



Arrangements for:
**HNC Countryside and Environmental
Management (G91K 15)**
**HND Countryside Management
(G91L 16)**

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Acknowledgement

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of Higher National qualifications.

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1 Introduction

This is the Arrangement Document for the revised HNC Countryside and Environmental Management and HND Countryside Management, both of which were validated in August 2008. This document includes background information on the development of the Group Awards, their aims, guidance on access, details of the Group Award structures, and guidance on delivery.

HNC and HNDs for Countryside Management have traditionally been offered by the land-based colleges within Scotland and are designed to articulate with degree provision at the Scottish Agricultural College.

The HNC Countryside Management was first established in 1990 and was designed to meet the needs of the sector for trained *and* qualified employees. In 1993 a second year was added to create an HND Countryside Management and this was eventually upgraded to a degree (a BSc (Hons) validated by the University of Glasgow) in 1997. During this time a number of FE Colleges have offered either the HNC or the HND Countryside Management.

Although candidates have come from a variety of backgrounds, Countryside Management has proved to be particularly popular with mature candidates. In some cases these are candidates seeking a career change, while others are taking their first steps into further and higher education. These candidates come with a range of experiences which they can share with their peers and most come with a high level of enthusiasm.

HNC/HND Environment and Rural Resource Management

Unlike the Countryside Management course this suite of courses is only offered by SAC. The three courses were introduced over a number of years and their delivery at the three campuses has changed with time as illustrated below.

Date of introduction of environment courses

| SAC Campus | Rural Resource Management (G7FP 16) | | Environmental Protection (G7FR 16) | | Sustainable Environmental Management (G7FT 16) | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|-----------|--|-----------|
| | HNC | HND | HNC | HND | HNC | HND |
| Aberdeen | | | | | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 |
| Ayr | | | 1994/1995 | 1996/1997 | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 |
| Edinburgh | 1995/1996 | 1996/1997 | 1998/1999 | 1999/2000 | 2006/2007 | 2007/2008 |

All three of the courses progress to degree level (BSc) with Aberdeen offering the Sustainable Environmental Management course, Ayr offering SEM and Environmental Protection and Edinburgh offering all three courses.

HNC Countryside and Environmental Management

The introduction of the new design principles for the Higher National Modernisation Programme provided an opportunity to update the content in line with current practice and legislative requirements. It was decided that a number of related HNCs should be brought together at the same time to create a common HNC in Countryside and Environmental Management. This has optional Units within it which allows a degree of specialisation without tying candidates into a particular strand in the first year. Having achieved the HNC they will be able to choose either to progress to the HND Countryside Management or to opt for one of the related environmental HNDs which are offered by SAC.

This revised HNC Countryside and Environmental Management (G91K 15) replaces the predecessor HNC Countryside Management (G7F3 15).

This revised HND Countryside Management (G91L 16) replaces the predecessor HND (G7F4 16).

2 Rationale for the development of the Group Award

2.1 Consultation

It is advisable that the links between the various teaching teams and the countryside management industry are strong and that many of the staff involved in delivering the course have worked in the sector. In addition, current practitioners may be employed as seasonal lecturers as this helps to maintain a close relationship between the demands of the industry and the course content and ethos.

To ensure that the revised awards were fit for purpose, extensive consultation was carried out. This consultation involved:

- ◆ colleges and other centres offering the current HN awards
- ◆ employers and staff in the countryside management sector
- ◆ candidates undertaking the existing awards
- ◆ external examiners

The consultations confirmed the demand for the revised HNC and HND and their relevance and attractiveness to the countryside management sector. Extensive use was also made of the Sector Skills Council, Lantra, Skills Survey published as *Sector Skills Agreement Stages 1-3 Report; Environmental Conservation Industry* (Lantra National Training Organisation Ltd, Kenilworth, Warwickshire), *Environmental Conservation: National Occupational Standards and Qualifications Structures for NVQ/SVQ Levels 2 and 3r* (Lantra SSC, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, 2005), *Industry Specific Action Plan — Environmental Conservation 2003-2004* (Lantra National Training Organisation Ltd, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, 2000) and *An investigation of ways forward for the co-ordination of training and continuing professional development linked to participation in the environment sector* (Gibson, I.).

2.2 Links to SVQ/NVQs

The HN Countryside Management awards also contain the underpinning knowledge and understanding for some components of Scottish/National Vocational Qualifications (SVQ/NVQs) at levels 3 and 4. If candidates gaining the HNC and HND wish to undertake SVQs in the workplace then some of the underpinning knowledge and skills for some elements of the SVQs will have been covered in the HN awards, although they are not likely to be certificated. Links between these awards and National Occupational Standards can be found in Appendix 2.

2.3 Links to Professional Body Qualifications

There are no formal links with professional bodies although consultation took place with the Scottish Countryside Rangers Association and the Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management.

3 Aims of the Group Award

3.1 HNC in Countryside and Environmental Management

3.1.1 General aims of the HNC

- 1 Develop positive communicators who have a broad, balanced and practical understanding of sustainability, ecological/conservation principles, people and the interface between them.
- 2 Produce graduates who have a good understanding of the management of the countryside and the issues which are associated with it.
- 3 Contribute to the growing demand by employers for personnel with the appropriate knowledge and skills required to meet new challenges in countryside management.
- 4 Provide a programme of study with flexible entry and a range of exit points from higher national diploma to honours degree.
- 5 Provide a candidate-centred learning environment that will stimulate candidates to reach their full intellectual potential and develop scientific skill, independence of thought and an enquiring mind.

3.1.2 Specific aims of the HNC

- 6 Provide candidates with a good understanding of different land uses and their role in the countryside.
- 7 Investigate factors which have influenced the development of current land use.
- 8 Introduce candidates to the policies and issues which will influence countryside and environmental management in the future.
- 9 Introduce candidates to the concept of sustainable land management through a greater awareness of their environment.
- 10 Develop basic ecological and environmental knowledge.
- 11 Develop Core Skills.
- 12 Enable candidates to exercise initiative in carrying out defined activities at a professional level.
- 13 Supervise others in less familiar areas of work.
- 14 Work with others in support of current professional practice under guidance.

3.2 HND in Countryside Management

3.2.1 General aim of the HND Countryside Management

- 15 provide individuals with generic and specific knowledge and understanding, competencies, skills and abilities countryside management to make them employable at the management level of the industries or to pursue an independent career.

3.2.2 Specific aims of the HND

- 16 Provide an introduction to the practical management of informal recreation and biodiversity in the countryside.
- 17 Further develop ecological and environmental knowledge.
- 18 Further develop Core Skills including data handling.
- 19 Enable candidates to exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level.
- 20 Take significant managerial or supervisory responsibility for the work of others in defined areas of work.
- 21 Deal with ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes or practices under guidance.

3.3 Target groups

Entry to both Group Awards is open to all suitably qualified applicants but the experience of a number of deliverers of predecessor Group Awards is that the majority of applicants were mature candidates either upskilling or seeking a career change. This meant that in the main, previous candidates tended to have significant experience prior to undertaking the Group Awards. It is expected that this trend would continue with the revised Group Awards.

However, while experience in a relevant field may be an advantage, the lack of it should not be a barrier to entry to either Group Award.

3.4 Employment opportunities

Candidates leaving with the HNC may have a number of career opportunities open to them including:

- ◆ Countryside ranger
- ◆ Trainer
- ◆ Footpath worker
- ◆ Forestry worker
- ◆ Campaigner
- ◆ Field officer

Candidates leaving with the HND may have a number of career opportunities open to them including:

- ◆ Countryside ranger
- ◆ Footpath/Access officer
- ◆ Project officer
- ◆ Environmental education officer
- ◆ Nature tourist guide
- ◆ Biodiversity project officer

4 Access to the Group Awards

Access to the Group Awards is at the discretion of the delivering centre. Applicants should possess an appropriate level of Numeracy and Communication Skills prior to commencing the awards, with SCQF level 5 recommended. The capacity and determination to succeed will also be required. Formal qualifications, appropriate work experience, or both may evidence this. No prior knowledge of countryside or environmental management will be essential for entry, but relevant prior experience or qualifications would obviously be of benefit.

As with all SQA qualifications, open access is encouraged and the following recommendations are for guidance only. Suitable formal qualifications such as SQA National Qualifications (or equivalent) are specified below.

- ◆ two Higher level passes at SCQF level 6 together with three Standard Grade passes at SCQF level 4 and evidence of the Core Skills of *Information Technology and Communication* at SCQF level 5
- ◆ an appropriate group of National Units at SCQF level 5/6. These might include, for example, *Trees in the Environment*, *Investigating Animal Wildlife*, *Wildlife Conservation 1* and *The Physical Landscape of Scotland* among others
- ◆ appropriate vocational qualification might include an SVQ/NVQ at level 3 in a relevant subject, for example, Countryside Skills
- ◆ other combinations of National Qualifications, vocational Qualifications and qualifications from other awarding bodies may be acceptable at equivalent SCQF levels

Candidates with suitable work experience may be accepted for entry provided that the enrolling centre is satisfied that they are able to cope with and likely to benefit from undertaking the award.

Where English is not the first language of a prospective candidate, it is recommended that the candidate possess *English for Speakers of Other Languages* at an appropriate level. If using a test such as IELTS or equivalent, an entry score of 5.5 or above would provide a sound linguistic basis for the candidate to attempt this level of course. Candidates would be asked to produce a certificate to verify this.

5 Group Awards' structure

5.1 Framework

HNC Countryside and Environmental Management

For a candidate to achieve the HNC in Countryside and Environmental Management, they must attain **all** of the mandatory Units (64 SCQF credit points/8 SQA credits), including one Graded Unit at SCQF level 7 (8 SCQF credit points/1 SQA credit). Candidates must **also** attain 32 SCQF credit points/4 SQA credits from the list of optional Units.

Mandatory Units

Candidates must achieve **all** of the following mandatory Units (56 SCQF credit points/7 SQA credits):

| Unit title | Code | SCQF credit points | SCQF level | SQA credit value |
|---|----------|--------------------|------------|------------------|
| Biodiversity Conservation | F43034 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Ecology and Ecosystems | H93A 34* | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Geology and Geomorphology | F3SL34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Information Technology: Applications Software 1 | D75X34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Rural Land Use in Scotland | F3ST34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Environmental Awareness | F2G834 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Countryside and Environmental Management: Graded Unit 1 | F4BP34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |

Optional Units

Candidates **must** also attain 40 SCQF credit points/5 SQA credits from of the following list of optional Units:

| Unit title | Code | SCQF credit points | SCQF level | SQA credit value |
|---|---------|--------------------|------------|------------------|
| Countryside Recreation and Access | F43234 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Classification and Identification of Organisms | F3X234 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Interpretation: An Introduction | F3SP34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Leadership of Countryside Activities | F43734 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Pollution and Waste Management: An Introduction | F2EE 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Chemistry and Physics for Life Sciences | F21J34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Economic Principles for Business | DE3A34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Scottish Rural Development | F4AK34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| History and Archaeology: An Introduction | F3SN34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Understanding the Landscape | D5E634 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Countryside Visitor Management | F3F634 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Biology: An Introduction | F3SJ34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Conservations Skills | F3SJ 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Fundamental Chemistry: Theory and Laboratory Skills | H92X 34 | 16 | 7 | 1 |
| Quality and health and Safety Systems in Science Industry | DF82 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |

Candidates intending to progress to the HND in Countryside Management award are strongly advised to select from the following Unit options:

| Unit title | Code | SCQF credit points | SCQF level | SQA credit value |
|--|--------|--------------------|------------|------------------|
| Recommended optional choice for progression to HND Countryside Management (3 Unit credits required) | | | | |
| Countryside Recreation and Access | F43234 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Classification and Identification of Organisms | F3X234 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Interpretation: An Introduction | F3SP34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Leadership of Countryside Activities | F43734 | 8 | 7 | 1 |

HND Countryside Management

For a candidate to achieve the HND in Countryside Management, they must attain **all** of the mandatory Units (184 SCQF credit points/23 SQA credits), including one Graded Unit at SCQF level 7, and one Graded Unit at SCQF level 8. Candidates must **also** attain 56 SCQF credit points/7 SQA credits from the list of optional Units.

Mandatory Units

Candidates must achieve **all** of the following mandatory Units (184 SCQF credit points/23 SQA credits):

| Unit title | Code | SCQF credit points | SCQF level | SQA credit value |
|--|----------|--------------------|------------|------------------|
| Biodiversity Conservation | F430 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Biology: An Introduction | F3SJ 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Ecology and Ecosystems | H93A 34* | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Geology and Geomorphology | F3SL 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Information Technology: Applications Software 1 | D75X 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Rural Land Use in Scotland | F3ST 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Environmental Awareness | F2G8 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Countryside Recreation and Access | F432 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Classification and Identification of Organisms | F3X2 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Interpretation: An Introduction | F3SP 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Leadership of Countryside Activities | F437 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Data Collection and Handling Methods | F3X3 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Ecological Surveying | F433 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Education for Sustainable Development: Principles and Practice | F434 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Habitat Management | F3SM 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Interpretive Principles | F3SR 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Terrestrial Ecosystems | DP4X 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| History and Archaeology: An Introduction | F3SN 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Understanding the Landscape | D5E6 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Countryside Visitor Management | F3F6 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Countryside and Environmental Management: Graded Unit 1 | F4BP 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Countryside Management: Graded Unit 2 | F4BR 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Countryside Management: Graded Unit 3 | F4BS 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |

Optional Units

Candidates **must** also attain 56 SCQF credit points/7 SQA credits from of the following list of optional Units:

| Unit title | Code | SCQF credit points | SCQF level | SQA credit value |
|--|----------|--------------------|------------|------------------|
| Applied Interpretation | F42Y 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Aquatic Ecosystems | DP4V 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Business Management: An Introduction | F1RJ 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Conservation Skills | F431 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Heritage Studies: Scotland | F3TL 35 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Freshwater Environments: Management and Protection | F435 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Marine Environments: Management and Protection | F3SS 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Scottish Natural Heritage Tourism | F3F5 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Personal Development Planning | DE3R 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Scottish Rural Development | F4AK 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Soil Management | F21V 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Work Placement | HJ4W 34* | 8 | 7 | 1 |
| Geodiversity Conservation | F436 35 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Geographic Information Systems | F502 34 | 8 | 7 | 1 |

Core Skills

The importance of Core Skills has been recognised and these are developed throughout the awards (see Appendix 5). Recommended entry and exit levels for the Core Skills profiles, together with the appropriate carrier Units, are given in the following tables.

| Core Skills | Recommended Entry Level HNC/HND | Recommended Exit Level HNC | Recommended Exit Level HND |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Communication | level 4 | level 5 | level 6 |
| Information Technology | level 4 | level 6 | level 6 |
| Numeracy | level 4 | level 5 | level 6 |
| Problem Solving | level 4 | level 5 | level 6 |
| Working with Others | level 4 | level 5 | level 6 |

| Core Skill | Carrier Unit(s) | Level |
|------------------------|--|---------|
| Information Technology | Information Technology Applications Software (D75X 34) | level 6 |

Graded Units

The three Graded Units were chosen to develop and test the skills that the candidates have acquired during their studies and their ability to integrate the material from the different Units. In Year 1 the candidates are asked to carry out a Case Study. For this they will be given some information relating to a countryside site and they will be asked to develop proposals based on this information plus any additional material that they are able to gather. They are given clear written guidance on how to go about this task and will be supported through the assessment by means of workshop sessions and site visits. As this is the first time that they have been asked to carry out such a complex task and complete a formal report it is important that the requirements of the assessment are appropriate.

For the HND there are two Graded Units with one being an Investigation. This follows similar lines to the first year Unit but requires much more of the candidates in terms of gathering information and drawing more in-depth conclusions. At this level they will be expected to utilise an even wider range of knowledge and to draw together information from the Core Units from the first two years.

The second Graded Unit in the HND is an Examination. This will include both short answer questions and extended responses and will test their ability to produce well structured work under the pressure of a time limit. The questions will require the candidates to bring together the knowledge and skills that they have acquired and to demonstrate an understanding of a range of aspects of countryside management.

These Graded Units were chosen to reflect the abilities that would be expected of someone working in the industry. Employees have to bring together a range of different subject areas in order to produce well thought out recommendations regarding the management of countryside sites. They also have to demonstrate an ability to recognise the potential conflicts that arise between different countryside users and to arrive at acceptable compromises. It is considered that the type of Graded Units chosen will test these abilities.

5.2 Mapping information

The mapping of Units against the aims of the course are listed in Appendix 3 while the mapping of the Units against the occupational standards are listed in Appendix 2

5.3 Articulation, professional recognition and credit transfer

Progression from HND Countryside Management

Candidates achieving the HND Countryside Management may be able to articulate to the following courses:

- ◆ Year 3 of the BSc Countryside Management delivered by SAC and validated by Glasgow University
- ◆ Year 2 or 3 of countryside management degrees offered by universities elsewhere in the UK

Opportunities for credit transfer

Candidates may be given credit transfer between HN Units (developed using 1988 design principles) and the revised HN Units (developed using 2003 design principles). There is no transition framework for the HND Countryside Management but candidates can be given credit transfer for individual Units.

Credit transfer can be given where there is broad equivalence between the subject related content of the Unit or combination of Units. Candidates who are given credit transfer between predecessor Units and revised HN Units must still satisfy all other conditions of the revised HNC Countryside and Environmental Management and HND in Environmental Management, including the Mandatory Units, Graded Units, Optional Units and the correct number of credits at the correct SCQF level.

The table below details where credit transfer can be given between predecessor Units and revised Units. These have been agreed by the External Verifier.

| Predecessor Unit | Unit code | Revised Unit | Unit code | Credit transfer conditions |
|--|-----------|---|-----------|----------------------------|
| Biodiversity Conservation: An Introduction | DF2A 04 | Biodiversity Conservation | F430 34 | |
| Biology: An Introduction | DF8J 04 | Biology: An Introduction | F3SJ 34 | |
| Countryside Recreation | DF1X 04 | Countryside Recreation and Access | F432 34 | |
| Earth Science: An Introduction | D5DN 04 | Geology and Geomorphology | F3SL 34 | |
| Ecology: An Introduction | DC9E 04 | Ecology and Ecosystems | DN37 34 | |
| Environmental Awareness | DF7K 04 | Environmental Awareness | F2G8 34 | |
| Identification Skills for the Living World | DF8M 04 | Classification and Identification of Organisms | F3X2 34 | |
| Interpretation: An Introduction | DF1N 04 | Interpretation: An Introduction | F3SP 34 | |
| Land Use Systems | D7TV 04 | Rural Land Use in Scotland | F3ST 34 | |
| Leadership of Countryside Activities | DF2G 04 | Leadership of Countryside Activities | F437 34 | |
| Practical Use of Software Application Packages | DG0T 04 | Information Technology: Applications Software 1 | D75X 34 | |
| Developing Personal Effectiveness | DG0V 04 | Personal Development Planning | DE3R 34 | |
| History and Archaeology: An Introduction | DF8A 04 | History and Archaeology: An Introduction | F3SN 34 | |
| Planning: An Introduction | DF85 04 | Scottish Rural Development | F4AK 34 | |
| Understanding the Landscape | DF21 04 | Understanding the Landscape | D5E6 34 | |
| Work Experience | DG0W 04 | Work Experience | DV0M 34 | |

| Predecessor Unit | Unit code | Revised Unit | Unit code | Credit transfer conditions |
|--|-----------|--|-----------|----------------------------|
| Countryside Visitor Management | DG0M 04 | Countryside Visitor Management | F3F6 34 | |
| Ecology: Principles and Practice | DF25 04 | Terrestrial Ecosystems | DP4X 35 | |
| Education for Sustainability: Opportunities and Delivery | DF24 04 | Education for Sustainable Development: Principles and Practice | F434 35 | |
| Habitat Management | DF1R 04 | Habitat Management | F3SM 35 | |
| Information Handling and Presentation | DG0X 04 | Data Collection and Handling Methods | F3X3 34 | |
| Interpretive Principles | DF1M 04 | Interpretive Principles | F3SR 35 | |

6 Approaches to delivery and assessment

The curriculum design provides an awareness and understanding of *essential* skills required by those wishing to pursue a career in the countryside management sector. The intention is to develop candidates' ability to identify and apply individual skills in their chosen specialisation within this very diverse sector, thereby enhancing future employability.

In order to make the course as relevant as possible a wide range of delivery methods are used. There is extensive use of guest lecturers and site visits/field trips which bring candidates in touch with practitioners and the working environment. This also helps to ensure that the course is relevant in terms of current practice. While lectures are a significant part of course delivery these are supported by on-line material, presentations, role play and simulations.

Although centres can choose in what order to teach the Units within the awards, it is envisaged that the primary elements of the mandatory Units in the first year are delivered prior to delivering the Graded Unit. It is important that the mandatory Units have been delivered before the Graded Unit is assessed. A suggested timetable for delivery is given in Appendix 4.

The Graded Units have been designed as a progression from the case study in the HNC to an Investigation and an Examination in the HND. This means that the candidates will be given information to collate and analyse in their first year while in the second year they will be expected to gather and analyse information themselves. The Examination will test a wide range of material in terms of knowledge and understanding while also preparing progressing candidates for a more exam based assessment format in years 3 and 4 of a degree. For both the Case Study and the Investigation the candidates should be introduced to the project brief either at the end of term 1 or very early in term 2. In both cases it is advised that comprehensive guidance is given to ensure that candidates have a good understanding of what is required of them.

The assessment strategy of the SQA Design Principles — to encourage a more holistic approach to assessment — has been adopted throughout this award. The new HN Unit specification places the emphasis on reducing the assessment load for both candidates and centres by devising assessments that assess the entire Unit or integrate the assessments of Outcomes together. It is strongly recommended that centres endeavour to integrate assessments wherever possible and encourage the flexible use of evidence in order to enhance the streamlining of assessment.

There may also be the opportunity to integrate some assessments across Units. The logistics of this will depend on the programme in individual centres.

Open learning may be feasible for some Units in this award and it should be noted that the predecessor HNC Countryside Management and HNC Environmental Protection awards were both offered as distance learning courses. It is envisaged that the revised HNC Countryside and Environmental Management would also be delivered in this way and there may be opportunities for the revised HND as well. Practical and hands-on activities give candidates valuable experience and should be built in wherever possible but experience has shown that this can be incorporated to a large extent within a flexible mode of delivery. A blended approach to learning, including on line learning, offers many opportunities to both lecturing staff and candidates and this enables part-time study by those in work. This could be by attending college and extending the HNC over a period of two years or by using the on-line material to deliver the award remotely.

Unit specifications detail the exact Evidence Requirements and suggested assessment procedures for each assessment area of study.

7 General information for centres

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 Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these Group Award(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 and Quality Assurance for Colleges of Further Education* (www.sqa.org.uk).

8 General information for candidates

The intention of the HNC and the HND is that you will have a broad understanding of how the different land uses in the countryside interact, in particular the conservation of the countryside and its recreational use. For this you will investigate a wide range of topics including planning, land use, history and archaeology, landscape and geology. These will underpin core topics such as ecology, visitor management, interpretation, habitat management and identification skills and will give you a greater awareness of the wider issues and conflicts that affect the countryside.

Each of the Units that you study will be assessed but there will be a wide variety of assessment types including projects, case studies and practical assessment as well as multiple choice or short answer assessments. It is important to note that you will have three Graded Unit assessments, one within the HNC and two within the HND. These are designed to test the integration of knowledge and skills that you will have acquired during your studies. The first of these assessments is a case study where you will visit a countryside site and will be given information about it. Your task will be to analyse the information and make recommendations about the management of the site. In the second year you will have an investigation where you will be required to plan your study, gather your own information and again make recommendations. The third assessment is an examination which will test your knowledge and understanding of the course material. The Graded Units are used to give you an overall grade for the course.

After you complete your course there may be opportunities for you to seek employment in countryside management. The range of possible jobs is wide but you will be able to greatly enhance your employment prospects by getting some practical experience through part-time work or volunteering. The HNC may qualify you to seek work as a seasonal countryside ranger, a footpath worker, an environmental trainer or a campaigner. With the HND you could apply for a post as a full-time ranger, an access officer, an environmental education officer or a nature tourist guide.

Following successful completion you may wish to progress to a related degree course. The most obvious of these, and currently the only one in Scotland which deals specifically with countryside management is the BSc Countryside Management that is offered by the Scottish Agricultural College. In addition the HND may also be accepted as an entry qualification for other degree courses, particularly in environmental studies.

During the course the content and methods of delivery of the Units will help to develop your Core Skills in *Communication*, *Numeracy*, *Working with Others*, *IT* and *Problem Solving*. Of particular relevance will be your communication skills, in particular delivering presentations.

The HNC Countryside and Environmental Management can be studied part-time and has been developed as a distance learning course so it is possible to study it from home. The course delivery includes three study weekends per year and candidates would normally take two years to complete the course.

9 Glossary of terms

SCQF: This stands for the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework, which is a new way of speaking about qualifications and how they inter-relate. We use SCQF terminology throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF see Appendix 2 or visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk.

SCQF credits: One HN credit is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points. This applies to all HN Units, irrespective of their level.

SCQF levels: The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HN Units will normally be at levels 6–9. Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8 (see Section 6 for further information on this).

Subject Unit: Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Graded Unit: Graded Units assess candidates' ability to integrate what they have learned while working towards the Units of the Group Award. Their purpose is to add value to the Group Award, making it more than the sum of its parts, and to encourage candidates to retain and adapt their skills and knowledge.

Dedicated Core Skill Unit: This is a Unit that is written to cover one or more particular Core Skills, eg HN Units in Information Technology or Communications.

Embedded Core Skills: This is where the development of a Core Skill is incorporated into the Unit and where the Unit assessment also covers the requirements of Core Skill assessment at a particular level.

Signposted Core Skills: This refers to the opportunities to develop a particular Core Skill at a specified level that lie outwith automatic certification.

Qualification Design Team: The QDT works in conjunction with a Qualification Manager/Development Manager to steer the development of the HNC/D from its inception/revision through to validation. The group is made up of key stakeholders representing the interests of centres, employers, universities and other relevant organisations.

Consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs are those developments or revisions undertaken by a group of centres in partnership with SQA.

Specialist single centre and specialist collaborative devised HNCs and HNDs are those developments or revisions led by a single centre or small group of centres who provide knowledge and skills in a specialist area. Like consortium-devised HNCs and HNDs, these developments or revisions will also be supported by SQA.

10 Appendices

- Appendix 1: Skills surveys
- Appendix 2: Matching Units and Occupational Standards
- Appendix 3: Matching aim and Units
- Appendix 4: Suggested timetable for delivery of mandatory Units
- Appendix 5: Core Skills development

Appendix 1: Skills surveys

Lantra are the industry lead body in relation to the environmental conservation sector which encompasses the main course content of the HNC CEM and the HND CM. However it should be noted that there is relatively little coverage of environmental interpretation and visitor management which are significant components of the CM strand. A recent report from Lantra (February 2006) provides useful background information on the industry which includes businesses and also the volunteer sector. In this it estimates a total workforce of around 56,000 in the UK (17% of which is in Scotland) plus a volunteer sector of around 200,000. Most of these businesses are small (73% employ less than 10 people) and the majority of staff are aged between 25 and 34.

The industry is being driven by developments in legislation and policy which impact on the skills required by industry.

| Legislative Drivers | Generic skills requirements |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| CAP and Rural Development Programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ sustainable development ◆ business planning ◆ protection and enhancement of the environment |
| Land Reform/Access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ liaison, negotiation, communication and customer care ◆ recreation management ◆ legislation and liability ◆ education and interpretation |
| Biodiversity Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ environmental management skills ◆ high level communication skills ◆ skills required due to climate change ◆ training in husbandry as a result of changes in habitats and species as a result of climate change |
| Water Framework Directive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ environmental management ◆ legislation ◆ sustainable principles |

In addition there are a number of sociological and other factors which have significant implications for the sector.

| Sociological Drivers | Generic skills requirements |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Customer demand and public values | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ customer service ◆ education and advocacy ◆ animal welfare skills ◆ motivation and leadership skills ◆ community engagement |
| Voluntary sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ supervision and management of volunteers ◆ technical skills ◆ types of skills learning ◆ CPD |
| Enterprise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ commercial skills ◆ selling and persuasion skills ◆ fundraising skills ◆ negotiation skills |
| Technological advances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ electronic recreation and land management tools ◆ GIS and GPS ◆ updating ICT skills |

These generic skills areas translate into a very wide variety of specific skills, some of which may be very specialist but some common skills gaps have been identified.

Field interpretation
Species identification
Heritage management
Chainsaw training
First aid
Minibus driving/trailer towing

Interpersonal skills
Coaching at work
Wildlife management
Team working
Communication skills
Managing people

Appendix 2: Matching Units and Occupational Standards

HNC Countryside and Environmental Management

| New Unit | Equivalent Occupational Standards |
|---|--|
| Biodiversity Conservation | |
| Biology: An Introduction | |
| Ecology and Ecosystems | Survey and report on the condition of the environment (EC2) |
| Geology and Geomorphology | |
| Rural Land Use in Scotland | Negotiate improvements in land use (EC28) Assess the characteristics of site (LBMCU91) |
| Information Technology: Applications Software 1 | Operate a computer level 2 (OPU2) Presentation Software level 2 (PS2) Spreadsheet Software level 3 (SS3) Word Processing Software level 3 (WP3) Use IT to Exchange Information level 2 (UEI3) Use IT Systems level 3 (UIT3) Email level 2 (MAIL2) Use IT Systems and Software (CIC34) |
| Environmental Awareness | Implement environmental good practice at work (EC19) |
| Countryside Recreation and Access | |
| Classification and Identification of Organisms | |
| Interpretation: An Introduction | |
| Leadership of Countryside Activities | |
| Pollution and Waste Management: An Introduction | Implement environmental good practice at work (EC19) |
| Chemistry and Physics for Life Sciences | Provide operational monitoring assistance (ND418) Assess ionising radiation risks (RP4) Radiation protection — Identify and quantify radiation hazards in the workplace (No ID available) |
| Economic Principles for Business | |
| Scottish Rural Development | |

HND Countryside Management

| New Unit title | Equivalent Occupational Standards |
|--|---|
| Data Collection and Handling Methods | Manage and store information (O8NSAS4) |
| Ecological Surveying | Survey and report on the condition of the environment (EC2) Monitor and report on environmental change (EC22) Prepare, conduct and report on field surveys (EC23) |
| Habitat Management | |
| Education for Sustainable Development: Principles and Practice | |
| History and Archaeology: An Introduction | |
| Terrestrial Ecosystems | Prepare, conduct and report on field surveys (EC23) |
| Interpretive Principles | |
| Understanding the Landscape | |
| Countryside Visitor Management | |
| Applied Interpretation | |
| Aquatic Ecosystems | Prepare, conduct and report on field surveys (EC23) |
| Business Management: An Introduction | |
| Conservation Skills | |
| Heritage Studies: Scotland | |
| Freshwater Environments: Management and Protection | |
| Marine Environments: Management and Protection | |
| Scottish Natural Heritage Tourism | |
| Personal Development Planning | |
| Geodiversity Conservation | |
| Soil Management | |
| Work Experience | |

Although links between the Units and the NOS have been identified it is not likely that successful completion of the Unit will result in the certification for the SVQ/NVQ.

Appendix 3: Matching aim and Units

HNC Countryside and Environmental Management

| Unit title | Positive communicators | Understand land uses | Factors in land use | Policies and issues | Sustainable land management | Ecological and environmental | Core Skills | Initiative in activities | Supervise others | Work with others |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Biodiversity: An Introduction | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Biology: An Introduction | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Ecology and Ecosystems | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Geology and Geomorphology | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Information Technology Applications Software | | | | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Rural Land Use in Scotland | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Environmental Awareness | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Countryside Recreation and Access | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Classification and Identification of Organisms | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Interpretation: An Introduction | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Leadership of Countryside Activities | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Economic Principles for Business | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | |
| Chemistry and Physics for Life Sciences | | | | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Pollution and Waste Management: An Introduction | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Countryside and Environmental Management: Graded Unit 1 | | | | | | | ✓ | | | |

HND Countryside Management

| Unit title | Positive communicators | Practical management | Ecological knowledge | Core Skills | Autonomy and initiative | Significant managerial responsibility | Ethical and professional issues |
|--|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Data Collection and Handling Methods | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Ecological Surveying | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Education for Sustainable Development: Principles and Practice | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Habitat Management | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| History and Archaeology: An Introduction | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Interpretive Principles | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Terrestrial Ecosystems | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Understanding the Landscape | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Countryside Visitor Management | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Applied Interpretation | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | |
| Aquatic Ecosystems | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Business Management: An Introduction | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Conservation Skills | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Heritage Studies: Scotland | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | |
| Freshwater Environments: Management and Protection | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Marine Environments: Management and Protection | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Scottish Natural Heritage Tourism | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Personal Development Planning | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Soil Management | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Work Experience | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Geodiversity Conservation | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Countryside Management: Graded Unit 2 | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Countryside Management: Graded Unit 3 | | | | ✓ | | | |

Appendix 4: Suggested timetable for delivery of mandatory Units

HNC Countryside and Environmental Management

| Unit title | Term 1 | Term 2 | Term 3 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| Biodiversity Conservation | | ✓ | |
| Biology: An Introduction | ✓ | | |
| Ecology and Ecosystems | | | ✓ |
| Geology and Geomorphology | | ✓ | |
| Information Technology: Applications Software 1 | ✓ | | |
| Rural Land Use in Scotland | | | ✓ |
| Environmental Awareness | ✓ | | |
| Countryside and Environmental Management: Graded Unit 1 | | ✓ | ✓ |

HND Countryside Management

| Unit title | Term 1 | Term 2 | Term 3 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|
| Data Collection and Handling Methods | | ✓ | |
| Ecological Surveying | | | ✓ |
| Education for Sustainable Development: Principles and Practice | ✓ | | |
| History and Archaeology: An Introduction | | ✓ | |
| Habitat Management | ✓ | | |
| Interpretive Principles | ✓ | | |
| Terrestrial Ecosystems | | | ✓ |
| Understanding the Landscape | | | ✓ |
| Countryside Visitor Management | | | |
| Countryside Management: Graded Unit 2 | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Countryside Management: Graded Unit 3 | | ✓ | ✓ |

Appendix 5: Core Skills development

| Unit title | Communication | | | Numeracy | | IT | Problem Solving | | | Working with Others |
|---|---------------|---------|------|--------------|-----------------------------|----|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| | Reading | Writing | Oral | Using Number | Using Graphical Information | | Critical Thinking | Planning and Organising | Reviewing and Evaluating | |
| Biodiversity: An Introduction | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Biology: An Introduction | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| Ecology and Ecosystems | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Geology and Geomorphology | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Information Technology Applications Software | | | | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Rural Land Use in Scotland | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Environmental Awareness | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Countryside Recreation and Access | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Classification and Identification of Organisms | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Interpretation: An Introduction | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Leadership of Countryside Activities | | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Rural Development: An Introduction | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Pollution and Waste Management: An Introduction | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | |

| Unit title | Communication | | | Numeracy | | IT | Problem Solving | | | Working with Others |
|---|---------------|---------|------|--------------|-----------------------------|----|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| | Reading | Writing | Oral | Using Number | Using Graphical Information | | Critical Thinking | Planning and Organising | Reviewing and Evaluating | |
| Chemistry and Physics for the Life Sciences | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Economic Principles for Business | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| HNC Graded Unit | | | | | | | | | | |
| Data Collection and Handling Methods | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Ecological Survey | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Education for Sustainability: Principles and Practice | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Habitat Management | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| History and Archaeology: An Introduction | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Interpretive Principles | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Terrestrial Ecosystems | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Understanding the Landscape | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Countryside Visitor Management | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Applied Interpretation | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Aquatic Ecosystems | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Business Management: An Introduction | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Conservation Skills | | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Heritage Studies | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | |

| Unit title | Communication | | | Numeracy | | IT | Problem Solving | | | Working with Others |
|--|---------------|---------|------|--------------|-----------------------------|----|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| | Reading | Writing | Oral | Using Number | Using Graphical Information | | Critical Thinking | Planning and Organising | Reviewing and Evaluating | |
| Managing Freshwater Environments | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Marine Environments: Management and Protection | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Natural Heritage Tourism | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Personal Development Planning | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Soil Management | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Principles of Geodiversity Conservation | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Work Experience | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| HND Graded Unit 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| HND Graded Unit 2 | | | | | | | | | | |