



Group Award Specification for:

NPA in Woodland Operations at QCF level 6

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Qualification(s) structure.....	3
2.1	Structure.....	3
3	Aims of the qualification(s).....	4
3.1	General aims of the qualification(s)	4
3.2	Specific aims of the qualification(s).....	5
4	Recommended entry to the qualification(s).....	5
4.1	Core Skills entry profile.....	5
5	Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs	6
5.1	Mapping of qualification aims to Units	7
5.2	Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade body standards	8
5.3	Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification(s) ...	10
5.4	Assessment Strategy for the qualification(s)	11
6	Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment.....	13
6.1	Sequencing/integration of Units.....	14
6.2	Recognition of Prior Learning	15
6.3	Opportunities for e-assessment.....	16
6.4	Support materials	16
6.5	Resource requirements	16
7	General information for centres	16
8	Glossary of terms	17
9	General information for learners	19

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

Rationale

Forestry is an increasingly significant land use industry in Scotland at the same time as it has a larger proportion of its workforce over 55 years of age — 28% in contrast to other industries where the figure is 16% (LANTRA survey). In addition, more than 53% of the forestry work force is over 40 years old which means that the medium to long term prospects are for an increasing skills shortage within the workforce. 43% of organisations with vacancies find it difficult to fill these vacancies because of skills shortages (Forestry Skills Action Plan, 2011). Further concern is created by the low level of skills development being undertaken by employees in the land based sector in general and forestry in particular. The establishment of these skills is essential in providing the industry with potential employees capable of meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse industry. Forests, woodlands and trees are now central to government initiatives on a range of social and environmental policies including public health and welfare, climate change amelioration, biodiversity enhancement, sustainable rural communities and urban renewal.

Government training and education policies are centered on the 16–19 age group to address the social dislocation caused by unemployment and this makes for a good fit between the shortage of skills within the industry and the widening of opportunities for productive and realisable employment in an industry which is supplying a range of social benefits. There is a need to broaden the appeal/attractiveness of forestry and woodland management as an industry and a career, and the title and content of the NPA Woodland Operations has been designed to generate engagement with a wider spectrum of the population than was previously attracted to the traditional narrower perspective of forestry as a timber producer. The use of 'Woodland' rather than 'Forest' in the title is to emphasise this wider diversity and the changing emphasis and focus on smaller scale management even if that is within a wider Unit.

The content of the NPA Woodland Operations reflects changes in forest policy and strategy which now encompass a far greater range of values and ecosystem services provided by woodlands. The UK Forestry Standard and Scottish Forestry Strategy have been modernised with increased emphasis on sustainable development, natural and native woodlands and the management of woodlands in a more environmentally protective way. In addition managed woodlands are being viewed in a far more positive light as valuable habitats for wildlife and biodiversity. The NPA is designed to develop the skills that can meet the changing demands for social and diverse benefits from woodlands. It is also designed to develop specific skills that are in short supply because of the historic changes to forestry policy and the re-establishment of these management objectives in the current strategies and policies.

The NPA has also been designed to increase the range of courses and levels in the curriculum offered at the Scottish School of Forestry and to fill the gap between SCQF level 5 certificate courses and SCQF level 7 HNC courses in forestry and arboriculture and urban forestry. The NPA would also offer higher vocational skills levels which would improve the employability of students as well as being a positive development in meeting the needs of Curriculum for Excellence whereby the NPA meets the entry requirements for HE at HNC level. It also offers the opportunity to develop particular technical skills that would attract a wider range of students as well as widening the employment opportunities. In addition, as indicated above, it will function as a development programme for students wishing to progress to SCQF level 7 and increase the likelihood of successful transitions to higher level programmes.

Whilst initially planned and designed as part of the integration of curriculum at the School the NPA offers the potential for use in the progression from FE to HE in other institutions.

The subject areas of the NPA and their close affinity with National Occupational Standards create opportunities for certification of practical skills, eg coppicing, mobile sawmills and woodfuel machinery based round LANTRA's competence based certification.

Table Indicating Range of Learners

Widening participation	Increasing the attractiveness of FE programmes to wider groupings influenced by a perception of forestry in narrowly prescriptive terms.
Workforce development	The higher skills built into the NPA will develop technical workers with wider skills better fitted to modern forestry/woodland development.
Schools	SCQF level 6 provision will be attractive to pupils wishing to progress from Skills for Work, and the NPA awards at SCQF level 5 as well as attracting vocationally focused pupils who wish to gain SCQF level 6 qualifications.
16–19	The programme is ideally suited to this age range and will be a sound basis for career choice and continuing skills development.
Adult Returners	Forestry has been widely recognised as an attractive option for adults returning to training and education and this development gives added value to the process of adult career development.
Employees	Given the increase in employee development through HE and the need for continuous development of staff, this level of course is an ideal entry point for forestry workers and craftsperson.
Engaging employers	The practical basis to the programme will include engagement with employers within the industry not only through the Forestry Advisory Committee of the Scottish School of Forestry (membership of which includes representatives from all the major areas of the industry) but through the provision of real work experience in the skills included in the programme.
Volunteers	The programme will fulfil the needs and requirements for woodland groups including NGOs and Community Woodland groups and its diversity will provide skills of a practical nature at a level of self-management and of a standard to meet best practice guidelines.

2 Qualification(s) structure

This Group Award is made up of 6 SQA Unit credits comprising 36 SCQF credit points of which 24 are gained from the 4 Units in the mandatory section and the remaining 12 SCQF credit points gained from the optional Section 6 of which can be gained from the SCQF level 5 Unit *Cable Cranes*.

Whilst Core Skills are not certificated in this award there are opportunities to develop Core Skills throughout the Units that make up the award. These are presented in Section 5.3.

The Design Principles for NPAs state that:

- ◆ NPAs can be set at SCQF levels 2 to 6
- ◆ NPAs will have a minimum credit value of 12 SCQF credit points (at least two Units)
- ◆ At least half of the credits points will be at the level of the Group Award

The structure of the NPA in Woodland Operations at SCQF level 6 meets all these requirements.

2.1 Structure

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
Mandatory Units					
24 SCQF Credit Points Required (4 SQA Unit Credits)					
H69W	46	Coppiced Woodlands	1	6	6
H69Y	46	Green Woodworking	1	6	6
H69X	46	Mobile Sawmills	1	6	6
H6A0	46	Woodfuel Processing and Supply	1	6	6
Optional Units					
12 SCQF Credit Points Required (2 SQA Unit Credits)					
D897	12	The Ecology of Scotland	1	6	6
D855	12	Forest Ecology	1	6	6
D885	12	Forest Nursery Practical Techniques	1	6	6
E8T7	12	Countryside Woodwork and Access Facilities	1	6	6
F91H	12	Landbased Engineering: Forest Machinery Maintenance	1	6	6
H69V	45	Cable Crane Systems	1	6	5

The award is structured on the basis of mandatory and optional Units with the ratio of 2:1 mandatory to optional giving a reasonable balance between essential core learning and student choice. Whilst the award is not differentiated into separate streams/strands there are connections between Units that offer opportunities to students to develop areas of particular interest:

Landbased Engineering: Forest Machinery Maintenance and Cable Crane Systems = Forest Harvesting

Forest Nursery Practical Techniques and Countryside Woodwork and Access Facilities = Estate Maintenance

The mandatory Units have been selected to encompass the diversity of woodland operations but also to indicate the potential for combining woodland management for social and environmental benefits with sustainable production.

The Units have been created with close reference to both the National Occupational Standards for Tree Work and the SCQF level 6 Framework Guidelines so that the Units reflect the competency and learning levels suitable for an NPA at SCQF level 6. The exception to this is the newly created Unit *Cable Crane Systems* which is leveled at SCQF level 5 with the potential for integration into SCQF level 5 programmes.

3 Aims of the qualification(s)

The principal aims of the qualification are:

- ◆ to give learners the opportunity to develop their knowledge of woodland management in ways that engage with the social and productive capacities of woodlands in a wider context, including sustainable management, biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- ◆ to develop diverse technical and interpersonal skills to increase the range of employment opportunities.

3.1 General aims of the qualification(s)

The general aims of the NPA in Woodland Operations at SCQF level 6 are to develop:

- 1 generalised knowledge of woodland management and operations
- 2 skills in the planning of sequenced operations
- 3 knowledge of production and market processes
- 4 skills in the application of theoretical learning to practical situations
- 5 skills in problem solving in operational situations
- 6 skills and practices associated with particular operations
- 7 knowledge and skills to make recommendations on actions to be taken
- 8 knowledge to collate information and data to make decisions
- 9 knowledge and skills to work independently as a self - motivated learner
- 10 knowledge and skills for responsible working as a team member and as team leader
- 11 knowledge and skills which will facilitate the transition to further study
- 12 knowledge and skills that will increase opportunities for employment

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification(s)

The specific aims of the NPA in Woodland Operations at SCQF level 6 are to develop:

- 1 knowledge and skills to plan and set up green woodland operations
- 2 knowledge and skills to maintain and set up the tools and equipment required for woodland operations
- 3 skills to operate tools, equipment and machinery for woodland operations
- 4 knowledge and skills to set up machinery and devices for woodland operations
- 5 knowledge and skills to produce marketable materials from woodland operations
- 6 knowledge and skills to survey woodlands for biodiversity
- 7 knowledge and skills to plan woodland operations
- 8 knowledge and skills to carry out risk assessments for woodland operations
- 9 knowledge and skills to produce accurate and detailed maps of woodlands
- 10 knowledge and skills to create and maintain coppice woodlands

4 Recommended entry to the qualification(s)

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.

Learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ SCQF level 5 Units in Forestry
- ◆ SCQF level 5 Units in Conservation Skills
- ◆ Any other SQA based programme that has practical conservation, rural, environmental skills as its base.
- ◆ Candidates with relevant prior experience or knowledge will also be eligible for consideration for entry onto this award.
- ◆ Candidates who have gained LANTRA and/or NPTC certification through training courses will also be given consideration.
- ◆ Candidates with relevant work experience will be considered for entry on to the award.
- ◆ Candidates should meet the age requirements for the use of chainsaws in a work situation

4.1 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skills 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.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	5	Extended writing in the creation of site plans and operational reports.
Numeracy	4	Measurement of materials, product specification, distribution of material sizes, financial outturns, survey methodologies.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	4	Production of maps — use of GPS and GIS, word processing, Excel spreadsheets for production and markets, figurative representation of data.
Problem Solving	5	Planning of woodland operations, product range, risk assessment and solutions, product specification, site and operational layouts.
Working with Others	5	Team work in woodland operations particularly coppicing, mobile sawmilling and woodfuel production. Marketing of products and provision of materials for the making of wood based articles.

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. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to Units

Code	Unit title	Aims											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
H69W 46	Coppice Woodlands	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
H69Y 46	Green Woodworking	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
H69X 46	Mobile Sawmills	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X
H6A0 46	Woodfuel Processing and Supply	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
D897 12	The Ecology of Scotland							X	X			X	X
D855 12	Forest Ecology	X						X	X			X	X
D885 12	Forest Nursery Practical Techniques	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X
E8T7 12	Countryside Woodwork and Access Facilities	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
F91H 12	Landbased Engineering: Forest Machinery Maintenance	X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X
H69Y 45	Cable Crane Systems	X	X		X	X	X				X	X	X

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

The NPA Woodland Operations has close links with the National Occupational Standards (NOS), and the practical skills incorporated in the Units have been selected in order to ensure a close match with those of the NOS. The table below shows these connections.

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standard
H69W 46	Coppice Woodlands	LANTw51 Plan and Evaluate for Coppice Management LANTw52 Maintain Coppice Health and Productivity LANTw53 Cut, Process and Extract Coppice CS35 Sever Multiple Windblown Limbs LANCS21 Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety
H69Y 46	Green Woodworking	LANTw55 Build and Maintain Tools and Devices Used to Process Coppice and Green Wood Products LANTw56 Process Coppice Materials and Green Wood Products LANTw57 Design a Green Wood Product to Client Specification LANTw58 Construct a Green Product to Client Specification CS35 Sever Multiple Windblown Limbs LANCS21 Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety
H69X 46	Mobile Sawmills	LANTw40 Process Timber Using Hand-fed Machines LANCS21 Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety
H6A0 46	Woodfuel Processing and Supply	LANTw59 Produce Wood Fuel in a Woodland or Forest CS35 Sever Multiple Windblown Limbs LANCS21 Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety
D897 12	The Ecology of Scotland	LANTw64 Carry Out Site Surveys and Communicate Your Findings
D855 12	Forest Ecology	LANTw64 Carry Out Site Surveys and Communicate Your Findings
D885 12	Forest Nursery Practical Techniques	CS35 Sever Multiple Windblown Limbs LANCS21 Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety
E8T7 12	Countryside Woodwork and Access Facilities	LANCS20 Construct Boundaries or Access Points LANCS21 Maintain and Repair Boundaries or Access Points LANCS21 Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standard
F91H 12	Landbased Engineering: Forest Machinery Maintenance	LANTw19 Carry Out Routine Maintenance of Chainsaw and Cutting Systems LANCS21 Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety
H69V 45	Cable Crane Systems	LANTw42 Use Mechanically Powered Winches in Timber Work LANTw43 Extract Wood and Wood Products Using Small Motorised Equipment LANTw44 Choker Timber in Wire Rope Work LANCS21 Monitor and Maintain Health and Safety

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification(s)

Unit Code	Unit Title	Communication		Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written	Oral	Using Numbers	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Organising	Working Cooperatively	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
H69W46	Coppice Woodlands	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
H69Y46	Green Woodworking	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
H69X46	Mobile Sawmills	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
H6A046	Woodfuel Processing and Supply	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
D89712	The Ecology of Scotland	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
D85512	Forest Ecology	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
D88512	Forest Nursery Practical Techniques	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X
E8T712	Countryside Woodwork and Access Facilities	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X
F91H12	Landbased Engineering Forest Machinery Maintenance	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X
Opportunities for Core Skills development are signposted and there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills Components.												

5.4 Assessment Strategy for the qualification(s)

Unit	Assessment		
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
Coppice Woodlands	Open-book Extended written response or presentation on the history, biology and silviculture of coppice woodlands	Practical skills assessment Performance observation of learners coppicing techniques using best practice standards.	Practical skills assessment Performance observation of the production of coppice materials against a previously established specifications using best practice standards
Green Woodworking	Open-book Site map and operational plan detailing the setting out of a green woodworking area	Practical skills assessment Performance observation of maintenance of tools and the creation and setting up of devices used in green woodworking	Practical skills assessment Performance observation of the use of tools and devices and the production of green wood products to established specifications
Mobile Sawmills	Open-book Site plan detailing layout and production process	Practical skills assessment Performance observation of sawmill maintenance and sharpening of blades/bands	Practical skills assessment Performance observation of the operation of a mobile sawmill and the production of specified products
Woodfuel Processing and Supply	Open-book Extended written response or presentation detailing the organisation of a woodfuel processing system	Practical skills assessment and written risk assessment Performance observation of maintenance and set up of woodfuel process +risk assessment detailing site and operational conditions	Practical skills assessment Performance evaluated against specification and quality standards
The Ecology of Scotland	Open-book Short answer/question assessment at end of Unit.	Open-book Assignment based report on a given Eco-system (combined 2 and 3)	Open-book Assignment based report on a given Eco-system

Unit	Assessment		
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
Forest Ecology	Open-book Assignment based written report based on site assessment and ecological systems (Combined 1 and 3)	Open-book Assignment based report or presentation using written and diagrammatic materials	Open-book Assignment based written report based on site assessment and ecological systems (Combined 1 and 3)
Practical Forest Nursery Techniques	Closed-book Restricted response question paper (Combined 1 and 3)	Practical exercise Performance observation using checklist	Closed-book See Outcome1
Countryside Woodwork and Access Facilities	Closed-book Restricted response question paper	Closed-book Multiple choice question paper	Open-book Folio of plans and designs
Land Based Engineering: Forest Machinery Maintenance	Open-book Short answer/question assessment at end of Unit.	Practical skills assessment Performance observation using checklist	Practical skills assessment Performance observation using checklist
Cable Crane Systems	Practical skills assessment Performance observation based on industry best practice guidelines	Practical skills assessment Performance observation based on industry best practice guidelines	Practical skills assessment Performance observation based on industry best practice guidelines

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

The award has been designed to combine theoretical and experiential learning and, by so doing, develop in the learner the ability to connect conceptual thinking to concrete situations and circumstances. Within the framework there is an emphasis on analysis, logical planning and process thinking. It is important that the Units are delivered in a varied and challenging way which engages the learners and develops within them a level of responsibility for their own learning, and confidence in their abilities to problem solve and set themselves goals and standards based on identified best practice.

Pedagogical methodologies to be embraced:

- ◆ Short introductory lectures utilising Smart technology

This will involve small group working and student engagement including contributions to future operational design and planning. Lectures should include video clips of sites and skills. Student activities should include researching background information in a way that contributes to the profile of the learning and skills integral to the Unit being studied. It is essential that learners are engaged in all aspects of their learning and that lectures should be designed to be interactive and the learners' contributions encouraged and valued

- ◆ Flash thinking groups and small group working

These could be used to initiate engagement with the learning content and promote enthusiasm for the subject area and the learning activities. Small group working and team building are essential characteristics of the award, and the earliest opportunities should be taken to initiate these skills and develop them throughout the duration of the programme. Candidates should be actively engaged in determining the structure of their teams and in defining the qualities required for a harmonious and productive team (with contributions/guidance from the lecturer). Reflection on the performance of the team should be an essential part of the organisation of the Units within the award. Peer review is a useful mechanism for self and others' improvement of performance against established standards and also for promoting learner engagement.

It is through this continuous process of engagement that learning energy is built up within the learners

- ◆ Workshops

These should be used for the learning and development of IT skills, particularly with reference to the mapping of sites, operational planning, the design of devices and products and the provision of survey details and statistics. These workshops could be run as a combination of large group instructional sessions, small group exploration sessions, one to one remedial and developmental sessions and guided study development. Importance should be placed on the process of engagement with IT resources, but it is essential that emphasis is placed on the production of IT-useable materials from each session. Focus sessions are essential precursors to all teaching sessions but this is particularly true of IT workshops.

With this level of focus IT is used in an applied and productive way to create, inform and enhance learning.

Laboratory workshops are used in conjunction with field studies to develop identification and analytical skills for species identification and ecosystems understanding. These labs should be used in conjunction with key guides, both paper- and software-based, and with real specimens and library resource images. Where possible the images used are those created and collected by the students. Demonstrations are enhanced by guided study and discovery learning through safely constructed tests.

Maintenance and machinery workshops should be used for the development of practical skills in the making, repair and maintenance of tools, equipment, devices and machinery used in the planned operations within the Units of the award. These practical sessions will be a combination of video and real time demonstration, supervised practice and consolidation sessions.

- ◆ Instructional techniques

These will be used in the teaching of practical skills with expert demonstration followed by one to one practice, supervised group working and individual reinforcement and development. Remedial sessions should be used to address both common and individual learning needs. Consolidation of skills should take place under close supervision. Peer group review should be encouraged to stimulate engagement, develop a more independent improvement ethos, and strengthen team bonding. It is essential that the skills developed are aimed at industry standards.

- ◆ Video review

Recording of practical skills performance could be used for evaluation, monitoring and improvement of performance. This could be used as a one to one session between lecturer/teacher and candidate for individual performance analysis or as part of a group/team assessment and monitoring. In the latter case this could be used to develop peer review and self-reflection in the learners. In conjunction with Smart technology this can be used to foster ownership of learning and also provide learning materials for the future.

6.1 Sequencing/integration of Units

The first Unit taught in the NPA should be *Coppice Woodland* because it is the foundation of knowledge and skills in woodland management. It also provides the basis for the other Units as the product from the management of coppice will be required for the processes involved in the Units *Green Woodworking*, *Woodfuel Processing* and *Supply and Mobile Sawmilling*. *Woodfuel Processing* requires to be timetabled, where possible, to utilise the waste products of the other productive Units.

It is recommended that *Greenwood Working* follows *Coppice Woodlands* as the coppiced materials are used to produce the specified greenwood items. *Forest Ecology* is delivered in conjunction with *Coppice Woodland* to provide the essential knowledge for the ecological and biodiversity elements of the Unit.

Landbased Engineering: Forest Machinery Maintenance requires to be delivered prior to *Cable Crane Systems* to ensure that the essential practical skills have been established to facilitate continuity and development of machinery skills.

Countryside Woodwork and Access Facilities should be programmed to follow *Mobile Sawmills* because the latter Unit will be used to provide the materials utilised in the construction of facilities and devices.

Practical Forest Nursery Techniques requires to be timetabled in relation to the plant growth cycle.

Regarding integration of Units, there can be selective integration between elements of *Coppice Woodlands* and *Green Woodworking*, *Countryside Woodwork and Access Facilities* and *Mobile Sawmills*, *Landbased Engineering: Forest Machinery Maintenance* and *Cable Crane Systems*.

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.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of Units and assessments:

- ◆ HN Graded Units
- ◆ Course and/or external assessments
- ◆ Other integrative assessment Units (which may or not be graded)
- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the Unit
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an Assessment Strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website 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

This NPA provides progression to the HNC programmes delivered at the Scottish School of Forestry (HNC Arboriculture and Urban Forestry; HNC Forestry) and, with establishment, can be used as a progression award for other relevant HE programmes within the Land-based sector. It is also designed to provide skills levels suitable for industry certification.

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

Given the largely practical nature of the Units included in the NPA, the opportunities for e-assessment may be fairly limited, however centres could utilise e-assessment for much of the underpinning knowledge and understanding developed in the NPA. An e-portfolio could be used to collate the evidence generated across the various Units. Centres must ensure that legislation and industry best practice policies are adhered to, particularly with regard to Health and Safety, regardless of the form the assessments take.

6.4 Support materials

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

6.5 Resource requirements

Centres delivering this qualification would be required to have the following resources as a minimum:

- ◆ transportation resources for site visits and access to work and assessment areas
- ◆ sufficient woodland area to allow for rotational management of coppice, eg 7 years cutting for Hazel coppice, 15 years for woodfuel production
- ◆ a range of woodland production machinery including mobile sawmill, woodfuel processers, cable crane system, greenwood tools equipment and devices
- ◆ nursery facilities including polytunnel, seed sources and supply
- ◆ qualified personnel to industry standards, ie certificated and registered assessors
- ◆ qualified personnel to educational standards, eg TQFE qualified
- ◆ ICT resources to include GIS, CAD, GPS (in addition to all general ICT resources)
- ◆ PPE to meet legal requirements as a minimum
- ◆ suitable tools and equipment for woodworking and coppicing

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.

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).

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.

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.

9 General information for learners

This section is designed to give you as a prospective candidates an oversight of the programme and how it relates to career opportunities including progression routes for those wishing to continue to more advanced programmes in these or related fields of study.

The NPA Woodland Operations has been designed to extend study opportunities and to increase the range of employment opportunities for those interested in forestry, woodland management with the objectives of providing the skills and knowledge to allow for sustainable care and management of the environment and woodland habitats.

Within this overall design and set of objectives you will be able to develop a range of specialist skills in relation to the care, maintenance and management of woodlands. You will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in:

- ◆ Coppice Woodlands
- ◆ Green Woodworking
- ◆ Mobile Sawmills
- ◆ Woodfuel Processing and Supply

In addition you will also have the opportunity to develop further specialist skills, ranging from Forest Ecology to Cable Crane Systems depending on your area of interest; current employment or future career goals.

The NPA has a practical focus and will allow you to develop the skills required to work effectively and safely in a range of woodland operations whilst ensuring you have the knowledge and understanding required to adapt and apply your skills in different contexts.

It is also designed to introduce you to the initial steps in planning woodland operations.

Technical knowledge acquisition and practical skills learning are fundamental to the NPA but of equal importance within the ethos of the programme is the opportunity to develop core personal and employability skills in all the essential areas to aid understanding, cooperation, communication and productive individual and team working. *Communication, Numeracy, critical thinking, Working with Others* are all skills required in order to allow fuller personal and productive development and these skills are all contextualised to the technical knowledge and practical skills learning of the programme.

The objective is that technical, knowledge, practical skills and essential personal and productive skills are acquired through a fully integrated and holistic learning experience.

The programme has been created to offer successful candidates progression routes to employment in a range of land based occupations and industries; more advanced programmes in the same field of study and as access qualifications to other programmes of study.

SCQF level 6 qualifications are good indicators of capabilities for further study and the personal and productive skills learned in the programme are transferrable at a level desirable to employers and to academic institutions.

Each of the modules has a continuous assessment structure and this will be a mixture of practical skills assessment through observed good practice against industry standards and technical knowledge assessment through written projects or short and extended written or oral responses. Core Skills will be assessed through the assessments for technical knowledge and practical skills.

There are no formal entry requirements for the NPA; however existing qualifications in Forestry or related areas or relevant work experience would be of benefit.

As indicated above, on completion of the NPA you will be well placed to gain employment at a relevant level within the Forestry industry, related fields and have a range of skills and experiences that would increase your employability in other fields.

With the increasing diversity of woodland ownership and management objectives the skills being looked for have also diversified. Therefore as well as being better qualified for employment in commercial forestry there will be increasing opportunities in NGO woodlands, community woodlands and private estates managed for sustainability and commercial and bio-diversity.

The NPA Woodland Operations also equips successful candidates to progress to higher levels studies such as the Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma in Forestry and related fields.