

A SCHOOLS' GUIDE TO RHS QUALIFICATIONS



Contents

Introduction	5
What is horticulture?	6
Aiming High	9
Why you should offer horticulture to your students	10
What schools say about RHS qualifications	11
An overview of RHS qualifications at Level 1 and 2	12
Assessing the right level course for your students	13
Models and case studies	14
Model 1 – Become a satellite of an existing RHS approved centre	16
Model 2 – Partnership between business, an approved centre and a school	18
Model 3 – Set your school up as an RHS approved centre	20
– RHS Centre Approval Process	24
Model 4 – Send your students to study RHS qualifications at an existing approved centre	26
Physical resources needed for RHS practical qualifications	29
Where do RHS Qualifications lead?	
Further Study	30
Employment	33
Units of study and course content for RHS qualifications at Level 1 and Level 2	
RHS Introductory Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture	35
RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture	36
RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture	37
RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Plant Growth, Propagation and Development	39
RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Garden Planning, Establishment and Maintenance	40
RHS Level 2 Diploma in The Principles and Practices of Horticulture	40
Further Information	42
GrowCareers	43

Education and Learning
are at the heart of our
charitable purpose.

Introduction

The RHS is committed to providing a voice for all gardeners. We are driven by a simple love of plants and a belief that gardeners make the world a better place. More than two hundred years after our foundation in 1804, we continue to safeguard and advance the science, art and practice of horticulture, creating displays that inspire people to garden. In all aspects of our work we help gardeners develop by sharing our knowledge of plants, gardens and the environment.

Education and Learning are at the heart of our charitable purpose. Our qualifications, courses and workshops are for anyone who has an interest in plants and gardening, whether at a professional level, as a keen gardener wishing to acquire additional knowledge, or as a beginner wanting to gain the basic skills.

To protect our heritage and the future of our industry, we need to develop the interests and skills of our young people. We are working to put horticulture back on the map for secondary schools in the UK by working in partnership with leading organisations to develop project ideas and resources for teachers and careers advisors. We will be showcasing and facilitating

relationships between schools and inspirational businesses in our sector, and offering advice and support to an increasing number of schools who would like their students to benefit from studying for accredited horticultural qualifications.

This guide tells you how to set yourself up so that your students can study for RHS Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications whilst still at school. With the Level 1 qualification providing a great foundation for practical, transferable skills, the Level 2 opens a gateway for students to the horticulture industry, thereby providing a widely acknowledged stepping stone to a fulfilling future career.



What is horticulture?

Horticulture is not simply gardening. It is a strategically important industry that can help us mitigate the growing threat to our homes from flash flooding, to our green spaces and countryside from new pests and diseases, and to our food supplies from increasing demand and climate change.

Horticulture is a high-tech industry, where salads, herbs and flowers are grown all year round in glasshouses that can cover 25 acres or more.

Horticulture provides opportunities for creativity, artistry and design – from private gardens to public parks and landscapes. It can be a positive, impressive force in regenerating and transforming communities, from large scale projects such as The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to small scale neighbourhood events.

Horticulture is vital –it provides the food that we eat, the plants and flowers that we love, maintains our historic landscapes, parks and gardens, greens our cities and provides shelter for our wildlife. It offers diverse careers, from scientific research to crop growing, careers that provide great reward and satisfaction.



Horticulture provides opportunities for creativity, artistry and design

“The breadth of the RHS means there is always something new to learn or to be involved with...”

Aiming High

Matthew Pottage, 27, Garden Manager at RHS Garden Wisley
Matt is the youngest ever Garden Manager at the RHS. His talent and passion for his job, alongside his success at such a young age, are an inspiration to anyone thinking of a career in horticulture. Here, in his own words, he tells us how he got into horticulture and what his job entails.

Where it started

My love of all things green was perhaps a bit of a mystery to my parents, neither of whom were passionate gardeners. To this day, my mother puts it down to my grandma, who always loved everything to do with plants and gardens. My first interest really kicked in around the age of 10, when I started borrowing houseplant books from the town library and filling the house with plants! After filling every window sill, I started filling classrooms at schools. Eventually I found myself some voluntary work looking after plants at the local hospital and in a local residential home.

Horticulture as a career

Gardening satisfied my desire to work creatively and I rapidly decided to follow my hobby as a career path – it made perfect sense, far too many people hate their jobs and I wasn't going to be one of those people!

Training and first employment

I began my horticultural training at 16, studying a National Diploma in Horticulture at Bishop Burton College, near Hull. At 18, I was accepted as a trainee at RHS Garden Wisley and spent two years rotating between the different specialist departments. Working alongside professional gardeners enabled me to broaden my knowledge and hone my practical skills.

It seemed a no-brainer to take up full time employment when offered at the end of my training. I initially worked as a horticulturist in the glasshouse team and, whilst my love of indoor plants has never ceased, the offer to get back outdoors and manage the team looking after the woody plants a couple of years later was irresistible.

Me and my job today

Six years later, aged 26, I became the youngest ever Garden Manager at the RHS, responsible for the four teams that manage a huge part of RHS Garden Wisley, covering all the outdoor, ornamental plant collections. This includes everything from bedding, roses, the wonderful mixed borders and all the tree collections. I am responsible for over 100 acres of Wisley and over 25 full time staff. My role involves the management of a lot of people and a £100,000 budget, and whilst I don't get my hands dirty as often as I'd like, I'm in a key role for developing and moving the garden forward.

In addition to the day to day work, my career has been enriched by achieving the RHS Master of Horticulture and travelling to Chile to study one of my favourite trees, the Monkey Puzzle in its native habitat.

The breadth of the RHS means there is always something new to learn or to be involved with – it's probably the reason why nearly ten years here feels more like ten minutes!

Why you should offer horticulture to your students

Giving your students the opportunity to undertake a vocational qualification in horticulture whilst at school will:

- Provide a stepping stone to further, higher level study
- Equip students with practical skills that are directly related to work
- Provide a clear line of sight to employment in an industry that needs skilled young people
- Offer a balanced way of learning and working both inside and outside the classroom.

The horticulture industry contributes £9 billion to the UK economy each year and employs around 300,000 people. Those working in the industry display a passion for their careers and are rewarded with high job satisfaction. The lack of young people entering the industry however means that thousands of new recruits are needed between now and 2020 to avoid permanent damage to UK horticulture.

Horticulture needs new people at every level of the industry, including at least 2,000 at undergraduate and 1,000 at postgraduate level. A recent RHS survey demonstrated this skills shortage, with 72% of businesses saying they found it difficult to fill skilled vacancies. Moreover, 67% said that candidates often lacked basic workplace skills, plant knowledge and practical experience.

RHS qualifications give all students the opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of horticulture, to learn practical skills and to have a taste of the rewards a career in the industry may provide. Leaving school with an RHS Level 1 or Level 2 qualification, alongside GCSE's, provides a platform for further study and a route into training and employment.



RHS qualifications are respected for their relevance to the industry and their rigour, giving confidence to candidates, schools, colleges and employers. This does mean that the practical qualifications are demanding in terms of practical skills assessments and must therefore be taught and assessed by appropriately qualified and experienced people. To ensure standards, they rely on centres having robust internal verification processes in addition to the RHS external verification process which involves site visits.

Our hope is that the examples in this report will inspire you to involve your students in horticulture by making RHS qualifications available to your students. This document outlines how you can make that happen through the insight of other schools that have already taken their first steps down this path.

What schools say about RHS qualifications



“Delivering RHS practical horticulture courses allows us to provide high quality vocational qualifications for those who learn better outside than in the classroom. Students have to master a wide range of practical skills and, due to continuous assessment, avoid the stress of written notes and exam preparation. The status of the RHS makes the qualifications an excellent stepping stone to further qualifications and careers in land based industries”

Keith Oakley, Bohunt School, Hampshire



“For a school, offering horticulture is a great way of maximising use of existing space and encourages students to participate in outdoor activities, to pay more attention to their environment and to take ownership and responsibility for their surroundings”

Alan Robinson, Woodlands Mead School and College, West Sussex



“Horticulture is not just for the non-academic. Our year 10 and year 11 students undertake the challenging RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Plant Growth, Propagation and Development. This supports scientific knowledge and understanding – a useful addition to their practical skills”.

Mark Walker, Stanley Park High School, Surrey



“Many of our pupils enjoy taking responsibility for different tasks which can be undertaken in the garden. Horticulture builds a sense of self-esteem, teamwork, communication, patience and attention to detail that many of our pupils lack. We like the kudos of being able to offer RHS qualifications. Their reputation in the industry gives our students an advantage when looking for employment or considering further study”

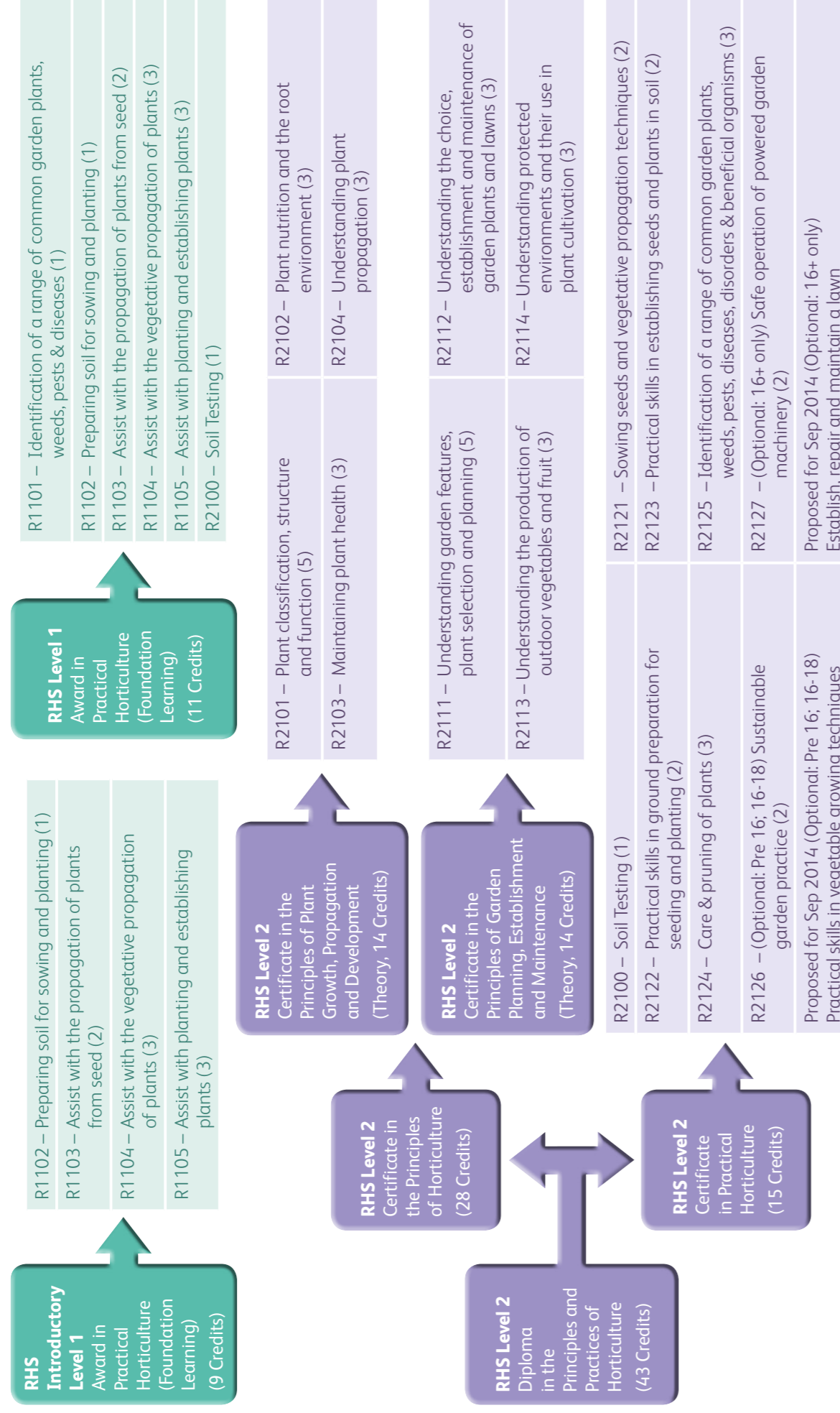
Alan Roderick, St Mary's School, East Sussex



“In addition to working towards a qualification (RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture), students learn about growing and caring for plants, develop practical skills and the life skills of planning, budgeting, making choices and independence”

Lin Backley, St Mary's College, East Sussex

An overview of RHS qualifications at Level 1 and 2



Assessing the right level course for your students

Name of Qualification	Credits	Guided Learning Hours	Assessment method	Suitable for students who	Progression route
RHS Level 1 Introductory Award in Practical Horticulture	9	90	Practical assessments; small number of short written assessments	Want to learn basic practical horticultural skills; are able to complete tasks with guidance	Further study at Level 1 or 2; Apprenticeship
RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture	11	110	Practical assessments; plant identification assessments; small number of short written assessments	Want to learn basic practical horticultural skills; are able to complete tasks with guidance; able to identify a range of plants by botanical name	Further study at Level 2; Apprenticeship
RHS Diploma in the Principles and Practices of Horticulture	RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture	15	Practical assessments; plant identification assessments; small number of short written assessments	Want to develop the skills introduced at Level 1; are able to complete tasks exercising autonomy and judgement; able to identify an extensive range of plants by botanical name; want to go on to employment in horticulture or further study / training	Further study or training at Level 2 or 3; Apprenticeship; Employment
	RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Plant Growth, Propagation and Development	14	Written examinations in February and / or June	Want to learn the scientific principles underpinning horticultural practices; want to go on to employment in horticulture or further study / training	Further study or training at Level 2 or 3; Apprenticeship; Employment
	RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Garden Planning, Establishment and Maintenance	14	Written examinations in February and / or June	Want to learn the principles underpinning horticultural practices; want to go on to employment in horticulture or further study / training	Further study or training at Level 2 or 3; Apprenticeship; Employment

Models and case studies

RHS qualifications are delivered through RHS approved centres located throughout the UK and Ireland. Only RHS approved centres are permitted to host examinations or conduct any part of the assessment process. You can apply to become an approved centre for theory or practical qualifications, or both. However, it is also possible for schools to link with an existing approved centre.

Theory Qualifications

Centre approval is required for those wishing to hold RHS written examinations. Centres must provide a single point of contact (such as an examinations officer), have a suitable, accessible venue for examinations, be able to store exam papers securely, have appropriate policies and procedures in place (for example: equal opportunities and appeals) and undertake to use appropriately qualified staff to deliver the courses.



Practical Qualifications

RHS practical qualifications are delivered and assessed in RHS approved centres. Any organisation that meets the RHS requirements for facilities, equipment and staff, and can provide a single point of accountability for the management of the qualification, can apply to become an approved centre. The suitability of each site is assessed by a centre verifier as part of the approval process. Examples of approved centres are schools, colleges, garden centres, nurseries, adult learning centres, parks and botanic gardens.

RHS practical qualifications must be taught and assessed by appropriately qualified and experienced staff and rely on an internal and external verification process to ensure standards.

There are different approaches currently taken by schools to be able to offer their students RHS qualifications.

Model 1

The school becomes a satellite site of an existing RHS approved centre.

Model 2

A partnership between business, an approved centre and a school.

Model 3

The school sets up as an RHS approved centre.

Model 4

Students study RHS qualifications at an existing approved centre.

These models are described in greater detail over the next few pages, using case studies of schools to highlight the benefits and requirements of each approach. They will help you decide the most suitable approach for your school.



Model 1

Become a satellite of an existing RHS approved centre

This approach suits schools that can provide adequate facilities, equipment and staff to run RHS practical qualifications on site, but would benefit from the expertise, additional resources, administration and verification provided by an existing approved centre.

Benefits

- Horticulture sessions and assessments take place at school
- Access to the expertise of an approved centre, including an internal verifier and possibly an assessor
- Access to the specialist facilities and resources, including plant material, of the approved centre
- The approved centre is responsible for the administration of the course and provides quality assurance and other policies (e.g. appeals procedures and health and safety policies)
- You tailor horticulture sessions to fit the school timetable
- Horticulture is visible around school
- Students actively involved in the care and maintenance of their own school grounds

This model requires your school to:

- Provide suitable facilities and equipment
- Meet the on-going cost of resources, such as compost, plants, seeds and tool replacement
- Care for plants, particularly cuttings, seedlings and young plants, at weekends and during school holidays
- Approach your nearest RHS approved centre, for whom it may be a new way of working
- Negotiate a fee with the approved centre that covers the costs of registration, administration, internal verification and support

This model may require your school to:

- Provide a suitably qualified or experienced teacher (qualified in horticulture to the level above the one you wish to offer, or one who has five years' experience of working in horticulture). This depends on the arrangement made with the approved centre
- Provide the assessor (qualified in horticulture to the level above the one you wish to offer and trained/qualified in assessment of practical qualifications). This depends on the arrangement made with the approved centre

Next steps to follow this route:

- Discuss the possibility of becoming a satellite of your nearest RHS approved centre
- Identify a suitably qualified / experienced teacher or train staff to required level
- Identify a suitably qualified / experienced assessor or train staff to required level. The approved centre may be able to assist you in bringing your assessment skills in horticulture up to the required standard
- Ensure you can provide necessary facilities, equipment and resources
- Once an arrangement and a fee have been agreed with the approved centre and facilities and equipment are in place, the approved centre will apply to the RHS in order for you to be accepted as a satellite
- You can request a support visit from the RHS to guide you through the detail of running RHS qualifications

Bohunt School, Liphook, Hampshire

Approved as a satellite of a land-based college to deliver RHS Level 1 and 2 qualifications in practical horticulture

School type and size

A mixed 11-16 Academy with more than 1300 students on roll.

Facilities

Small polytunnel, outdoor beds, large potting shed, large storage shed for tools and equipment, small propagation house, extensive collection of plants in school grounds.

Staff involved

Keith Oakley was asked to set up a horticulture department to offer practical qualifications to complement GCSE's. After advice from his local land-based college, Sparsholt, Keith completed the RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture by day release and trained in assessment to be able to teach and assess the RHS level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture. By setting up as a satellite of Sparsholt College, the school has been able to benefit from their support and guidance, with the college doing most of the administration. The school is also able to access Sparsholt's resources and the college also provides the internal verifier. Subsequently Keith has completed the RHS Level 3 Diploma in the Principles and Practices of Horticulture (theory via distance learning and practical at Sparsholt college) so that he can teach and assess the RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture at Bohunt School, allowing student progression to a level equivalent to GCSE grade A*-C.

RHS qualifications offered

RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture; RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture

Number of students and length of course

Two groups, with a maximum of twelve in each, have six 50 minute lessons of horticulture a week. They complete the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture in year 10 and then progress onto the RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture in year 11.



What would you say to a school thinking of offering RHS Qualifications?

"Setting up as a satellite of an existing approved centre, Sparsholt College, has really helped us. They provide the majority of the administration, the essential policies and the internal verifier. It wouldn't have been possible for us without their support".

Have any of your students gone onto further study, employment or training in horticulture?

Many have continued studying horticulture, some at level 3, with some undertaking more specialist Level 2 courses such as arboriculture, green keeping and landscaping. Others have switched to agriculture.

Several students are now employed by local landscaping firms, often combined with complementary study at college.

Model 2

Partnership between business,
an approved centre and a school

This approach suits schools that cannot provide adequate facilities or staff to run RHS practical qualifications on site but are able to work in partnership with an appropriate, local horticultural business. The business becomes a satellite of an existing approved centre, providing state-of-the-art facilities; the approved centre provides the point of contact, policies, procedures and a teacher/assessor and internal verifier. The school provides the students.

Benefits

- Access to the facilities, resources and industry standard equipment provided by a specialist horticultural business
- Studying off-site encourages independence and can increase motivation and attendance
- Students able to see professional horticulture close up and gain close connection to the world of work.
- Possible direct pathway to apprenticeship and employment.
- Some control over timetabling of horticulture sessions
- Low set up costs

This model requires your school to:

- Partner with a suitable local horticultural business
- Partner with an existing approved centre
- Arrange a suitably qualified/experienced teacher/assessor
- Arrange a suitably qualified internal verifier.
- Provide some of the equipment and resources

This model may require your school to:

- Transport students to the approved centre

Next steps to follow this route:

- Negotiate the arrangement with a suitable local horticultural business. Check they can provide suitable and safe facilities, agree a fee for use and provision of any resources
- Approach an existing approved centre to discuss the satellite arrangement and the provision of suitably qualified staff to teach, assess and internally verify the course at the required level. A list of RHS approved centres is available at rhs.org.uk
- Ensure you can provide necessary equipment and resources
- The existing approved centre applies to add the site as a satellite

Thomas Clarkson Academy, Wisbech St Mary, Cambridgeshire

Working in partnership with Delamore Young Plants and the Manea School of Gardening to offer RHS qualifications to students

School type and size

A larger than average, mixed 11-18 Academy (more than 1200 students on roll).

Facilities

Use of Fenland Horticultural Academy training facilities at Delamore – giving access to a teaching classroom, state of the art growing space under glass and the use of land for growing projects and assessment. Storage space provided for tools and equipment.

Set up and people involved

Delamore specialises in the production of quality young plants, grown from cuttings under glass, and is the largest horticultural employer in Wisbech. Their main site occupies 50 acres of land, with 15 acres under glass, and employs over 100 local full time staff. The Horticultural Academy on their site is the result of a joint initiative between Delamore, Fenland District Council and Local Enterprise Partnerships, providing facilities that allow young adults to develop horticultural and workplace skills in a commercial environment. As well as being used by their own apprentices and staff, the training academy enables students from The College of West Anglia and The Thomas Clarkson Academy to access vocational, horticultural training.

Delamore and The Thomas Clarkson Academy are working in partnership with an existing approved centre, The Manea School of Gardening, to offer RHS Qualifications at the training academy. The Manea School applied to RHS Qualifications to add the Delamore site as a satellite, enabling RHS qualifications to be delivered and assessed at the training academy. The Manea School provides the management of the course, the policies and procedures and the single point of contact. They also provide staff – Alan Mitch teaches and assesses, Mary Larham teaches and provides internal verification. They have also been able to advise the school on the resources necessary to run the qualifications.



RHS Qualifications Offered

RHS Level 1 Introductory Award in Practical Horticulture; RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture. Considering RHS level 2 Certificates.

Number of students and length of course

14 students attend every Friday – they are picked up by minibus from Thomas Clarkson Academy at 0830 and return at 1515. They are mainly from years 10 and 11 though there are a few year 9's, all were selected by interview after being invited to apply by their form tutors.

What would you say to a school thinking of setting up in this way?

“The model has been very successful. Sessions taking place in state of the art facilities within a real working environment reflects the high expectations all the partners have of the students and encourages good behaviour and attendance. Delamore see the potential for bringing in the younger, skilled staff they need and the students can clearly see the link to employment in a modern, skilled industry. Potentially the Academy will have students at the end of year 11 with level 1 and 2 horticultural qualifications and two or three year’s practical experience. They are likely to be offered an apprenticeship with the largest horticultural employer in the region”

Model 3

Set your school up as an RHS approved centre

This approach suits those schools that are confident in their ability to meet all the requirements of being an approved centre, including administration, policies and verification as well as facilities, staff and equipment. It gives schools the opportunity to have their expertise acknowledged in their local schools network and to offer their RHS qualifications to others.

Depending on the expertise and facilities within the school, it is possible to meet the requirements through one of the following three approaches:

- The school has facilities and suitable staff to teach, assess and verify 'in-house'
- The school has facilities and suitable staff to teach but 'buy in' assessors and verifiers
- The school has suitable staff to teach / assess but uses approved community garden / allotment for some practical sessions and assessments and 'buys in' verifiers

Benefits

- The school manages the course themselves and is able to tailor horticulture sessions to fit the school timetable
- The school is able to promote itself as a RHS approved centre, including the use of RHS approved centre logos, and can offer their RHS qualifications to others if they wish to do so
- Horticulture is visible to other students and teachers around school
- Students are actively involved in the care and maintenance of their own school grounds

This model requires your school to:

- Provide a suitably qualified or experienced teacher (qualified in horticulture to the level above the one they wish to offer, or one who has five years' experience of working in horticulture)

- Provide a suitably qualified and trained assessor (qualified in horticulture to the level above the one they wish to offer and trained/qualified in assessment of practical qualifications)
- Provide a suitably qualified and trained internal verifier to ensure that assessments are being carried out fairly. It may be possible to identify suitable internal verifiers through the network of land-based colleges listed at landex.org.uk or through other approved centres
- Provide suitable facilities and equipment
- Meet the on-going cost of resources, such as compost, plants, seeds and tool replacement
- Care for plants, particularly cuttings, seedlings and young plants, at weekends and during school holidays
- Administer the course and have suitable policies and procedures in place

Next steps to follow this route:

- Identify a suitably qualified / experienced teacher or train staff to required level
- Identify a suitably qualified / experienced assessor or train staff to required level. An approved centre may be able to assist you in bringing your assessment skills in horticulture up to the required standard
- Identify a suitably qualified / experienced internal verifier
- Ensure you can provide the necessary facilities, equipment and resources
- Apply to the RHS to become an approved centre (contact RHS Qualifications and ask for a centre approval form)
- You can request a support visit from the RHS to guide you through the detail of running RHS qualifications

St Mary's College, Bexhill, East Sussex

Approved centre for RHS Level 1 qualifications, assessments carried out on site and at RHS approved local allotment/farm

School type and size

A specialist college for students with speech, language and communication needs and associated learning difficulties.

Facilities

A tool store, small polytunnel (4m x 3m), six raised beds and a wide range of plants around the site (woodland, perennial shrubs, herbaceous plants and climbers) allow aspects of many Level 1 units to be tackled at college, especially with the use of a classroom that has potting benches facing onto the garden area. Extra room is found by having had a nearby outdoor educational centre / farm approved as a site for assessment. This is where students complete most of their soil preparation and outdoor seed sowing assessments.



Staff involved

Lin Backley, a science teacher, leads the horticulture. Lin and another member of staff are qualified to RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture and have been trained in assessment. An additional member of staff is completing the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture and provides further support. The school 'buys in' a freelance internal verifier.

RHS Qualifications Offered

RHS Level 1 Introductory Award in Practical Horticulture and RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture. St Mary's is a specialist college for students with speech and language difficulties, but all horticulture students attempt the six units of the Level 1 Award, including the identification unit. Those that struggle with the literacy skills required will gain the Level 1 Introductory Award on completion of four practical units

Number and age of students and amount of horticulture timetabled

Eight students, aged 17 – 19, have four hours of horticulture every week.

What would you say to a school thinking of offering RHS Qualifications?

"We benefit from having an approved external site for assessments, as we don't have sufficient space at college, and the students enjoy working away from the college site. Several of our students have gone on to further study at land-based colleges as a direct result of engaging in horticulture at St Mary's."

Lin Backley, Science Teacher

Stanley Park High School, Carshalton, Surrey

RHS approved centre offering RHS Level 2 Certificate in The Principles of Horticulture (theory)

School type and size

A mixed community school for students of all abilities between the ages of 11 and 19 years

Facilities

Raised beds, 20m polytunnel with facilities for propagation, perennial beds, annual beds, storage shed, indoor classroom

Staff involved

Mark Walker is a passionate and enthusiastic teacher, qualified to RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture and working towards RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Horticulture.

RHS Qualifications offered

RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Plant Growth, Propagation and Development (Theory, 14 credits).



Length of course

Students have three 50 minute horticulture lessons per week in both year 10 and year 11. Over the year these are roughly 50% practical and 50% theory, arranged as follows:

Year 10, September – February: Predominantly theory

Year 10, March – July: Mainly practical work on plots: managing the perennial and annual beds and The Shrub Project, whereby students grow-on young plants bought from a local garden centre. These are then labelled and sold through the garden centre later in the year. Students also undertake a work placement in the local horticultural industry

Year 11, September: Practical work on plots

Year 11, September – May/June: Students work towards RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Plant Growth, Propagation and Development, with exams in February and June. Those not ready will instead submit a portfolio of work towards a BTEC Level 2 in Practical Horticulture.



Number and age of students

2 x Year 10 classes (16 in each)
2 x Year 11 classes (16 in each)

What would you say to a school thinking of offering RHS Qualifications?

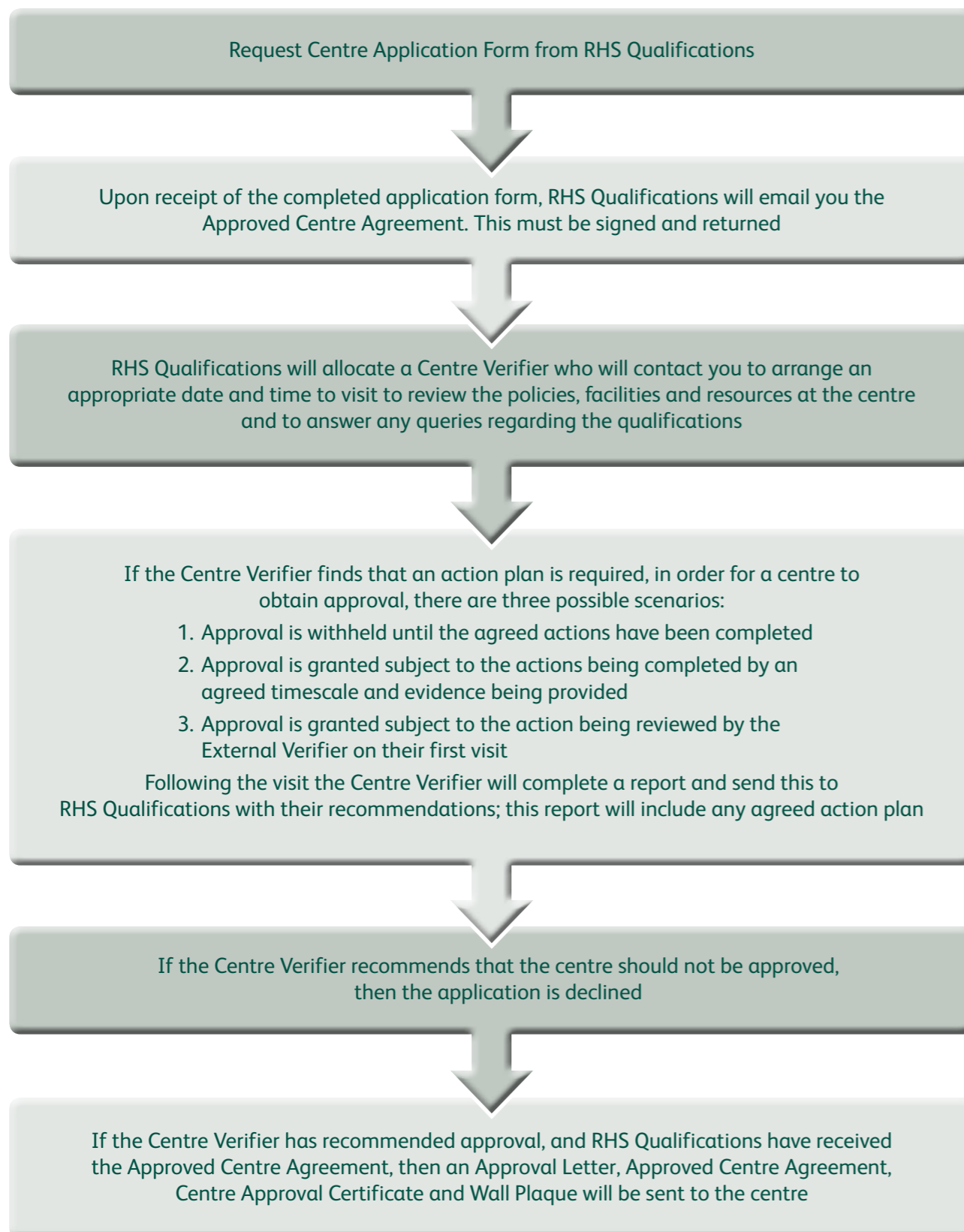
“Horticulture is not just for the non-academic. Our year 10 and year 11 students undertake the challenging RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Plant Growth, Propagation and Development. This supports scientific knowledge and understanding – a useful addition to their practical skills”.

Mark Walker, Horticulture Teacher



Model 3

RHS Centre Approval Process



Model 4

Send your students to study RHS qualifications at an existing approved centre

This approach suits schools that are unable to provide suitable staff, facilities and equipment but recognise the value of offering practical vocational qualifications in horticulture. Some schools put sufficient resources in place to offer an RHS Level 1 on site with students progressing to RHS Level 2 at an approved centre; in other schools all the horticulture takes place at an approved centre. Whichever arrangement you make, all schools and students adopting this route are able to benefit from the approved centre's expertise, facilities and resources.

Benefits

1. Access to the expertise, facilities and equipment provided by an approved centre
2. Studying off-site encourages independence and can increase motivation and attendance
3. Will not have the costs involved in becoming an RHS approved centre, including the provision of staff, facilities and equipment, or the on-going costs of running a horticultural qualification on site (if all horticulture takes place at the approved centre)
4. Will not have to care for plants over weekends or during school holidays (if all horticulture takes place at the approved centre)

This model requires your school to:

- Be in reasonably close proximity to an approved centre
- Find out what horticulture courses are on offer for different age groups (not all approved centres offer horticulture to 14 – 16 year olds)
- Fit in with the approved centre's timetable

Next steps to follow this route:

- Contact your nearest RHS approved centre to find out what horticulture courses are available to your students



LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common, West Sussex

An approved centre for the RHS Level 1 Award, the school facilitates students attending a local land-based college for additional horticulture qualifications.

School type and size

A specialist school for young people with Asperger's and autism.

School Resources

A polytunnel, a series of outdoor beds and trained staff enables students to develop their confidence in horticulture.

Progression

Supported by the school, students progress to higher level horticulture qualifications at a local land-based college where they develop independence as well as core horticultural skills.

Joe's horticultural journey

Joe's success in horticulture at school, where last year he completed 4 units of the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture, has greatly helped his self-esteem, his self-confidence and independence as well as developing his practical horticultural skills. Without this, he may not have made the step to 2 days a week out at his local land-based college, Chichester's Brinsbury campus.

Here he is able to benefit from the expertise, facilities and industry standard equipment provided by a specialist land-based college. Joe gains hands-on experience studying a practical horticulture course that includes soil preparation and testing, turf, plant identification and propagation. He will soon be combining this with work experience in a local garden centre and two days a week at school.

Joe is totally independent at Brinsbury and will be equally independent during his work experience, a great achievement for a student who has Asperger's and finds it difficult communicating with others. Joe can become very anxious when asked questions and when things are uncertain but practical horticulture enables him to focus and excel on routine tasks.

"I can just get on and do it. My worries go away because I totally focus on the gardening"

Joe Bedding, student at LVS Hassocks



Physical resources needed for RHS practical qualifications



Physical Resource	RHS Level 1 Introductory Award in Practical Horticulture	RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture	RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture
Covered growing space, such as a ventilated polytunnel	Not a requirement, but is recommended	Not a requirement, but is recommended	Not a requirement, but is recommended
Soil plots	Individual plots and plots for assessment	Individual plots and plots for assessment	Individual plots and plots for assessment
Indoor facilities for germination and propagation	Potting shed workstations approximately 1.5m – 2m width per student	Potting shed workstations approximately 1.5m – 2m width per student	Potting shed workstations approximately 1.5m – 2m width per student
Gardening tools and equipment	Tools and equipment for: preparing soil; planting out; maintaining plots; establishing plants; seed sowing and potting on; tool maintenance; vegetative propagation	Tools and equipment for: preparing soil; planting out; maintaining plots; establishing plants; seed sowing and potting on; tool maintenance; vegetative propagation	Tools and equipment for: preparing soil; planting out; maintaining plots; establishing plants; seed sowing and potting on; tool maintenance; vegetative propagation; water collection and storage; irrigation
Plants for identification	X	40 specimens to be assessed from the RHS approved list	110 specimens to be assessed from the RHS approved list
Material for propagation	Plant material for cuttings (soft tip, semi ripe, hardwood) and divisions Medium sized seeds	Plant material for cuttings (soft tip, semi ripe, hardwood) and divisions Medium sized seeds	Plant material for cuttings (stem, leaf petiole, leaf lamina, root) and divisions Fine, medium and coarse sized seeds
Plants for planting out and potting on	Each student needs to: plant bare root; modular, young and established plants	Each student needs to: plant bare root; modular, young and established plants	Plants for planting out, re-potting and potting on.
Appropriate plants, tools and equipment for pruning practice	X	X	Plants for pruning, pruning saw, bypass loppers, bypass secateurs, hedge shears
Soil pH testing equipment	X	Includes laboratory equipment for preparing soil samples, testing soil pH and determining soil textural classes	Includes appropriate laboratory equipment for preparing soil samples, testing soil pH and determining soil textural classes
Composting	X	X	Facilities to make and process materials for composting
Personal protective equipment and clothing	Overalls; protective footwear; gloves (including non-latex); eye protection; dust masks	Overalls; protective footwear; gloves (including non-latex); eye protection; dust masks	Overalls; protective footwear; gloves (including non-latex); eye protection; dust masks; hard hats

Please note, this table is for guidance only. For the definitive and up-to-date list, please refer to the 'guidance on physical resources and staff necessary to offer RHS qualifications in practical horticulture' on the RHS website www.rhs.org.uk/courses/qualifications

Where do RHS qualifications lead?

RHS qualifications are well respected in the industry and provide a route of learning from Level 1 all the way through to the Master of Horticulture. They can lead to employment, with RHS Level 2 seen as the entry point for the horticulture industry, or can develop understanding and skills once in employment. They can also open the door to further training opportunities such as apprenticeships.

Further Study

Joseph, student at St John's School and College, Seaford, East Sussex.

A special educational needs school and college that provide education, care and medical therapy to young people aged 7 to 25.

St John's is an approved centre for the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture and facilitates students attending their local land-based college for the RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture.

Joseph was inspired by undertaking the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture whilst at school, completing it with two hours of horticulture every week over two years. As St John's does not have the resources to deliver the RHS Level 2, instead of coming to school on a Wednesday morning Joseph makes his own way to his nearest land-based college, Plumpton, to study the RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture. At 1 o'clock he is collected and brought back to St John's.

At Plumpton he benefits from their extensive grounds and facilities, including several large tunnels, glasshouses and a wide range of plants. A team of dedicated horticulturists are able to share their knowledge and expertise. They also care for plants over weekends and holidays, something that was always difficult at St John's.

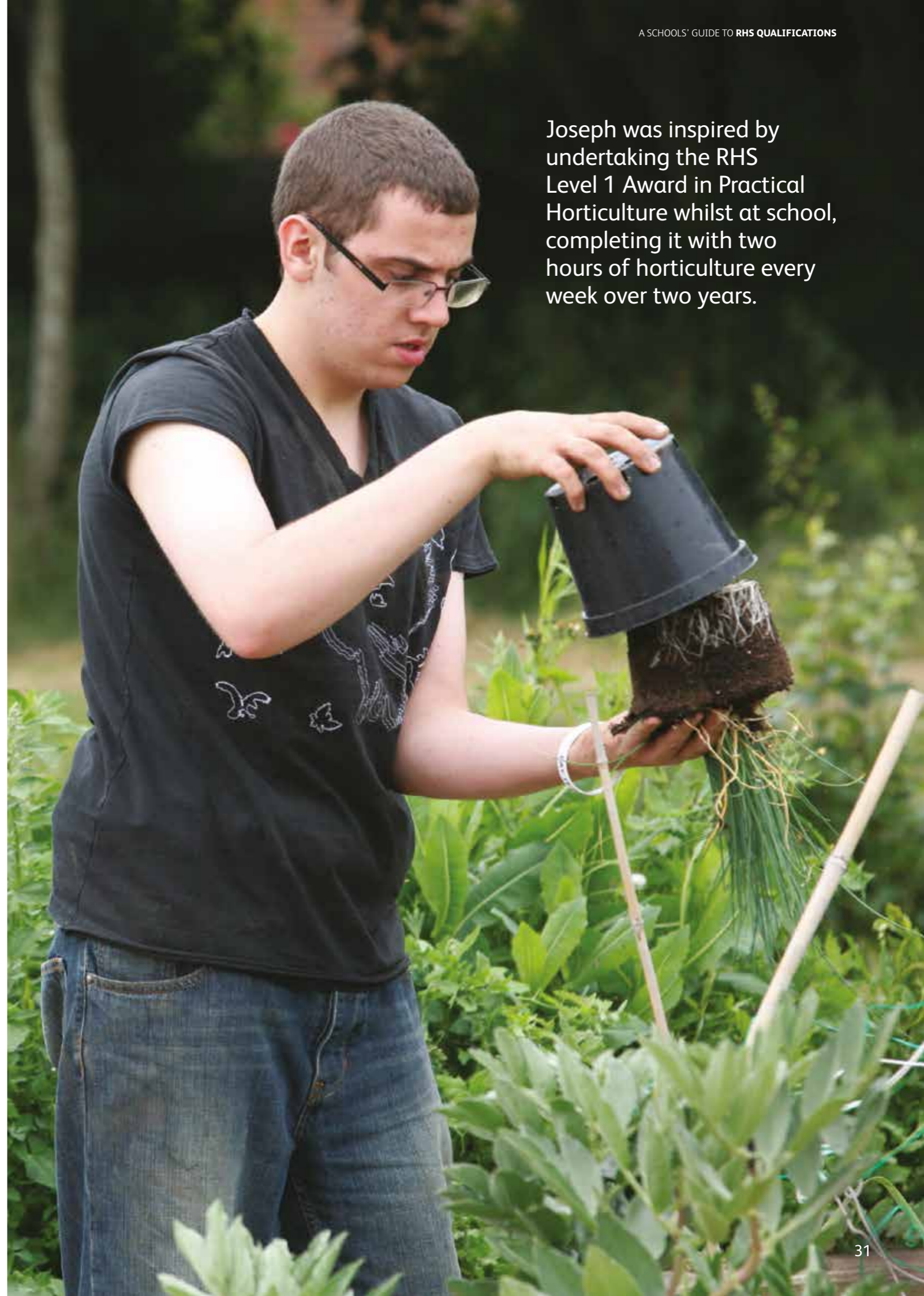
Whilst most of those on his course have no qualifications in horticulture, the knowledge and skills Joseph gained from the RHS Level 1 Award have had a hugely positive effect on his self-confidence. He loves being able to identify many of the plants that others do not yet know and has a head start when it comes to many of the practical tasks. He is also learning new skills, such as pruning.

Joseph clearly loves the different environment of college and the social interaction with people of a variety of ages and backgrounds, including those already working in the industry. St John's has arranged for him to get experience by working with their grounds maintenance team one afternoon a week and his new independence and confidence has enabled him to set up paid gardening work at weekends. His employers used to get him to cut the grass and do the weeding but now they're asking him for advice, "What do you think we should do with that Hypericum, Joseph?"

"Successfully completing the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture at school has given me the confidence to go on and study the RHS level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture at college. As a result I am now getting work experience with the school grounds maintenance team and earn money with a garden maintenance round at the weekend"

Joseph, student aged 19,
St John's School and College, East Sussex

Joseph was inspired by undertaking the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture whilst at school, completing it with two hours of horticulture every week over two years.



“To pursue a career in horticulture the best advice I can give you is to give one hundred percent and nature rewards you every day.”

Where do RHS qualifications lead?

Employment

**Lucie Tait,
Team Leader, RHS Garden Wisley**

“I get a vast amount of variety in my day-to-day work. As part of the seven-strong team we are responsible for 20 acres of diverse garden and we work hard to keep to Wisley’s exacting standards. The winter months are for planting trees, cutting back herbaceous materials and clearing ditches. It’s also the time for planning renovation works and designing new planting schemes across the herbaceous area. Then as the soil warms the seasonal tasks begin in earnest: pruning and planting, weeding and maintaining and more. Never dull or quiet, it really is a joy working for one of the most famous UK public gardens.

I left school at 18 after gaining 3 A-levels and followed a career in costume design via Wimbledon School of Art. I worked in television after college and then in the West End theatres followed by 3 years at the English National Opera. This was a fantastic time and taught me a lot about working to deadlines and achieving the impossible, but I worked in a black box with no windows from 11:00am – 11:00pm and hardly saw the changing seasons. In the end I decided I wanted to work outside with plants - they aren’t quite so demanding and when they put on a show, boy do they!

As a career changer it has taken me 6 years to get where I am now, starting with RHS Level 2 theory at Waterperry Gardens in Oxfordshire, then level 3 theory and practical at Bicton College in Devon. I worked all through this period in various garden roles: contract work, estate gardens, community allotments, alternative biodynamic gardens, garden centres, and school gardens, everything I could do with plants. The changes were necessary to develop the perfect combination of skills: working in a fast paced garden with lots of people, striving to be the best in gardening, sharing a passion for growing through education and tours, hearing about the newest advances in science and commercial growing.

These experiences culminated in employment as a horticulturist at RHS Garden Wisley in 2011. Initially a member of the Formal department, I worked my way up to looking after the front of house, then last November I took over the management of the Herbaceous Ornamental team, responsible for the areas around the glass house and the vast naturalistic plantings in the oldest part of Wisley, the ‘wild garden’.

I thoroughly enjoy breaking down the barriers to learning the complicated art of the horticulturist and getting new recruits kick started on what is a continual journey with gardening. I am always learning and I’m now studying for the Master of Horticulture here at Wisley, in my spare time.

To pursue a career in horticulture the best advice I can give you is to give one hundred percent and nature rewards you every day. There are lots of positions available for seasonal staff and trainees that allow you to experience gardening whilst you study. The potential is huge in this vast industry and there are options for those interested in engineering, science, education, events, or just plants. The trick is to enjoy the process of gardening and be as conscientious as you would be with any other career”.

Units of study and course content for RHS qualifications at Level 1 and Level 2

RHS Introductory Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture

Approved for: Pre 16; 16-18
Credit Value: 9
Guided learning hours: 90

The RHS Introductory Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture focuses on developing basic practical horticultural skills. It allows progression to the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture by taking two additional units.

Units of study

- Preparing soil for sowing and planting (1 credit)
- Assist with the propagation of plants from seed (2 credits)
- Assist with the vegetative propagation of plants (3 credits)
- Assist with planting and establishing plants (3 credits)

Assessment

The Introductory Level 1 Award relies mainly on practical assessments where students are expected to complete defined tasks with guidance. There are a small number of short written assessments.

Course Content

Unit R1102: Preparing soil for sowing and planting

Credit Value: 1

Getting the soil right is the foundation for successful gardening. Understanding how and when to prepare it means that you can provide your seeds and plants with the right balance of soil oxygen and moisture for successful germination and growth.

This unit provides the opportunity to hone the skills needed to be able to prepare soil for sowing seeds and planting plants correctly. It includes:

- Selecting and correctly using a spade, fork, rake and wheelbarrow
- Identifying and removing unwanted debris

- Safely loading, transporting and spreading bulky organic matter evenly over site
- Cultivating soil by hand to include single and simple digging, forking and raking
- Disposing of different types of waste materials correctly

The skills gained are essential for successful growing and provide an opportunity to learn how to use tools safely and efficiently, avoiding injury to others and yourself.

Unit R1103: Assist with the propagation of plants from seed

Credit Value: 2

This unit develops skills in raising plants from seed, including secondary cultivation of soil, preparation of growing media, sowing of large and medium sized seeds in a variety of ways and aftercare of seedlings.

The unit includes:

- Using and maintaining equipment in a safe and effective manner
- Preparing the growing medium
- Handling seeds in a way that minimises damage
- Sowing seed evenly and accurately
- Providing aftercare in accordance with instructions
- Disposing of waste safely and legally
- Working safely

Unit R1104: Assist with the vegetative propagation of plants

Credit Value: 3

Raising plants vegetatively is often quicker and cheaper than growing from seed and for some plants, it is the only reliable method. This unit will give candidates the skills to take cuttings. Schools will need to ensure suitable plants are available to provide sufficient material for the practice and assessment of the activities, though many schools may find suitable plants are present in their grounds already.

Whilst hardwood cuttings of many species will be fine outside, other material does best with some protection and it would be advisable to have simple propagators in place as a minimum.

continued overleaf...

RHS Introductory Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture (continued)

The unit includes:

- Assisting with collecting propagation material for the vegetative propagation of plants
- Assisting with preparing propagation materials
- Assisting with establishing propagation materials in a growing environment
- Safe working

Unit R1105: Assist with planting and establishing plants

Credit value: 3

Developing the skills needed to be able to plant bare-root and container-grown plants, pot-on plants and provide appropriate aftercare to ensure establishment is essential to successful gardening, whether for pleasure or for employment. Creating a flourishing garden, whether at school or in the community, provides the opportunity to practice these skills before assessment.

Each learner needs to plant out bare root, modular and established plants and to pot on young and established container plants.

This unit includes:

- Selecting correct tools, materials and personal protective equipment.
- Preparing the planting medium
- Transporting plants to the planting site
- Keeping plants in a suitable condition prior to planting
- Planting to correct spacing, orientation and depth
- Reporting any problems
- Maintaining and storing tools and equipment
- Providing support, shelter or mulching as necessary
- Safe working

RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture

Approved for: Pre 16; 16-18

Credit Value: 11

Guided learning hours: 110

This practical qualification focuses on developing essential horticultural skills and provides a foundation for RHS practical qualifications at Level 2. It could also be used to demonstrate an avid interest in horticulture required for entry to an apprenticeship.

Units of study

The qualification consists of six units, four of which are identical to those that make up the Level 1 Introductory Award. A student who has already gained the Introductory Award need only complete the two additional units to gain the full Level 1 Award.

- Preparing the soil for sowing and planting (1 credit)
- Assist with the propagation of plants from seed (2 credits)
- Assist with the vegetative propagation of plants (3 credits)
- Assist with planting and establishing plants (3 credits)
- Identification of a range of common garden plants, weeds, pests and diseases (1 credit)
- Soil testing (1 credit)

Assessment

The Level 1 Award relies mainly on practical assessments, where students are expected to complete defined tasks with guidance, and a small number of short written assessments.

Course Content

The two additional units that differentiate the Level 1 Award from the Introductory Award are outlined below.

Unit R1101: Identification of a range of common garden plants, weeds, pests and diseases

Credit value 1

A range of common garden plants, weeds, pests and diseases must be correctly identified, the plants being identified by botanical name. The specimens used must be on the list provided by the RHS, (comprising plants chosen because they are widely available and easy to maintain across a wide geographical range and pests and diseases chosen because of their common occurrence and horticultural importance). Access to live specimens is important for assessment and to allow students to become familiar with the plants, pests and diseases.

The unit requires students to:

- Provide written explanation of the benefits of using botanical names and how the terms genus, species and cultivar are used in naming plants.
- Identify a range of plants from the following categories: trees; conifers; deciduous shrubs; evergreen shrubs; climbing / wall plants; rock / alpine plants; weeds; non-woody herbaceous plants
- Identify a range of common pests and diseases

Unit R2100: Soil Testing

Credit value 1

This unit provides students with the skills and knowledge to test a range of soils to determine their texture and pH accurately. This is good practice when planning a garden as it may help determine the best location, the type of plants to be grown and the soil improvements required. It is also good practice to test garden soil regularly to be able to make necessary amendments as pH (and nutrient) levels will change over time.

This unit can be used to develop a useful understanding of the crucial role that soil plays in the life of a garden – influencing the amount of water and nutrients available to plants, root penetration, plant stability and the level of microbial activity supported. The texture of a soil will influence how the soil is managed, when it is cultivated and when it can be sown.

The unit requires students to:

- Understand the reasons for testing soil
- Collect and prepare soil samples for testing
- Identify the textural class of distinctly different soils by feel.
- Determine the pH of different soils using an industry standard soil testing kit.

RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture

Approved for: Pre 16; 16-18

Credit Value: 15

Guided learning hours: 150

A practical based qualification that focuses on developing further the essential skills needed in horticulture. It offers opportunities for employment and provides a foundation for further learning and training in the field of horticulture.

Units of study

The qualification consists of 6 core units and one optional unit. Any unit involving powered machinery is not approved for pre 16 learners (alternative units are available). Please check with RHS Qualifications for any additions or amendments to these options. Note that the soil testing unit is the same unit included in the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture. Students who have already achieved the unit do not need to repeat it.

Core units

- Soil testing (1 credit)
- Sowing seeds and vegetative propagation techniques (2 credits)
- Practical skills in ground preparation for seeding and planting (2 credits)
- Practical skills in establishing seeds and plants in soil (2 credits)
- Care and pruning of plants (3 credits)
- Identification of a range of common garden plants, weeds, pests, diseases, disorders and beneficial organisms (3 credits).

Optional units

- Sustainable garden practice (2 credits)
- Safe operation of powered garden machinery (2 credits).

Additional optional units (from September 2014)

- Practical skills in vegetable growing techniques (2 credits)
- Establish, repair and maintain a lawn (2 credits)

Entry Requirements

It is not necessary for students to possess the RHS Level 1 Award to undertake this qualification, but it is recommended that they possess the basic skills covered at level 1 and would therefore be an excellent progression route.

continued overleaf...

RHS Level 2
Certificate in Practical Horticulture (continued)

Assessment

The Level 2 Certificate requires students to complete practical assessments competently and independently. Students must also be able to identify an extensive range of plants (by botanical name), pests, diseases, disorders and beneficial organisms (by common name). There are a small number of written assessments.

Course Content

Soil Testing

Credit value: 1

This unit includes:

- Collecting and preparing soil samples for testing
- Distinguishing between distinctly different textural classes by feel using the ADAS 1985 soil texture key
- Performing soil pH tests

Sowing seeds and vegetative propagation

Credit value: 2

This unit includes:

- Sowing large, medium and fine seeds in containers to a consistent standard
- Specifying appropriate temperature range for germination of different types of seed
- Pricking out seedlings at stated densities
- Propagating plants from stem, leaf petiole, leaf lamina and root cuttings
- Carrying out propagation by division on a range of plants

Ground preparation for seeding and planting

Credit value: 2

This unit includes:

- Preparing the ground for seeding and planting appropriate to the plants / seeds being established, soil type and ground conditions
- Producing the required tilth for the specified finish
- Clearing debris safely, tidily and legally
- Working in a way which maintains health and safety and is consistent with current legislation, minimising environmental damage

Establishing plants in soil

Credit value: 2

This unit includes:

- Identifying a representative sample of plants, transport and maintain in good health prior to planting
- Positioning and plant the plants or seeds according to instructions /drawings

- Providing aftercare to meet the planting specifications
- Preparing, maintaining and storing equipment in a safe and effective working condition

Care and pruning of plants

Credit value: 3

This unit includes:

- Being able to re-pot and pot on plants, including:
 - Assessment of the condition of plants
 - Removal of surface media, easing compaction of the root ball and trimming aerial growth as necessary
 - Selection of appropriate growing media and container for the subject
- Providing appropriate aftercare to plants that have been re-potted and those growing in the open ground, including:
 - Application of fertilisers
 - Reporting changes to the condition of plants and suggestion of likely causes
- Applying the principles of pruning
- Pruning a range of plants to achieve specified outcomes

Identification of a range of common garden plants, weeds, pests, diseases, disorders and beneficial organisms

Credit value: 3

This unit includes:

- Understanding how plants are botanically named
- Identifying a range of plants by botanical name
- Identifying a range of seeds, pests, diseases and disorders by common name
- Knowing a range of beneficial birds, animals and insects

Sustainable garden practice

Credit value: 2

This unit includes:

- Identifying hazards and risks associated with sustainable garden practices, including:
 - Handling plant waste and composting
 - Applying compost teas and other organic materials
 - Water storage and use
 - Potentially injurious plants
- Using appropriate personal protective equipment and clothing
- Selecting and using a range of tools, equipment and materials
- Making and using garden compost
- Harvesting rainwater, conserving grey water, storing and using to irrigate plants

- Using green manure, compost and natural materials to enhance soil fertility and feed plants
- Preparing and apply liquid organic materials
- Selecting plant species adapted for specific environmental conditions
- Selecting and make provision for beneficial birds, animals and insects
- Preventing and controlling pests, weeds and diseases using sustainable practices

Safe operation of powered garden machinery

Credit value: 2

This unit includes:

- Identifying potential hazards and risks associated with powered garden machinery
- Selecting and wearing appropriate personal protective equipment and clothing
- Carrying out pre-start checks on powered garden machinery
- Checking that all safety signage, guards and devices are in position and operating correctly
- Identifying the controls and defining their function
- Adjusting a limited range of garden machinery for specified tasks
- Using garden machinery safely and effectively
- Cleaning and checking garden machinery after use
- Correctly disposing of waste associated with garden machinery

RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Plant Growth, Propagation and Development

Approved for: Pre 16; 16-18

Credit Value: 14

Guided learning hours: 140

A theory based qualification which assesses knowledge of the scientific principles underpinning horticultural practices. It provides a foundation for further learning and training in the field of horticulture.

Units of study

- Plant classification, structure, and function (5 credits)
- Plant nutrition and the root environment (3 credits)
- Maintaining plant health (3 credits)
- Understanding plant propagation (3 credits)

Entry Requirements

There are no pre-requisites for entry to the qualification

Assessment

Each unit will be assessed by a separate written examination covering all learning outcomes specified in the unit. Examinations are offered twice a year in February and June at RHS approved centres.

Course Content

Plant classification, structure and function

Credit value: 5

This unit will enable students to develop an understanding of the basis on which higher plants are classified and named. It covers the fundamental physiological processes within plants including photosynthesis, respiration and water movement as well as pollination, fertilisation, seed formation and germination.

Plant nutrition and the root environment

Credit value: 3

This unit develops an understanding of the constituents, properties and management of soils and growing media.

Maintaining plant health

Credit value: 3

This unit develops an understanding of pest, disease and weed life cycles including modes of infestation. Cultural, biological, chemical and integrated systems are explored.

Understanding plant propagation

Credit value: 3

This unit develops an understanding of the principles and main practices of plant propagation in horticulture.

RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Garden Planning, Establishment and Maintenance

Approved for: Pre 16; 16-18

Credit Value: 14

Guided learning hours: 140

A theory based qualification which assesses knowledge of the principles underpinning horticultural practices. It provides a foundation for further learning and training in the field of horticulture.

Units of study

- Understanding garden features, plant selection and planning (5 credits)
- Understanding the choice, establishment and maintenance of garden plants and lawns (3 credits)
- Understanding the production of outdoor vegetables and fruit (3 credits)
- Understanding protected environments and their use in plant cultivation (3 credits)

Entry Requirements

There are no pre-requisites for entry to the qualification.

Assessment

Each unit will be assessed by a separate written examination covering all learning outcomes specified in the unit. Examinations will be offered twice a year in February and June.

Course content

Understanding garden features, plant selection and planning

Credit value: 5

This unit develops an understanding of basic surveying and design principles and their application to basic garden design and planning. Students will also develop an understanding of plant selection for soft landscaping.

Understanding the choice, establishment and maintenance of garden plants and lawns

Credit value: 3

This unit develops an understanding of plant selection, establishment and maintenance of lawns and a range of ornamental plants

Understanding the production of outdoor vegetables and fruit

Credit value: 3

This unit develops an understanding of the basic cultural operations and production methods necessary to obtain outdoor vegetable and fruit crops.

Understanding protected environments and their use in plant cultivation

Credit value: 3

This unit develops an understanding of the control of the environment in greenhouses, frames, polythene tunnels and cloches; the horticultural uses of protected environments; the production of a range of plants in greenhouses and tunnels; and the care of plants in the house and conservatory.

RHS Level 2 Diploma in the Principles and Practices of Horticulture

Approved for: Pre 16; 16-18

Credit Value: 43

Guided learning hours: 430

The Level 2 Diploma combines both the theory-based and practical-based qualifications at Level 2. Learners who successfully complete all the necessary units for every one of the Level 2 qualifications listed previously will gain the RHS Level 2 Diploma.



Further Information

Regulated qualifications

The RHS Awarding Organisation is recognised by Ofqual and the Welsh Government. As such, our qualifications are accredited in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

By being recognised:

- Our qualifications are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications which is a key resource for those looking to take qualifications
- It informs centres, students and employers, that our qualifications are monitored and are of the standard and level that they claim to be
- When we develop qualifications it gives an assurance that the qualification has appropriate industry support

Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)

Qualifications that are within the QCF framework are made up of units. This provides flexible ways to gain a qualification. Each unit has a credit value which gives an indication of how long it will take the average learner to achieve a unit or qualification. One credit will usually take the average learner 10 hours of study.

Each unit has:

- A level, which indicates the degree of complexity of the unit. Vocational qualifications at level 1 are at the same level as GCSE's grade D-G, and at level 2 are at the same level as GCSE's grade A*-C
- A credit value which gives the number of credits that a learner achieves by successful completion of the unit.
- Learning outcomes which state what the learner achieves by successful completion of the unit.
- Assessment criteria which describe what standard the learner has to meet to show that a learning outcome has been achieved.

Candidate Certification

Once candidates have met the requirements for the unit a credit certificate will be issued. Once all units have been passed for the qualification a qualification certificate will be issued. All certificates are sent to the approved centre.

Section 96 Qualifications

Section 96 is the section of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 that provides the Secretary of State with the power to approve qualifications for delivery to people under 19 years of age. It enables courses that lead to qualifications to be taught in funded institutions, and for public funds to be used for these courses and qualifications. The RHS Level 1 Introductory Award in Practical Horticulture, the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture, the RHS Level 2 Certificates in the Principles of Horticulture and the RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture have been approved for pre-16 (avoiding units with powered machinery) and 16-18.

How can I find out more

Visit our website at: rhs.org.uk

The RHS Qualifications team are available to help answer any questions you may have and to support you in offering RHS qualifications to your students.

Email: qualifications@rhs.org.uk

Phone: 01483 226500

Post: RHS Qualifications, RHS Garden Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB

All images: Fiona Secrett © RHS, apart from: p6 © Ginger Horticulture, p6 Paul Kettell © RHS, p7 © Ginger Horticulture, p23 © Mark Walker, p26 © RHS, p28 Tim Sandall © RHS

GrowCareers


The place to link to for guidance on jobs and careers in horticulture.

Focused information on:
Science & Technology
Arts & Design
Business & Food
Heritage & Conservation
Sports & Leisure
Health & Wellbeing

Grow Careers provides information and links to organisations from all those sectors.

Connect to GrowCareers via:

www.growcareers.info

 /GrowCareers

 @GrowCareers





RHS Campaign for School Gardening
The Royal Horticultural Society
RHS Garden Wisley
Woking GU23 6QB

Sharing the best in Gardening

rhs.org.uk/schoolgardening

RHS Reg Charity No: 222879/SC038262

