



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Horticultural Skills (SCQF level 5)

CODE F6AV 11

SUMMARY

The Unit is designed to provide the candidate with a range of practical skills in horticulture and to provide the knowledge and understanding which underpins these horticultural practices. Candidates will have an opportunity to carry out a range of garden maintenance tasks, plant propagation practices and turf maintenance operations.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Describe and carry out a range of horticultural garden maintenance tasks.
- 2 Describe and carry out a range of plant propagation practices
- 3 Describe and carry out a range of turf maintenance operations.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, it would be beneficial if candidates had previous experience and knowledge of the horticultural sector. This may be evidenced by possession of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Rural Skills (SCQF level 4) or component Units of this award such as *Crop Production: An Introduction* (SCQF level 4) and *Soft Landscaping: An Introduction* (SCQF level 4)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at SCQF level 5 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*).

**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.*

Administrative Information

Superclass: SA

Publication date: May 2009

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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CORE SKILLS

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

The Unit provides opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the following Core Skills:

- ◆ *Communication* (SCQF level 5)
- ◆ *Working with Others* (SCQF level 5)
- ◆ *Problem Solving* (SCQF level 5)

These opportunities are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Horticultural Skills (SCQF level 5)

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.

OUTCOME 1

Describe and carry out a range of horticultural garden maintenance tasks.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Describe the tools and equipment required to carry out a range of garden maintenance tasks.
- (b) Describe a range of garden maintenance operations in terms of timing, safety requirements and environmental conditions.
- (c) Carry out a range of horticultural garden maintenance tasks.

OUTCOME 2

Describe and carry out a range of plant propagation techniques.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Describe the main types of propagation.
- (b) Identify appropriate propagation methods for a range of plants.
- (c) Carry out a range of plant propagation practices.

OUTCOME 3

Describe and carry out a range of turf maintenance operations.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Describe the tools required to carry out a range of turf maintenance tasks.
- (b) Describe a range of turf maintenance operations in terms of timing, safety requirements and environmental conditions.
- (c) Carry out a range of turf maintenance tasks.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Horticultural Skills (SCQF level 5)

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Performance evidence supported by assessor observation checklists together with written and/or oral evidence is required to demonstrate that all Outcomes and Performance Criteria have been achieved. Evidence will be collected at appropriate points throughout the Unit under supervised closed-book conditions.

In relation to Outcome 1: performance evidence should be supported by an observation checklist which demonstrates that the candidate has carried out a minimum of four horticultural garden maintenance tasks. These maintenance tasks should include pruning, weeding, mulching and dead heading.

Written and/or oral evidence should include: For each garden maintenance task chosen

- 1 A description of the tools required to carry out each task.
- 2 The time of year the task is normally carried out.
- 3 The safety requirements for carrying out each of the tasks.
- 4 The environmental requirements for each garden maintenance task chosen. For example soil conditions or weather conditions.

In relation to Outcome 2: performance evidence should be supported by an observation checklist which demonstrates that the candidate has carried out a minimum of four types of propagation. These types of propagation will include seed sowing and 3 vegetative propagation methods.

Written and/or oral evidence will include a description of the main types of propagation used in horticulture and the identification of the method of propagation used for a minimum of six plants.

In relation to Outcome 3: performance evidence will be supported by an observation checklist which demonstrates that the candidate has carried out a minimum of four turf maintenance tasks. These maintenance tasks will include scarifying, edging, aerating and top dressing.

Written and/or oral evidence should include; for each turf maintenance task chosen:

- 1 A description of the tools required to carry out each of the tasks
- 2 The time of year each task is normally carried out
- 3 The safety requirements for carrying out each task soil conditions.

The Assessment Support Pack for this Unit provides sample assessment material. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the Assessment Support Pack to ensure a comparable standard.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Horticultural Skills (SCQF level 5)

This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This is an optional Unit in the NPA Rural Skills at SCQF level 5 but can also be taken as a stand alone Unit.

It is important that the practical aspects of the learning takes place involving horticultural skills in either a work setting or simulated work setting. Partnerships with Land-based colleges, training providers or employers are likely to provide the most appropriate settings.

It is important that the deployment of appropriate learning environments is preceded by a valid risk assessment, particularly identifying any protective personal equipment which the candidate may require.

A range of suitable topics and themes is shown below.

Outcome 1: A range of horticultural garden maintenance tasks may be covered depending on the season and situation. For the main tasks of pruning, mulching, weeding and dead-heading the tools required should include secateurs (by-pass and anvil), hoe and rake. The correct time of year and the soil requirements when undertaking each task should also be discussed. Note that weeding should be restricted to non-chemical means, ie hoeing or hand weeding. For mulching a range of materials may be used including bark or other organic alternatives.

Outcome 2: Seed sowing and 3 vegetative propagation techniques should be covered. The vegetative methods chosen would depend on the time of year and the species available but could include leaf cutting, hardwood cutting, softwood cutting, leaf bud cutting or propagation by plantlets. The use of a specialist propagation Unit or mist Unit would be advised where appropriate. The candidate should be aware of how to handle large and small seeds, how to water correctly and how to identify when plants are ready to be moved on. Seed trays, a range of composts and other equipment will be required. Candidates should be able to identify the propagation methods for some common plants for example Pelargonium, Chlorophytum or Begonia rex.

Outcome 3: A range of turf maintenance tasks may be covered depending on the season and situation. For the main tasks of scarifying, edging, aerating and top dressing the tools required should include lawn rake, edging shears, half-moon edger, fork/spiker, dragmat/brush. The correct time of year and the soil requirements for undertaking each task should also be discussed.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Horticultural Skills (SCQF level 5)

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The practical aspects of this Unit should take place in a realistic and appropriate environment or a simulated work setting using live plant material. For all practical tasks a risk assessment should be carried out and particular attention should be paid to the PPE required by the candidates for each task. The importance of Health and Safety should be emphasised at every opportunity.

Group discussions and team working activities will play an important part in the delivery of the Unit and provides an opportunity for candidates to develop their communication and working with others skills.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

This Unit could provide opportunities for the development of *Communication* and *Working with Others* at SCQF level 5 during the learning and teaching activities throughout the Unit. Candidates will also have an opportunity to develop *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 5 during the practical activities required for all of the Outcomes.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcomes 1–4

Appropriate instruments of assessment for all of the Outcomes would be a series of practical exercises together with restricted response questions.

Opportunities for the use of 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 e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

DISABLED CANDIDATES AND/OR THOSE WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website

www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements