

Next Generation Higher National Unit Specification

Horticulture: Professional Practice (SCQF level 8)

Unit code: J7AE 48
SCQF level: 8 (24 SCQF credit points)
Valid from: session 2024–25

Prototype unit specification for use in pilot delivery only (version 2.0) August 2024

This unit specification provides detailed information about the unit to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year.

This unit specification is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information required to deliver and assess the unit.

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Unit purpose

This unit provides learners with the knowledge and skills they need to enter the horticulture industry at an appropriate level. Learners gain authentic, practical and professional skills, in collaboration with industry partners. Learners carry out and reflect on two meaningful simulated and/or work-based learning placements throughout the year in areas of industry that are of interest to them. They also develop their meta-skills.

Before starting the unit, learners would benefit from having a foundation knowledge of horticulture, ideally having completed units from the Higher National Certificate (HNC) Horticulture, on which this unit expands.

On completion of the unit, and on achievement of the Higher National Diploma (HND), learners may be able to progress to the BSc in Horticulture. Alternatively, they may wish to apply directly to the horticulture industry and related work placements.

Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

- 1 demonstrate a range of practical activities relevant to horticulture
- 2 engage in organisational management activities
- 3 participate in and reflect on a minimum of two work placements
- 4 develop meta-skills in a vocational or academic context

Evidence requirements

You should assess the unit through a portfolio of evidence that learners produce over all the learning outcomes. Learners can present their evidence in a variety of ways, including video recordings, checklists, oral recordings, and written work.

Learners can generate this evidence under unsupervised, open-book conditions.

Outcome 1

Learners should provide evidence that demonstrates their ability to perform a minimum of 20 horticultural skills. The skills are at your centre's discretion, but could fall under the following categories:

- ◆ business management and awareness
- ◆ plant propagation
- ◆ plant care and maintenance
- ◆ laboratory and research
- ◆ soil management
- ◆ ecology and environment
- ◆ sustainability
- ◆ botany and taxonomy

Outcome 2

Learners gather evidence that demonstrates that they have:

- ◆ carried out a minimum of two risk assessments in different working environments
- ◆ created a minimum of two work plans for the supervision and management of others
- ◆ carried out a stock management exercise relevant to the workplace, such as stock checking, ordering and reordering, and goods intake

Outcome 3

Learners gather evidence that demonstrates that they have:

- ◆ carried out a minimum of two meaningful work placements
- ◆ participated in a personal development and/or a career review meeting
- ◆ reflected on their own management and professional behaviours

For the purposes of the unit, the term 'work placement' can include any activity that offers an experience of work. Evidence from the following sources is acceptable:

- ◆ paid part-time employment during the learner's own time
- ◆ a placement organised directly by the learner or with their centre's assistance
- ◆ voluntary work

The work placement activity or activities used should be as flexible as possible. The activity, or activities (combined), should normally comprise a minimum of blocked time to allow learners to fully integrate with the business and be involved in a range of activities over time.

Outcome 4

In this unit, you assess a learner's meta-skills development as an outcome, following the evidence requirements set out below.

This meta-skills outcome is the same at SCQF level 7 as at SCQF level 8. Learners who progress from SCQF level 7 to SCQF level 8 should continue to develop their meta-skills. They should gather evidence in line with the outcome requirements as they work through the unit, or other units they may be studying, or projects they may be doing.

Evidence

Learners must produce evidence that shows they have:

- ◆ self-assessed their meta-skills baseline
- ◆ created a plan for their own meta-skills development
- ◆ carried out activities to develop and demonstrate their meta-skills
- ◆ used reflective practice to monitor and assess the meta-skills they have improved and developed

[Skills 4.0: A skills model to drive Scotland's future](#) outlines three categories of meta-skills:

- ◆ self-management
- ◆ social intelligence
- ◆ innovation

Each of these comprises four meta-skills and a number of sub-skills.

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There are many interrelationships and dependencies between these skills and, at SCQF level 7 and 8, learners should focus on holistic development relevant to their vocational or academic context.

See the Educator Guide for more information.

Knowledge and skills

The following table shows the knowledge and skills covered by the unit outcomes:

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 1 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ how different practical activities can be used in horticulture ◆ when to use different practical applications in horticulture 	<p>Outcome 1 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ demonstrate a range of practical activities relevant to horticulture
<p>Outcome 2 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ how to implement organisational objectives on the ground and to priorities ◆ how to relate to higher management 	<p>Outcome 2 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ engage in organisational management activities, such as prioritising and discussing objectives
<p>Outcome 3 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ how to plan a work schedule and organise other people on a task ◆ the importance of reflection in good management and supervision 	<p>Outcome 3 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ participate in and reflect on a minimum of two work placements at a supervisory or lower-management level

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 4 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ meta-skills, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — the categories of self-management, social intelligence and innovation, and associated meta-skills, as described in Skills 4.0 — the importance of developing meta-skills, including employability, adaptability, and effectiveness — what meta-skills are most relevant to the learner’s vocational context ◆ approaches to developing meta-skills; in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — self-awareness: analysing preferences, strengths and weaknesses; meta-skills self-assessment — goal setting and action planning — reflective practice: principles of reflective practice; tools and approaches for effective reflective practice 	<p>Outcome 4 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ plan a strategy for meta-skills development ◆ implement and review plans for their meta-skills development ◆ assess their meta-skills development

Meta-skills

Throughout the unit, learners develop meta-skills to enhance their employability in the horticulture sector.

Self-management

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ focusing: recognising specific areas to work on and develop
- ◆ adapting: prioritising and discussing objectives; reflecting on and adapting management and supervision

Social intelligence

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ communicating: organising other people on a task, and communicating their role and responsibilities effectively; relating to higher management
- ◆ leading: creating work plans for the supervision and management of others

Innovation

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ creativity: understanding how different practical activities can be used in horticulture
- ◆ critical thinking: understanding when to use different practical applications in horticulture

Literacies

Learners develop core skills in the following literacies:

Communication

Learners develop communication skills by taking on a managerial role or supervising others. Clear communication skills are an essential part of professional practice and behaviours.

Digital

Learners develop digital skills and computer literacy through the production of an e-portfolio or blog.

Delivery of unit

You can teach and assess this unit alongside other units. In particular, you can integrate the management activities in outcomes 2 and 3 with the development of a management plan for outcomes 3 and 4 of Botanic and Historic Garden Horticulture at SCQF level 8.

The notional design length for the unit is 120 hours. However, the amount of time you allocate to each outcome is at your discretion.

We suggest the following distribution of time, including assessment:

Outcome 1 — demonstrate a range of practical activities relevant to horticulture
(60 hours)

Outcome 2 — engage in organisational management activities
(20 hours)

Outcome 3 — participate in and reflect on a minimum of two work placements
(20 hours)

Outcome 4 — develop meta-skills in a vocational or academic context
(20 hours)

Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

This unit is a work-based unit. Supporting materials and guidance on management and professional behaviours are available online, in tutorials, and through discussion. You may need to support learners in the use of digital technologies, for example to create their blog or e-portfolio.

We recognise that a wide range of learners may do this course, with varying levels of work experience. You can help learners by discussing what specific areas of professional practice they want to develop. Learners can set their own goals, and reflect on how well they have met these and what areas they could focus on developing in the future. This placement could be simulated or work-based and could be in a wide range of sectors, such as:

- ◆ amenity horticulture
- ◆ community growing initiatives
- ◆ botanic gardens
- ◆ historic gardens
- ◆ production horticulture
- ◆ research
- ◆ retail

Equality and inclusion

This unit is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You should take into account the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page:

www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Information for learners

Horticulture: Professional Practice (SCQF level 8)

This information explains:

- ◆ what the unit is about
- ◆ what you should know or be able to do before you start
- ◆ what you need to do during the unit
- ◆ opportunities for further learning and employment

Unit information

This unit provides you with the knowledge and skills you need to enter the horticulture industry at an appropriate level, with a view to working at a supervisory or lower-management level.

You gain authentic, practical and professional skills, in collaboration with industry partners.

You have the opportunity to carry out and reflect on two learning placements throughout the year, in areas of industry that are of interest to you. These placements allow you to demonstrate a range of the horticultural skills you have developed. You also develop other professional skills, such as carrying out risk assessments, work planning and stock management.

The unit also contains a meta-skills outcome that allows you to demonstrate and record the range of meta-skills you have developed across this unit and other units within the HND. The meta-skills cover self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

On completion of the unit, and on achievement of the Higher National Diploma (HND), you may be able to progress to the BSc in Horticulture. Alternatively, you may wish to apply directly to the horticulture industry and related work placements.

Administrative information

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Superclass: AF

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	Amended outcome 3 wording and evidence requirements.	July 2024

Note: please check [SQA's website](#) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.