

# Next Generation Higher National Unit Specification

## Landscape Design: Skills and Practice (SCQF level 8)

**Unit code:** J895 48  
**SCQF level:** 8 (24 SCQF credit points)  
**Valid from:** session 2024 to 2025

### **Prototype unit specification for use in pilot delivery only (version 1.0) 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 landscape design industry. Learners can gain authentic, practical and professional skills that allow them to design and present a detailed landscape design to clients and tradespeople.

The unit is flexible to ensure learner-centred teaching and learning, focusing on key, contemporary topics of interest to learners starting out on their careers. It uses active learning techniques to challenge learners' current understanding and build their confidence to explore new ways of thinking and communicating information.

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

On completing the unit and on achieving the Higher National Diploma (HND), learners may be able to progress to a BSc in Horticulture. Alternatively, they may want to apply directly to the horticulture industry or related work placements.

## Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

- 1 develop a design portfolio for a landscape project
- 2 design a range of hard landscape features
- 3 prepare documents for clients and building contractors

## Evidence requirements

### Outcome 1

Learners develop a design portfolio for a landscape project, evidencing that they can:

- ◆ conduct and analyse a site survey
- ◆ engage with clients to develop a design brief for the site
- ◆ design a hand-drawn layout plan for the site
- ◆ present the design portfolio

### Outcome 2

Learners design a range of hard landscape features, evidencing that they can:

- ◆ produce detailed construction drawings for three different features using computer-aided design (CAD) software
- ◆ specify, source and cost materials for the selected features

### Outcome 3

Learners prepare documents for clients and building contractors, evidencing that they can:

- ◆ create a tender document for the construction of a landscape feature
- ◆ prepare a schedule of works including timeline and allocation of tasks to suitable professional roles
- ◆ prepare an example contract including terms and conditions for the build of a landscape design
- ◆ describe statutory requirements for the build of a landscape design

## Knowledge and skills

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

Knowledge	Skills
<p><b>Outcome 1</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ the practical application of surveying techniques for a site</li> <li>◆ site analysis techniques that are appropriate for the site, such as soil, climate and aspect analysis</li> <li>◆ the importance of the client brief and how to prepare one</li> <li>◆ how to create a layout plan by hand</li> <li>◆ the format in which they should present a design portfolio</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 1</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ conduct a site survey to industry standards using appropriate techniques</li> <li>◆ conduct an analysis of a site to inform the design</li> <li>◆ create a brief by engaging with clients</li> <li>◆ create a layout plan by hand to industry standards</li> <li>◆ present a portfolio to clients that meets their requirements</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 2</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ the different materials available for construction</li> <li>◆ the process of creating construction drawings</li> <li>◆ how to specify, source and cost materials for the selected features</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 2</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ create construction drawings to industry standards using CAD software</li> <li>◆ specify, source and cost materials for selected features</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 3</b> Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ what a tender document is</li> <li>◆ how to prepare a schedule of works, including the importance of a timeline, and how to allocate tasks to suitable professional roles</li> <li>◆ the importance of contracts and how to prepare one</li> <li>◆ statutory requirements for a landscape design build</li> </ul>	<p><b>Outcome 3</b> Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ create a tender document for the construction of a landscape feature</li> <li>◆ prepare a schedule of works, including a timeline and task allocation</li> <li>◆ prepare a contract for the build of a landscape design</li> <li>◆ describe the statutory requirements for the build of a landscape design</li> </ul>

## **Meta-skills**

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

### **Self-management**

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ focusing
- ◆ integrity
- ◆ adapting
- ◆ initiative

### **Social intelligence**

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ communicating
- ◆ feeling
- ◆ collaborating
- ◆ leading

### **Innovation**

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ curiosity
- ◆ creativity
- ◆ sense-making
- ◆ critical thinking

## Delivery of unit

We recommend that you deliver the unit according to your centre's facilities and resources. You should make use of industry contacts and, where possible, organise site visits to help learners to contextualise their understanding.

We recommend that you take a flexible approach to delivering this unit, using a mixture of classroom teaching and tutorials to develop the learners' knowledge and understanding.

Learners need access to CAD software and suitable physical sites to be able to meet the evidence requirements.

Ideally, this unit should build on the knowledge and skills learners gained in the Creation of Gardens and Greenspaces unit in the HNC framework. The site on which learners focus should be more complex than those they have worked on before; this could, for example, include an urban public space or a heritage garden.

You could invite visiting speakers to illustrate the alternative viewpoints of those involved in design, implementing and managing garden design projects. You could also encourage learners to explore presentation and construction techniques that can enhance the breadth of capabilities of the garden designer.

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** — develop a design portfolio for a landscape project  
(40 hours)

**Outcome 2** — design a range of hard landscape features  
(40 hours)

**Outcome 3** — prepare documents for clients and building contractors  
(40 hours)

## Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

Learners should have access to CAD software throughout the delivery of this unit.

If practicable, you could deliver part or all of this unit in a design studio to allow learners to gain authentic skills that they can apply in practice.

## **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](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

## Information for learners

### Landscape Design: Skills and 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 is designed to allow you to develop a greater understanding of the roles and relationships of parties involved in designing gardens and realising garden designs. You learn how to manage clients and contractors, and develop an appreciation of the design and implementation process from their viewpoints. Managing projects effectively can be as important as the design itself, and therefore it is crucial to recognise the significance of all stages of the process, from design to successful completion onsite.

Before starting the unit, it would be helpful if you had a foundation knowledge of garden design, ideally having completed units from the Higher National Certificate (HNC) Horticulture, on which this unit expands.

The unit involves both practical and theory sessions to deepen your understanding of all the elements involved in designing landscape features, including contributions from other professionals in the process. You should take advantage of opportunities to visit garden sites, which are as beneficial to your learning as practical sessions.

Throughout the unit, you have the opportunity to develop meta-skills covering self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

To complete this unit, you must achieve a satisfactory level in all pieces of coursework. These are normally in the form of structured questions and a project in which you submit drawings. This unit is suitable for you if you wish to pursue a career in landscape design or other related horticulture areas.

On completing the unit and on achieving of the Higher National Diploma (HND), you can progress to a BSc in Horticulture. Alternatively, you may want to apply directly to the horticulture industry or related work placements.



# Administrative information

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**Superclass:** SE

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## History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

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