



## **Group Award Specification for:**

**National Progression Award (NPA) in Horticulture at  
SCQF level 4**

**Group Award Code: (GL2C 44)**

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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 HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities

An increasing number of schools are providing their pupils with the opportunity to develop practical skills in horticulture, working on school grounds, with local colleges and within their local communities. SQA has a range of provision for the horticulture sector but there is a gap for an introductory qualification primarily for use by the school sector. The National Progression Award (NPA) in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 is intended to provide a route to formally recognise the work that is already taking place and to provide a structure to any schools who may be interested in offering something in this area.

While primarily intended for use within Schools, the NPA is suitable for anyone who wishes a broad practical introduction to horticulture and could be offered by colleges and training providers.

The success of programmes such as the Skills for Work Rural Skills award (also at SCQF level 4) has demonstrated the value of practical skills development in a schools context and it is hoped that the NPA Horticulture will benefit from the lessons learned in developing and implementing the Skills for Work and other similar awards.

The NPA Horticulture, given its relatively small size and low level, is not intended to produce employment ready individuals but rather to provide an opportunity to develop some practical skills (and the knowledge that underpins them) and to serve as an introduction to the sector. Learners could progress to a range of qualifications including the National Certificate (NC) in Horticulture at SCQF level 5 and ultimately to the suite of Higher National Certificates and Diplomas in Horticulture and related subjects.

Please see Section 6.2.1 for an overview of the related qualifications that this new award could articulate with and provide progression opportunities to.

## 2 Qualification structure

### 2.1 Structure

NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 (18 SCQF Credit Points at SCQF level 4)

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SQA credit
<b>Mandatory Units — two Units (12 SCQF credit points) required</b>					
H1X4	10	Allotment Gardening	4	6	1
H1YK	10	Plant Propagation	4	6	1
<b>Optional Units — one Unit (6 SCQF credit points) required</b>					
H1XB	10	Soft Landscaping	4	6	1
H09F	10	Soft Landscaping: Introduction to Plant Groups, Selection and Use	4	6	1
H1X6	10	Horticultural Composting	4	6	1
H1YJ	10	Plant Identification	4	6	1
H1X9	10	Plant Health	4	6	1
H1X8	10	Organic Gardening: Edible Crops	4	6	1

## 3 Aims of the qualification

The aim of the NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 is to provide a broad practical introduction to Horticulture.

### 3.1 General aims of the qualification

- ◆ To develop the underpinning knowledge that provides context to practical skills
- ◆ To develop Core and Essential Skills.
- ◆ To provide a route to formal recognition of the work taking place in schools and communities.
- ◆ To provide a progression route to other related qualifications.
- ◆ To provide an introduction to the knowledge and skills required within the horticulture industry.

### 3.2 Specific aims of the qualification(s)

- To develop a range of practical horticulture skills.
- To develop the knowledge and skills required to establish and maintain a range of plants.
- To develop the knowledge and skills required to grow a range of fruits and vegetables.
- To develop the knowledge and skills required to propagate plants using a range of methods.
- To develop the knowledge and skills required to work safely in a horticultural context.
- To develop a basic understanding of how plants develop and grow.
- To develop the knowledge and skills required to identify a range of plants.
- To develop the skills required to safely use a range of basic horticultural tools.

## 4 Recommended entry to the qualification

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.

The NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 is intended as an introductory level qualification and as such there are no recommended entry requirements. An interest in horticulture would be an obvious benefit for learners. Centres may wish to consider interviewing prospective learners to ensure they are likely to commit to the qualification prior to commencing.

### 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 should be used to identify if additional learning support needs to 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.

<b>Core Skill</b>	<b>Recommended SCQF entry profile</b>	<b>Associated assessment activities</b>
Communication	SCQF level 3	Written/recorded oral assignments, presentations, interpretation of work instructions
Numeracy	SCQF level 3	Calculations of areas, quantities and costs
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	SCQF level 3	Producing assignments and simple designs
Problem Solving	SCQF level 3	Adjusting to growing, environmental and weather conditions
Working with Others	SCQF level 3	Contributing to 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 the more generic skills, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

## 5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to Units

Code	Unit Title	Specific Aims							
		a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
H1X4 10	Allotment Gardening	X	X	X		X			X
H1YK 10	Plant Propagation	X		X	X	X	X		X
H1XB 10	Soft Landscaping	X	X			X			X
H09F 10	Soft Landscaping: Introduction to Plant Groups, Selection and Use	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
H1X6 10	Horticultural Composting	X				X			X
H1YJ 10	Plant Identification	X				X		X	
H1X9 10	Plant Health	X	X			X	X		X
H1X8 10	Organic Gardening: Edible Crops	X	X	X	X	X	X		X

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

The mapping detailed below is designed to highlight broad similarities of content between the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and the SQA Units. In the context in which the NPA is likely to be delivered (within a School or as part of School/College partnership) it is unlikely that learners will be able to demonstrate the full occupational competence detailed in the NOS, they may however start to develop some of the underpinning knowledge required. The mapping also highlights the vocational importance of the subjects covered.

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standard								
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
H1X4 10	Allotment Gardening	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
H1YK 10	Plant Propagation	X				X	X			X
H1XB 10	Soft Landscaping	X	X	X	X				X	X
H09F 10	Soft Landscaping: Introduction to Plant Groups, Selection and Use	X	X	X	X				X	
H1X6 10	Horticultural Composting	X			X					X
H1YJ 10	Plant Identification	X	X						X	
H1X9 10	Plant Health	X	X	X					X	
H1X8 10	Organic Gardening: Edible Crops	X	X	X				X	X	

### National Occupational Standards (NOS):

- A: Maintain Safe and Effective Working Practices (LANCU1)
- B: Assist with Planting and Establishing Crops (LANCU61)
- C: Assist with Maintaining Plants (LANCU62)
- D: Assist with the Maintenance of Equipment (LANCU17)
- E: Assist with the Vegetative Propagation of Plants (LANCU63)
- F: Assist with the Propagation of Plants from Seed (LANCU64)
- G: Assist with Harvesting, Collecting and Preparing Crops (LANCU65)
- H: Assist with Identifying the Presence of, and Controlling, Common Pests and Diseases (LANCU70)
- I: Assist with the Preparation of Growing Media (LANCU71)

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

Unit code	Unit title	Communication		Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
H1X410	Allotment Gardening	X	X					X	X		X	
H1YK10	Plant Propagation	X	X				X	SCQF level 3*	X		X	
H1XB10	Soft Landscaping	X	X					X	X		X	
H09F10	Soft Landscaping: Introduction to Plant Groups, Selection and Use	X	X	X	X			SCQF level 4*	SCQF level 4*		X	
H1X610	Horticultural Composting	X	X					X	X		X	
H1YJ10	Plant Identification	X	X			X		X				
H1X910	Plant Health	X	X					X	X		X	
H1X810	Organic Gardening: Edible Crops	X	X				X	X	X		X	

**\*Core Skill Element Embedded**

## 5.4 Assessment Strategy for the qualification

Unit	Assessment				
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
Allotment Gardening	Open-book test	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist
Plant Propagation	Portfolio	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist		
Soft Landscaping	Identification exercise	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	
Soft Landscaping: Introduction to Plant Groups, Selection and Use	Written/recorded oral investigation	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	
Horticultural Composting	Identification exercise	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist		
Plant Identification	Identification exercise	Identification exercise			
Plant Health	Identification exercise	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist			
Organic Gardening: Edible Crops	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist	Performance Evidence/Observation Checklist		

## 6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

### 6.1 Sequencing/integration of Units

There is no prescribed sequence of delivery of the Units however, given the practical nature of the majority of the Units, centres will need to plan delivery and assessment carefully to reflect the seasonal nature of horticulture. If the NPA is delivered over the course of a normal academic year there will not be an opportunity to take learners through an entire growing season so centres will need to bear this in mind when planning assessments.

Each Unit included in the NPA can be delivered as a 'stand-alone' Unit, however if delivered as part of the NPA then every effort should be taken to integrate the delivery and assessment of the various Units. This will help learners to relate the content of specific Units to the wider aims of the Group Award and help reduce the assessment burden on learners and centres alike.

### 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.

As the NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 is primarily intended for use in schools and has been designed as an introductory qualification it is unlikely that Recognition of Prior Learning will be an issue.

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) 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

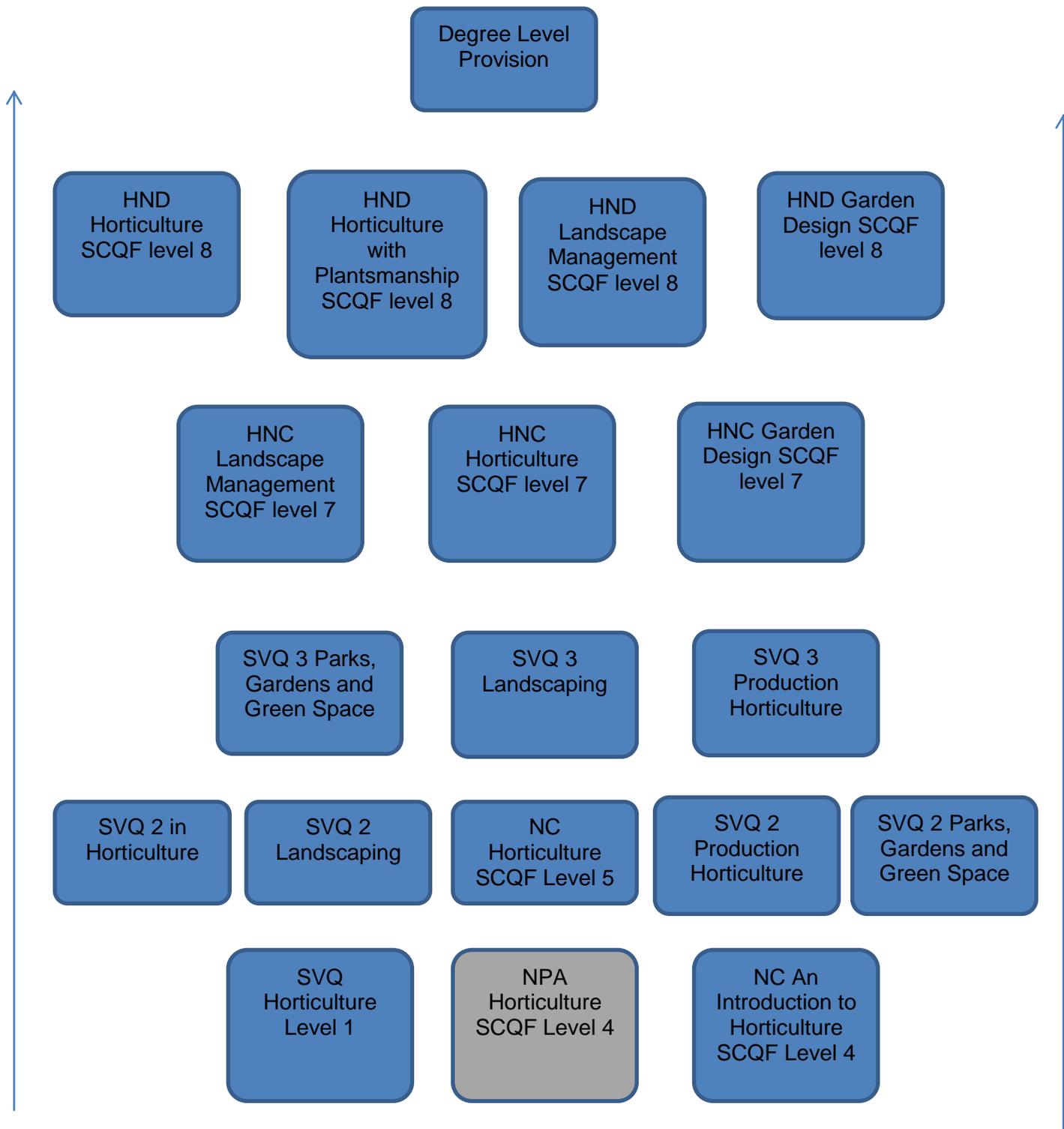
The NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 is designed as an introductory qualification

There are opportunities to progress from the NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 to other Horticultural and related area qualifications.

All of the Units included in the NPA Horticulture at SCQF level 4 are also included within the National Certificate (NC) in An Introduction to Horticulture also at SCQF level 4. Learners who had successfully completed the NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 would have also achieved a quarter of the credits required for the NC. While both awards are at the same SCQF level the 72 SCQF Credit Point NC allows for a wider range of knowledge and skills to be developed.

Progression from the NPA at level 4 to the NC in Horticulture at SCQF level 5 would also be possible, with the SCQF level 5 NC being a recognised route in to the suite of SCQF level 7 and level 8 Higher National Certificates and Diplomas.

The table below illustrates where the NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 sits in relation to other provision for the sector.



## 6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

The NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 has been designed to be a practically based qualification and as such opportunities for e-assessment will be limited. There may, however, still be opportunities to use e-assessment for aspects of some Units. For example much of Unit H1YJ 10 *Plant Identification* could be assessed using high quality images of plants for the identification exercise. Centres may also wish to consider the use of an e-portfolio to gather candidates' evidence across the Group Award. The e-portfolio could consist of video and photographic evidence, copies of observation checklists, written responses, plans and drawings and copies of presentations. Effective use of an e-portfolio can help identify opportunities to integrate assessments and identify evidence that could apply across Outcomes and Units. Further guidance on e-assessment is provided in the individual Unit Specifications.

## 6.4 Support materials

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

## 6.5 Resource requirements

The NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 has been designed to allow delivery and assessment by non-experts. A geography or biology teacher or indeed any keen and experienced gardener should possess the expertise required to make valid assessment decision against the Evidence Requirements.

The following tools, equipment and materials would be beneficial. The list is not exhaustive and the resources required will depend to a degree on the Optional Unit/s selected.

Resource	Quantity
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to include a minimum of protective footwear and gloves	One set per learner
Hand tools to include forks, spades, rakes, hand trowels and secateurs.	Sufficient for group size
Propagation materials to include a selection of seed trays, pots, dibbers, presser boards and watering cans.	Sufficient for group size
Access to areas for planting and maintenance.	Sufficient for group size
Selection of appropriate growing media for both seeds, cuttings and potting.	Sufficient for group size
Range of appropriate plant material including seeds for sowing, plants for planting and as parent plants for propagation.	Sufficient for group size
Resources for research (plant information, pests and diseases) either books or internet access.	Sufficient for group size
Protected facilities for the growing on of materials, eg glasshouse	Minimum of one

## 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 this/these qualification(s) 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/GuideToAssessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment)).

## 8 Glossary of terms

**Embedded Core Skills:** is where 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)

**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 Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

**SCQF levels:** The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National 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:** Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

**Signposted Core Skills:** refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

## 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's APS Navigator to confirm they are using the up to date qualification structure.

Version Number	Description	Date

## Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of this qualification.

## 9 General information for learners

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

The NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 has been designed to give you the skills required to carry out a range of basic gardening tasks. You will have the opportunity to grow a range of fruit and vegetables and to produce plants from seeds and cuttings. There will also be opportunities for you to develop your knowledge and skills of other areas such as soft landscaping, plant health, plant identification or organic gardening.

The NPA in Horticulture at SCQF level 4 is a practical qualification so you will have the opportunity to develop, practice and demonstrate a range of skills. You will also develop an understanding of the principles that underpin the practical skills and so you will be assessed by a mixture of practical and theory assessments.

In addition to the Horticulture skills you will develop throughout the qualification there will also be opportunities for you to develop Core Skills. There will be plenty of opportunities to develop the Core Skill of *Problem Solving* throughout and possibly opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication* and *Working with Others*.

On completion of this award you may be able to progress on to the National Certificate in An Introduction to Horticulture, which is also at SCQF level 4 and would give you the opportunity to broaden your knowledge and skills. You could also progress to the National Certificate in Horticulture at SCQF level 5, which in turn can lead on to the suite of Higher National Certificates and Diplomas at SCQF levels 7 and 8.