all relevant health and safety requirements and other relevant legislation.
- ◆ describe the health and safety requirements.
- ◆ describe the impact on the environment and sustainability.

Assessment may be carried out by practical observation using a checklist during construction for the first three bullet points listed in the Evidence Requirements above. The final two bullet points could be assessed by responses to oral questioning.

For Outcome 3:

- ◆ pot up/on container grown plants.
- ◆ stand down plants.
- ◆ plant out into field.
- ◆ lift field grown plant material.
- ◆ prune a range of plants.
- ◆ prepare soil to establish a range of species.
- ◆ use non-chemical weed control methods.
- ◆ maintain a range of plants.
- ◆ identify the health and safety requirements.
- ◆ identify the impact on the environment.

Assessment may be carried out by practical observation using a checklist during cultivation and maintenance for the first eight bullet points listed in the Evidence Requirements above.

The final two bullet points could be assessed by responses to oral questioning.



Higher National Unit Support Notes

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

Throughout this Unit, a broad range of horticulture/landscape skills to industry standard will be covered. The Unit is primarily intended for learners who are new to horticulture or landscaping, nevertheless it is also applicable to those who have work experience in the industry in which case it will enable new skills to be learnt and new materials to be used in a wider range of situations than previously encountered. Its objective is to identify the breadth of career opportunities available in horticulture/landscaping and related industries and to introduce skills that a learner can develop on future employment.

Outcome 1 looks at who employs horticulturists and landscapers, identifies career prospects and the practical skills which employers would seek from an employee. Essentially it puts the subjects to be taught into context within the Group Award and encourages learners to develop a skills profile.

In **Outcome 2**, learners should receive instruction in construction techniques. The nature of landscaping does not allow all techniques to be practised but learners should be instructed in those most commonly required by industry:

- ◆ Concrete mixing (both by hand and machine) and laying. If time and resources allow it is useful for the student to also gain the experience of bulk ready mix concrete delivery and laying, including associated slump testing and aftercare including polishing.

- ◆ Constructing free standing features, including:
 - Fencing
 - Walling
 - Dry stone Walling
 - Pergola
 - Plinth or Pillar
 - Other free standing hard landscape features as appropriate (by agreement with tutor)

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

- ◆ Laying paving/surfaces, including:
 - Block
 - Slabs
 - Cobbles
 - Asphalt
 - Other paving materials as appropriate (by agreement with tutor)

Within the time constraints of the Unit learners should be exposed to as wide a range of construction techniques as possible. The bullet points above should be seen as a minimum, other techniques taught or demonstrated might include; decking, recirculating water feature or raised pond construction, surface drainage channel installation, etc.

Learners with experience in construction should be encouraged to learn techniques with which they are unfamiliar or to work with materials with which they have not previously worked. However, the assessment for the Outcome must be the same for all learners, so that they all have minimum construction skills once the Unit is completed.

In **Outcome 3** learners should work as near to commercial conditions as possible. Instruction should be given in hand potting technique for a range of plant material (in terms of bare root or containerised, size and plant types) to give learners experience in adapting their potting technique accordingly and requiring to be stood down in a variety of growing environments.

Learners should be instructed in planting techniques appropriate for plants of various sizes. This may involve working individually, in pairs or in groups. It should be ensured that each learner completes each element of a practical task. Row planting, beds or square designs could be used but the learners will be instructed on the planting design and how to set up the lines for planting. Learners could prepare the ground for planting which would be relevant to assessments in Outcome 3 but this is not a requirement of the assessment and if a large number of plants have to be planted then soil preparation should be prepared by machine.

Learners should be instructed when to lift field grown material bare-root and when it should be root-balled. They should gain experience in both types of lifting. Methods of preventing root desiccation should be shown for moving plants from the field. Subsequent storage may be in outdoor temporary planting, ambient temperature stores, or cold stores.

Some background knowledge should be given on the purpose of formative and routine pruning and the plant specifications aimed at by pruning explained. It is also important to show learners the different aims of pruning for plant production and pruning in an amenity or landscape situation. Pruning practice will be given for a range of plants at different growth stages. It is suggested that trees and shrubs are included and as well as giving instruction on the growing stock, stock beds for propagation material could also be included. Support and tying-in of plants should also be practised on a range of plant material from glasshouse crops to trees and shrubs.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

Learners will gain experience in skills related to planting and maintaining an amenity or landscape area. Learners may gain experience by planting and maintaining a single amenity area or a range of amenity sites. Learners will gain most benefit if they can work with as wide a range of plant material as possible. Skills in digging, forking and raking will be covered when learners prepare an area for the establishment of a range of plants. This may incorporate the sowing of seed for a lawn or hardy annual display but should also include planting more mature plant material. This could be followed by the use of mulches and hoeing to control weed growth, alternatively separate sites could be used for the different tasks.

Pruning practice should be gained on a range of planting situations, for example hedges, shrub borders, rose beds, trees — using secateurs and/or shears as appropriate.

The learners should practice supporting and tying-in wall shrubs and/or climbers and the deadheading of annual flowers or roses.

Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

Delivery should place emphasis on the practical aspects of landscaping with learners going on a series of planned visits throughout the course to various work places to find out about employment opportunities and the skills that a future employer would be looking for in an employee in the landscaping industry. Learners should be encouraged to identify Core Skills in soft landscaping, hard landscaping, management, mechanisation and other related areas.

The key to teaching the practical aspects of this Unit will be in developing the major skills that can then be used in a wider range of contexts. For example, in the laying of concrete trowel skills should be included, these skills could then be applied by the learner to other construction methods. Similarly, with pruning it will be important for learners to learn precision pruning, for example pruning tree branches to a bud, but more general pruning, for example hedges or deciduous shrubs prior to potting should also be learnt. This will ensure that the Unit remains a manageable size and that learners have a useful range of skills to develop on completion of the Unit.

Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

Outcome 1

This Outcome could be assessed by the learner producing a report based on visits to landscaping enterprises/organisations covering the major sectors. Learners will need evidence to show that they can, with reference to particular situations provide an accurate and clear explanation of the aims of the enterprises investigated, the role of landscapers or horticulturists within the enterprises and the skills required for a landscaper/horticulturist to work effectively within the enterprise. The report could be built up on visits to employers within the main landscape/horticulture sectors.

Outcome 2

Evidence for the knowledge and skills in this Outcome could be generated by a practical assessment. Each learner will need evidence to show that they can:

- ◆ Mix and lay concrete, this should be done both by hand and by cement mixer.
- ◆ Construct two of the following free standing hard landscape features:
 - Fencing should be decorative not agricultural unless this is a secondary example
 - Walling may be brick, block, stone, etc
 - Dry stone Walling
 - Pergola,
 - Plinth or Pillar
 - Other appropriate free standing hard landscape features

All of the above construction should include ground works and the installation of relevant footings and foundation.

- ◆ Lay two of the following paving materials:
 - Block
 - Slabs
 - Cobbles
 - Asphalt
 - Other appropriate paving materials

The size of the area laid for any of the above should be that of a reasonably sized patio or pathway.

All of the above construction should include ground works and the installation of relevant footings and foundation.

It may be useful to complete one landscape/garden building project that encompasses all of the above points chosen for Outcome 2.

Assessment could be carried out by practical observation using a checklist during construction for the first three bullet points listed in the Evidence Requirements above. The final two bullet points could be assessed by responses to oral questioning.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

Outcome 3

Evidence for the knowledge and skills in this Outcome could be generated by a practical assessment. Each learner will need evidence to show that she/he can:

- ◆ pot on/up plants by hand, these may be propagules, bare-root plants or container grown plants. The learner will show that s/he can grade, prepare and correctly pot plants. Grading and preparation requirements for the specific plants will be given to the learner as will the size of pot to be used.
- ◆ prepare the standing area, either outdoors or under protection, prior to standing down the potted plants. Stand down plants at the required spacing and label batches of plants correctly.
- ◆ set out a line on an area previously prepared for planting. Select the appropriate method of planting for the plant material provided. This may be seedlings, rooted propagules or more mature plants needing transplanted for growing on. The plants will be correctly planted, using a suitable planting technique for the plant material provided, to the required spacing within and between rows.
- ◆ lift field grown plants and store appropriately prior to re-planting or despatch. The learner will either lift plants bare root or root-ball as appropriate. The learner will lift leaving an appropriate size of root system or root-ball for the species being lifted, prevent unnecessary damage to roots, stem and branches. The lifted plants will be stored either outdoors or under protection in an appropriate manner to prevent damage to the plant.
- ◆ correctly prune a selection of plants. This may include shrubs, trees or hedges. The learner will be given plants with which s/he has previous experience and prune appropriately to provide the structure that will produce a given specification.
- ◆ prepare an area of ground for either sowing or planting. Cultivation and soil preparation will be carried out using hand tools to a standard suitable for the planting purpose. The site may be for a new planting scheme or an area to be replanted, for example a herbaceous border.
- ◆ a new or established planted area will be maintained weed free either by applying a mulch or hand weeding using a hoe. Mulch will be provided but the learner must apply this to the correct depth. The use of the hoe must remove weed seedlings correctly without damaging planted material. Plants will be maintained according to the requirements of the plants. Maintenance could include: Irrigation of a container-grown crop where learners will assess water requirements and apply water by a suitable means; Support plants (and tie in if appropriate), using canes or other appropriate systems. These may be outdoors or in a glasshouse and could include climbing plants, trees or other suitable plant material; Deadhead flowering plants as appropriate on an amenity site. These may be outdoors or in a glasshouse and could include annuals, woody plants or houseplants.
- ◆ identify the health and safety requirements.
- ◆ identify the impact on the environment.

The assessments should be practical using a checklist to ensure that all aspects of the practical are correctly undertaken.

Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

Opportunities 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 learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment.

Due to the practical nature of this Unit it is not well suited to e-assessment.

Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

The visits to employers in Outcome 1 expose the learner to a number of different working environments and should broaden their understanding of enterprise and sustainable development. Citizenships and employability skills are built on during these visits via direct contact with the employer to gain necessary information.

The practical tasks in Outcomes 2 are likely to involve the learner in group work especially if the opportunity is taken to encompass the whole Unit in one garden/landscape construction project, this would provide a fairly complex activity. The Core Skill of *Working with Others* at SCQF level 6 could therefore be developed. *Working with Others* involves the ability to plan, agree and take responsibility for tasks; to support co-operative working in appropriate ways; and to review the effectiveness of one's contribution. This Core Skill could be developed without formal certification.

Practical soft landscaping work may be completed off site, for example in a community type garden where there are other opportunities for developing citizenship skills, alternatively soft landscaping may be undertaken as work experience in a commercial setting such as a nursery or in a local authority park, thereby developing employability skills.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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General information for learners

Unit title: Practical Landscaping (SCQF level 7)

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

This Unit provides you with knowledge of career routes and opportunities within horticulture and landscaping. This Unit is designed to enable you to identify and apply the main skills required in the horticulture and landscaping employment sectors and in particular to develop practical craft skills. You will begin to develop the key skills required for these sectors and acquire skills to minimum identified levels using professionally accepted techniques and standards.

On completion of this Unit you will be able to:

- 1 Investigate skill requirements for major horticultural and landscape sectors.
- 2 Construct a range of landscape features.
- 3 Cultivate a range of plants in amenity/landscape situations.

You will likely be assessed in this Unit by means of a report or assignment for Outcome 1 and by observation of practical tasks for Outcomes 2 and 3.