

OATRIDGE COLLEGE

Higher National Certificate in Horticulture

The HNC in Horticulture is a nationally recognized award that has been designed to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for the needs of the horticulture industry, both locally and nationally. It was recently reviewed and updated to reflect the changing demands of the industry and we offered this new HNC for the first time in September 2007.

For entry to the course, candidates must possess an appropriate level of Numeracy and Communication skills. Formal qualifications, appropriate work experience, or both may be sufficient evidence. Candidates may already hold an SVQ at level 2 or 3 in Amenity Horticulture, an appropriate group of Certificate level units or already have adequate relevant industrial experience. Mature candidates without a horticultural qualification may be admitted to the course if they can, during interview, demonstrate a capacity to cope with the demands of the course.

On achievement of the HNC Horticulture, it is possible to progress directly to HND Horticulture or HND Horticulture with Plantsmanship. The completion of a few additional units will also allow progression to HND Landscape Management.

If already in employment in horticulture or landscaping, an HNC should enhance your opportunity to progress to managerial positions within the workplace.

If directly entering employment after HNC, it may be possible to enter the horticulture industry at Senior Craft or Supervisory level. Other areas include self-employment, Technical Officer or Park Services Manager with a Local Authority, Technician dealing with plants, Head Gardener, Grounds supervisor, Curator in a Botanic Garden, Assistant Parks Manager, Garden Centre Manager, Nursery Manager, Parks technical Officer, Client Officer.

The course is offered on a full time and a part time basis. Full time students are required to attend a number of formal, practical and study sessions each week over one year (September to early June). It has also been designed to enable part-time students to complete the course at their own pace, although they can achieve the HNC in as little as two years.

The HNC is based on Higher National Units that have a total value of 12 credits. Candidates wishing to progress to HND will require to complete a further 3 bridging credits before being able to enter the HND course. HND involves the successful completion of a further 15 credits (30 in total).

At Oatridge, it is necessary to successfully complete all of the following Units in order to achieve the HNC in Horticulture:

HNC Horticulture Graded Unit. (1 credit)

The purpose of this Unit is to provide evidence that you have achieved the principal aims of the HNC, and that you can integrate knowledge and skills and apply them to new contexts. In Horticulture, it takes the form of an end of course Exam which is graded A, B or C.

Using Software Application Packages (1 credit)

This unit enables you to use IT systems and software application packages to process a range of types of data. You will integrate data from more than one application and carry out searches to extract and present information from electronic data sources.

Horticultural Practices (2 credits)

In this unit, you will be introduced to the main career routes and opportunities within the horticultural sector. During the bulk of this unit you will identify, acquire and apply the main practical skills required in horticulture, and to a minimum identified level, using professionally accepted techniques and standards.

Horticulture: Plant Recognition and Use (1 credit)

The aims of this unit are to develop your skills in plant recognition and plant knowledge. You will also develop an understanding of why specific plants are suitable for particular landscape use and their care and maintenance.

Soil Management (1 credit)

Here you will develop your skills in the assessment of soil properties and fertiliser needs. By the end of the unit, you will be able to evaluate the most appropriate soil management practices.

Plant Protection (1 credit)

You will develop your skills in the recognition and identification of plant protection problems. You will also be able to select the most appropriate methods for their control to a level of competence where you will be able to make sound practical decisions in the workplace.

Plant Growth & Development (1 credit)

After completion, you will be able to explain the biological processes responsible for development, growth and reproduction in plants. This will give a background to propagation, cultivation and the production of plants. It will also prepare you for more advanced studies, including 'Plant Physiology'.

Plant Physiology (1 credit)

This unit investigates the processes underlying plant growth and is an important foundation for a career in crop production, plant biotechnology and horticulture. It also underpins the work of more advanced units that examine crop physiology at the canopy level, the molecular and biochemical basis of plant growth and plant-environment interactions.

Nursery Production (1 credit)

In this unit you will be introduced to a range of nursery produced plants, their production systems and the factors that influence the choice of plants.

Horticultural Mechanisation Principles (1 credit)

This unit introduces you to the fundamentals of horticultural mechanisation. You will consider the machines that are suitable and appropriate for all types of horticultural business (cultivation and grass-care) and the maintenance needs of these machines. You will also look at the associated aspects of health and safety.

Supervision and Management (1 credit)

The Unit includes the identification of resources, selection of objectives, short-term plans. You will consider organisational structures and control measures used to ensure that performance conforms to appropriate standards. You will also look at decision making processes, management strategies and leadership and their relationship with management.

N.B. The units offered on this course at Oatridge College may alter slightly from year to year.

If you require further details about this course, please contact me at the address below:

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