

HIGHER NATIONAL CERTIFICATE & HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA



Programme Specification

Qualification titles:	Pearson BTEC Level 4 Higher National Certificate in Horticulture Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Horticulture and Garden Design
Qualification codes:	603/2853/8 (HNC) 603/2852/6 (HND)
Awarding institution:	Pearson Education Ltd
Accreditation details:	BTEC
Date specification was written:	July 2020
Date of next review:	August 2025

Aims of the Programme

This programme aims to teach and train students to be horticulture (and garden design) professionals to industry standards. It is unique in that the programme not only focuses on the theoretical side of horticulture but also on the practicalities involved in working in the horticulture (and garden design) sector.

In taking part in this programme, students will become able to meet the demands of employers within the industry and have a broad knowledge of the horticultural sector. Students will develop the confidence to embark on a chosen career path on completion of the programme.

The programme covers all aspects of horticulture from the principles of botany and crop nutrition to the business and marketing skills needed to be an informed and educated professional. The focus within the Pearson BTEC Level 4 Higher National Certificate in Horticulture is to develop a broad knowledge and awareness of plants and soil science, and the commercial aspects of the horticulture industry. This is aimed at those who are looking to gain knowledge and skills in this interesting and varied sector, one which offers many different employment opportunities. The focus within the Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Horticulture is on garden design. This is aimed at career-minded individuals looking for a more multi-disciplinary understanding of the industry.

This programme aims to produce graduates that can enter the industry and perform effectively in their chosen field; employed by a company or self-employed, running their own business in the horticulture sector.

Programme Outcomes

Students are expected to gain an all-round education in horticulture and the role it plays in our society. They will develop an appreciation of the role of plants and their relationship with humans, the local and global context of horticulture, and contemporary issues facing the industry, such as sustainability and the environment. The programme will focus on equipping students with the commercial and horticultural skills for success in a range of roles in this sector.

Academic skills will be developed during the course of the programme. These skills include learning to research independently, conducting primary and secondary research, critically evaluating, synthesising information, critically analysing a brief, as well as testing and problem-solving techniques and processes.

They will learn the practical skills required to work in the industry which include; performing laboratory experiments to investigate the principles of plant anatomy, physiology and morphology, identifying techniques to modify soil types to allow optimum production, producing attractive garden designs, using marketing to achieve business objectives, presentation techniques and managing projects.

Students will develop and hone other important techniques such as communication skills. Digital skills and presentation ability will improve constantly as will their knowledge of different sources of multimedia. Given the nature of the method of study they will also develop their time-management and organisational skills. Students will experiment with different methods and forms of communication gaining an in- depth understanding of the variety currently used today.

The commercial context is considered with regard to understanding the business environment, marketing and project management as well as the legalities and health and safety protocols which must be adhered to within the industry .

Teaching & Learning Strategy

Students are taught through a series of professionally produced online tutorial videos developed by the Academy. These videos can be viewed by students through the Online Learning Centre. Through the Online Learning Centre students can access comprehensive course material aimed at providing students with a relevant source of course content. All content, including video tutorials and course material, is developed in conjunction with industry experts.

Within the blended learning classes, there is a total of 72 hours of classroom sessions, delivered by a number of specialised tutors for the HNC programme, and a further 72 hours of classroom sessions for the HND programme. Normally each class is delivered by two tutors to facilitate workshops and in-class activities. Classes take place in a venue carefully selected for each centre on weekday evenings and/or Saturdays. Some classes feature guest speakers, professionals, who deliver workshops on specialised topics. Classroom students can also participate in class trips organised by the Academy in conjunction with classroom tutors.

Throughout the programme students are advised of horticultural shows, seminars and other relevant events that would be worthwhile attending and beneficial to their education. They are encouraged to undertake independent research outside of what is provided as part of the course material and are provided with reading lists which recommend sources relevant to topics covered throughout the programme as well as sources specific to each assessment.

There is an online Student Forum allowing all students to engage in peer discussion and to facilitate collaborative learning. Through the use of the online Student Forum and through external platforms, such as WhatsApp and Facebook, students are encouraged to engage with one another and to seek out support and ideas from their peer group.

Each student is assigned a tutor who they can email should they require additional guidance. The Student Services team is also available to answer student queries by email or phone.

Programme Structure

The Pearson BTEC Higher National Certificate (HNC) and the Pearson BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND), provided by the Academy, are very well-known and respected qualifications within the industry. The HNC is the same level as the 1st year of a UK university degree and the HND is the same level as the 2nd year of a UK university degree. Pearson has developed relationships with numerous universities that allow students to progress directly into a relevant degree program including opportunities for accelerated progression.

The Awards are comprised of the following credits:

Level 4 on the RQF (comparable to level 6 on the NFQ)

Level 5 on the RQF (comparable to level 6 on the NFQ)

Eight units make up the HNC at which point students are able to walk away with their certification. Alternatively, students can continue to do a further 7 units making a total of 15 units and receive their HND. Each unit is worth either 15 or in some cases 30 credits and each credit equates to approximately 10 hours of work time required by the student. Please note that this is only an approximation and differs for each student and each unit.

The following shows the breakdown of units within the HNC and HND:

Pearson BTEC Level 4 Higher National Certificate in Horticulture

FLG Unit	Pearson Unit Number	Unit Name	Unit Level	Credit Value	Unit Cod	Assignment Number
1	Unit 1	Principles of Botany	4	15	Y/616/8045	1,2
2	Unit 3	Plant Identification and Classification	4	15	D/616/8046	3,4
3	Unit 2	Business and the Business Environment	4	15	L/616/7829	5,6
4	Unit 4	Plant and Soil Science	4	15	T/616/7968	7,8
5	Unit 12	Marketing Essentials	4	15	F/616/7844	9
6	Unit 7	Plant and Crop Nutrition	4	15	A/616/7972	10,11
7	Unit 25MLN	Surveying and Measuring	4	15	M/615/3535	12,13
8	Unit 5	Managing a Successful Project (Pearson-Set)	4	15	F/616/7830	14,15

Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Horticulture and Garden Design

FLG Unit	Pearson Unit Number	Unit Name	Unit Level	Credit Value	Unit Cod	Assignment Number
9	Unit 17	Professional Garden Design	4	15	K/616/8048	16,17
10	Unit 19	Planning and Implementation of HardLandscapes	4	15	H/616/8050	18,19
11	Unit 15	Plant Selection and Propagation	4	15	H/616/8047	20,21
12	Unit 20	Landscape and Garden Maintenance	4	15	K/616/8051	22,23
13	Unit 18	Professional Garden Design Practice	4	15	M/616/8049	24,25
14	Unit 35	Sustainable Practices	4	15	D/616/7866	26,27
15	Unit 16	Research Project (Pearson-Set)	4	30	R/616/7850	28,29,30

*Please note: the units shown above represent the current structure of the programme and may be subject to change.

Assessment

Students are assessed using a number of different methods such as:

- formal essay,
- digital recordings,
- visual diaries,
- learner journals,
- lighting plan diagrams,
- annotated images,
- mind maps,
- mood/concept boards,
- client brief analysis,
- presentations, etc.

Multiple assessments are geared to form a part of the student's final portfolio of work. This portfolio is very important when going out into the industry on completion of the programme.

All of the tasks set within each unit are mapped to the relevant learning outcomes for that particular unit as set out by the awarding body BTEC. All assessments are delivered and submitted online through the Online Learning Centre - a secure, proprietary learning platform developed for the Academy.

Grading of Assessments

Each unit is broken down into 1 to 3 assignments depending on the unit. The achievement of learning outcomes, through the submission of student work for each assignment within the unit, is formally assessed at the end of a unit. Students are given the opportunity on each assignment to submit a version of their work for formative assessment prior to the final submission.

To pass a unit, students need to meet all of the learning outcomes and pass assessment criteria for the specific unit. To achieve a merit the student must meet each of the pass and merit criteria within the unit. To achieve a distinction the student must meet each of the pass, merit and distinction criteria within the unit. Most units will have 4 merit outcomes and 2 to 4 distinction outcomes.

For each submitted assignment, students receive comprehensive, developmental formative feedback from a tutor who is active within the horticulture and garden design industry. At the end of each unit the student receives summative feedback and a provisional result. Results are provisional until verified by the BTEC

External Examiner during the External Examiner visit.

Duration of Programme

Students may take up to three years to complete the HNC (Level 4) and may take up to 4 years to complete the HND (Level 5). Students can work at their own pace and in a time that suits them. There is no minimum time limit, however, a programme at this level does require a certain amount of time for reflection after completing a project. Students are encouraged to create an assignment calendar that includes assignment due dates that work for them, and one which can aid them in completing the programme within the required time frame.

Programme Team

The programme team comprises a Programme Leader who oversees the effective delivery of the programme and who is supported by a Course Co-ordinator. Tutors provide formative feedback to students and assess student submissions. The garden design / horticulture tutors form part of a highly skilled and knowledgeable team. Some of the tutors have more specialised qualifications and others have a broader knowledge of various, relevant topics.

Students will benefit from their varied and vocationally relevant industry knowledge. Assessment decisions are internally verified by the programme team in line with BTEC standards.

External Examination & Quality Assurance

The Pearson BTEC Higher National Certificate (HNC) and the Pearson BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) are higher education qualifications, aligned to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) benchmarks, and are part of the Ofqual Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

The Academy is a BTEC Centre approved to offer BTEC qualifications. The programme adheres to the standards of BTEC which are verified as part of the BTEC External Examiner (EE) visit. There are normally two EE visits per year and these visits include the verification of student results, sampling student work and verification of the Academy's QA Policies and Procedures. These policies and procedures are available to students within the student area of the Online Learning Centre and it is recommended that students periodically review these.

The Academy is also accredited by the British Accreditation Council as an online, distance and blended learning provider and is recognised by the International Approval and Registration Centre (IARC).

Additional Information

Our programme is a careful development and synthesis of many years of industry knowledge and educational teaching practice of the subject.

All key staff are passionate about the horticulture industry and have first-hand experience of what it takes to be a professional in this fast-moving economy.

We aim to provide a programme and mode of study that is accessible and available to all. We start our programmes with the fundamental basics of plant science and design, and this allows students to build up a thorough knowledge and base that will allow them to progress into both employment and University to a Level 8 degree (Ireland).

Our programme focuses on the practical implications of working in the business of horticulture but is still broad enough in its approach to allow students to branch off into other avenues of the horticulture industry in general.

In summation, horticulture is a very broad subject with a range of applications and different avenues that graduates can choose to follow. In this programme we combine practical application with academic rigour to produce balanced and well-rounded horticulturalists who are fit to apply their knowledge in a broad range of career arenas.



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