



Diploma in Environmental and Land-based Studies

Career Progression in Environmental Industries - Horticulture

Foundation Diploma to a Vocational Qualification to Employment

A career in Horticulture

Example – Gardener

The UK is renowned for its many open spaces, parks and gardens and there exist many varied opportunities for different types of gardener.

Gardeners grow and look after plants in many different settings. These include public and historical parks, private & botanical gardens, plant nurseries, sports facilities, roadside verges and green areas around public buildings. No two parks or gardens are the same therefore the work is varied, interesting and provides a wide variety of daily tasks and opportunities.

The job requires a wide range of different skills:

These include:

- an understanding of plant science
- a willingness to develop a full range of horticultural craft skills
- being able to work well alone and as part of a team
- good negotiating, communication and business skills
- a good awareness of health and safety issues.

Around 170,000 people work within gardening and horticulture in the UK. Given the role of gardeners there are many different types of employers, including local authorities, private companies, developers, voluntary sector organisations, sport clubs and heritage organisations such as the National Trust.

Gardening itself is becoming more popular, leading to greater demand for gardening services. Employment opportunities are increasing as local authorities seek to improve the 'green spaces' they control.

For information on the skills gaps and shortages of the current workforce and factsheets on individual industries within the environmental and land-based sector, including horticulture please visit: www.lantra.co.uk/skills-assessment

Although there are no set academic requirements for entry into this particular job role the Foundation Diploma would equip students with real skills and knowledge with which to undertake further study in preparation for employment.

There are also many other job roles within the horticulture industry and information on these can be found at www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u/ and www.afuturein.com

Why choose the Foundation Diploma in Environmental and Land-based Studies for entry into a career in Horticulture?

What makes the Diploma different from the traditional GCSE route is that it is not purely a classroom based course. Students get out and about and learn from different employer businesses/organisations who understand what the next workforce generation needs to know. Consequently students take up to date, real world knowledge directly into the workplace.

This is achieved through employers being actively involved with the Diploma in a number of different ways, for example:

- Work Shadowing
- Industry Days
- Visits
- Mentoring
- Questions and Answers Sessions
- Work Experience.

For further information on Employer Engagement in the Diploma visit – www.diplomaelbs.org.uk/welcome/consortia/downloads-and-resources/

What does the Diploma actually consist of and how is it different?

The Foundation Diploma is equivalent to 5 GCSEs (grades D-G). You can also study additional GCSEs alongside the Foundation Diploma.

There are **three** elements to the diploma:

- principal learning
- generic learning
- additional and specialist learning.

Principal Learning

Principal learning is a free standing qualification relating to the environmental and Land-based sector. It focuses on developing relevant knowledge, understanding and skills and applying them to work-based situations.

Therefore students would look at:

- exploring the productive and working environment – how we manage the environment in the modern world
- plants and animals – the role plants and animals in today's society covering subjects including nutrition, care, welfare and breeding
- developing the sustainable environment – the impact of people and business on the environment and debating current environmental issues.

Generic Learning

Consists of:

- functional skills in English, ICT and mathematics
- personal, learning and thinking skills
- a project
- work experience – a minimum of 10 days related work-based activities.

A Project

A student interested in a career in horticulture such as a Gardener would perhaps choose a project related to 'parks users, for both visitors and sports users' or 'a survey of various uses of the park during various seasons of the year'.

In order to meet project objectives students need to:

- manage the project
- use resources/undertake research as appropriate to the topic
- develop the project to achieve the planned outcome
- review the project outcomes including own learning and performance.

Students need to show they can plan, deliver and present a piece of work.

Work Experience

There are numerous opportunities for work experience in the horticultural industry. This could include working in historic or botanic gardens.

For a career in horticulture enthusiasm and an interest in working with plants and nature is really important. Work experience along with any voluntary experience would also be extremely valuable and is looked on favourably by employers.

Additional and Specialist Learning (ASL)

Additional and specialist learning adds breadth and/or depth to the learning experience. A student's choice of ASL enables them to personalise their programme to include studies which interest them and support their career ambitions. An example of this could be a Level 2 Certificate Working Safely in Agriculture/Horticulture or a Level 2 BTEC First Certificate in Horticulture.

For further information on the qualifications within the diploma please visit <http://www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/DiplomaCatalogueSelection.aspx>

Further Progression

On completion of the Diploma there will be opportunities both to undertake further study and to enter employment. There are a range of vocational qualifications available to further enhance opportunities for employment. These include a Level 2 or Level 3 Award, Certificate or Diploma in Horticulture and the Royal Horticultural Society Level 2 Certificate in Horticulture.

There may be opportunities to progress in this career to supervisor, managing a team of gardeners as well as the opportunity to diversify into different careers, such as outdoor recreation officer and horticultural education officer.

For a list of current qualifications visit the national database of accredited qualifications (NDAQ), www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk

It may also be possible to enter this career through an appropriate apprenticeship programme. Apprenticeships provide structured training with an employer and combine practical and theoretical skills designed to help employees reach a high level of competency and performance. For information on apprenticeships visit www.apprenticeship.org.uk

Diploma progression illustrations can be found on the QCDA website: www.qcda.gov.uk/25715.aspx

More information on the Diploma in Environmental and Land-based Studies can be found at www.diplomaelbs.org.uk.