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Open Awards Level 5 End-point Assessment for

ST0924 Horticulture and Landscaping Technical Manager

End-point Assessment Handbook

Version History

Version	Date	Change(s) made	Section(s)	Publication source(s)
1		New document.	All	Development Team

This EPA Handbook is for apprentices, employers and providers. It provides an overview of the end-point assessment, the assessment methods, the grading criteria etc. It is a reference document which will guide you through each stage of the process.

For further information about apprenticeship standards and Trailblazers please contact **enquiries@openawards.org.uk**.

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Occupational Overview

This occupation is found in different organisation such as within the charities sector, consultancy, a government organisation and in private estates/client or commercial contracting.

Horticulture and Landscaping Technical Managers work in horticulture grounds maintenance, landscaping, parks, greenspaces and gardens (historic, botanic, destination and estate).

The broad purpose of the occupation is to develop, build and manage parks, gardens, greenspaces and grounds (e.g. business parks, schools, retail sites etc). This includes planning the site, engaging with clients, customers and visitors, financial management and income generation.

This standard is suitable for those who wish to focus on constructing horticulture areas and those who maintain and develop them, but may use contractors for construction projects. The types of horticultural sites covered will vary depending on the employer and examples include landscape scale commercial developments, public gardens or parks.

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for:

- autonomous decision making relating to horticultural sites.
- budget management including financial sustainability.
- health and safety of staff and public plus competence of workforce.
- awarding and managing contracts and contractors.
- procurement and sales.
- gathering, analysing, interpreting, implementing and communicating information.
- regulatory compliance.
- compliance with legislative requirements for all machinery and equipment used on site and minimising their environmental impact.

Further details on the knowledge, skills and behaviours associated within the occupational standard are accessible on the IfATE website[1] and in the Assessment Specification section in this document.

[1] **https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/**

Standard Information

Level: 5

Reference: ST0924

Approved for delivery: 28 September 2021

Route: Agriculture, environmental and animal care

Minimum duration to gateway: 36 months (this does not include the EPA period)

Employers involved in creating the standard:

Health Education England Hillier Landscapes Historic and botanic garden training programme Horticulture Trades Association Idverde John O'Conner London Borough of Waltham Forest Maylim National Trust Nurture Landscapes Professional Gardeners Guild Rain Tree Training Roger Gladwell Landscaping and Garden Design Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew Royal Horticultural Society Scarborough Borough Council The Garden Makers The Royal Parks

External Quality Assurance Provider: Ofqual

Entry Requirements

There are no formal entry requirements however apprentices must achieve English and mathematics in line with current ESFA funding rules.

EPA Documents Overview

An overview of the main documents and supporting materials you will encounter during this end-point assessment is in the table below.

Document Name	Brief Description	Who Should Read this Document	When To Use this Document	Additional Information
Skills Scan	This document is designed to support employers and providers to ensure that an apprentice's job role meets the requirements of the standard.	Employers Providers	Use this during the decision making process when considering whether the EPA is appropriate for the apprentice.	This allows employers and providers to ensure that the EPA is a good fit for the skills and aspirations of the apprentice.
Apprentice EPA Journey	A one page visual overview of the different milestones the apprentice will reach within their EPA journey.	Apprentices Employers Providers	Before committing to the course to make sure it is the right fit for you. Throughout the EPA journey.	This roadmap will help you to understand what has been achieved so far and what still needs to be completed.
EPA Handbook	This provides an overview of the end-point assessment, the assessment methods, the grading criteria etc. It is a reference document which will guide you through each stage of the process.	Apprentices Employers Providers	During the apprenticeship as a reminder of the expectations, assessment methods and grading.	This is a key document which will help you to navigate your way through each step of the end-point assessment. Refer back to this frequently.

Document Name	Brief Description	Who Should Read this Document	When To Use this Document	Additional Information
Progression Tracker	This allows the employer to compile and record an evidence base to prove that the apprentice has demonstrated competence against each KSB specified in the assessment plan.	Apprentices Employers Providers	Throughout the EPA prior to gateway.	This document could be a valuable basis for discussions around progress that the employer may have with the apprentice.
Preparation for the Business Case	This gives you a brief reminder of how to prepare for the Business Case and the KSBs that will be assessed through this assessment method.	Apprentices Employers Providers	When preparing for your Business Case (from preparing the title and scope for gateway onwards).	The grading descriptors will help apprentices to identify areas you may need to work on.
Portfolio Referencing Matrix	This gives you an overview of the Portfolio of Evidence requirements. It also includes a declaration for the apprentice and the employer to sign.	Apprentices Employers Providers	When you submit the Portfolio of Evidence to support the Professional Discussion at gateway.	If this document is not signed and submitted the apprentice will not be able to enter gateway.
Preparation for the Professional Discussion	This gives you a brief reminder of how to prepare for the Professional Discussion and the knowledge and behaviours that will be assessed	Apprentices Employers Providers	When preparing for your Professional Discussion.	The grading descriptors may help you to complete a self-assessment whilst preparing for the

Document Name	Brief Description	Who Should Read this Document	When To Use this Document	Additional Information
				Professional Discussion
Preparation for the Site Management Plan	This gives you a brief reminder of how to prepare for the Site Management Plan and the KSBs that will be assessed through this assessment method.	Apprentices Employers Providers	When preparing your Site Management Plan (from preparing the title and scope for gateway onwards).	The grading descriptors will help apprentices to identify areas you may need to work on.
Gateway Authenticity and Declaration form	This form declares that the apprentice is ready for gateway, the gateway conditions have been met and the evidence submitted has been produced by the apprentice.	Apprentices Employers Providers	At gateway.	This form needs to be signed by employers, providers and the apprentice. The apprentice is unable to enter gateway until this form has been completed and submitted.

Gateway Requirements

The training provider must provide Open Awards with the following evidence to enable us to approve the gateway.

- Apprentices must have completed the minimum apprenticeship on-programme duration (12 months from the start date).
- Apprentices must achieve English and mathematics in line with current ESFA funding rules.
- Portfolio of evidence
- Portfolio Referencing Matrix
- Business case project brief
- Site Management Plan project brief
- Fully completed and signed Gateway Authenticity Declaration form.

For more information on funding rules acceptable qualifications for English and mathematics, please visit **here.**

Assessment

The ST0924 EPA consists of 3 assessment methods:

- Business case with presentation and questioning
- Professional discussion, underpinned by a portfolio
- Site Management Plan with questioning

Assessment Preparation

Support materials are available on the Open Awards portal to help prepare apprentices for their assessments. These materials will also support training providers and employers post-gateway to ensure apprentices are well prepared for their EPA experience. They are not intended to be used to measure proficiency pre-gateway or to support gateway decisions. Training providers can access these materials through the Secure Portal.

Order of Assessments

The assessment methods can be delivered in any order. The result of one assessment method does not need to be known before starting the next.

Assessment Window

The EPA period lasts for a maximum of 9 months, including re-sits and re-takes. It is anticipated that apprentices that do not require re-sits or re-takes will complete within 6 months.

Assessment Method 1 Business Case with Presentation and Questioning

The business case involves the apprentice completing a significant and defined piece of work that has a real business benefit. The business case must be undertaken after the apprentice has gone through the gateway.

A business case is used to justify business change or bring new products or services forward. It should include projections based on sound research

The business case should be designed to ensure that the apprentice's work meets the needs of the business, is relevant to their role and allows the relevant KSBs to be assessed for the EPA.

This assessment method includes two components:

- a business case
- a presentation and question and answer component to ensure the apprentice is assessed against their evidence.

Delivery

The apprentice must create the business case after they have gone through the gateway, and it must be completed and submitted to the EPAO by the end of **week 12 of the EPA period.**

The apprentice must complete their business case unaided. When the business case is submitted, the apprentice and their employer must verify that it is the apprentice's own work.

The business case should be either paper-based or in an electronic format.

The business case should give a sound rationale for a business change, including the operational and financial implications for the business.

The business case has a **maximum word limit of 3,000 words**. A tolerance of plus or minus 10% is allowed. Appendices, references, diagrams etc will not be included in this total.

Assessment Timings

The business case project brief will be submitted to the EPAO at the gateway, thereby allowing the EPAO to sign off the subject, title and scope of the business case. The project brief must scope out the project and should include a summary of the stages covered by the business case and an overview of the tasks as well as the specific responsibilities and duties assigned to be undertaken by the apprentice. The project brief is not assessed and should typically be no more than **500 words** (+/- 10% tolerance).

The apprentice must create the business case after they have gone through the gateway, and it must be completed and submitted to the EPAO by the **end of week 12 of the EPA period**. The employer should ensure the apprentice has sufficient time and the necessary resources to plan and undertake the project.

Assessment Component 2 Presentation and Questioning

A presentation involves an apprentice presenting their business case to an independent assessor, focusing on a particular topic. It will be followed by questioning from the independent assessor.

Apprentices will be required to produce, submit and present a presentation to the independent assessor.

A copy of the presentation must be submitted to the EPAO at the same time as the business case report; **12 weeks after** the gateway.

The presentation will take place **4 weeks after** the business case report and presentation have been submitted, to allow the independent assessor sufficient time to review the presentation and prepare appropriate questions. Apprentices will prepare and deliver a presentation that appropriately covers the KSBs assigned to this method of assessment.

The presentation will focus on the results of the business case.

Delivery

The presentation will be presented to an independent assessor, either face-to-face or via online video conferencing.

The presentation with questioning must last for **60 minutes** typically, including a presentation of **20 minutes**, followed by questioning lasting **40 minutes**.

The independent assessor will ask a minimum of **4 questions** at the end of the presentation. The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the presentation with questioning by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete their last point or answer their last question.

Questions will be drawn from a question bank supplied by the EPAO and follow up questions are allowed. Assessors will record the presentation and questioning as directed by the EPAO. The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

The evidence from the business case, presentation and responses to questions will be assessed holistically.

Assessment Location

The presentation and questioning elements must be conducted in a suitable, controlled environment. They will be conducted remotely by video conferencing with a camera and microphone unless an in-person assessment is requested at gateway.

The assessment will be conducted in:

- employer's premises
- other suitable venue selected by the EPAO (for example a training provider)

The EPAO will have processes in place to verify the identity of the apprentice and have their camera and microphone on at all times to ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

Only the independent assessor will observe the presentation. (A representative from the EPAO may be present when necessary for moderation purposes.)

Grading Criteria (Business Case with Presentation and Questioning)

Grading Descriptors	Pass Descriptors	Distinction Descriptors
Communication K21 S17	Justifies their choice of communication methods for both technical and non-technical audiences. (K21, S17)	Evaluates the impact of the communication methods chosen on the audience. (K21, S17)
Finance K24 S21	Prepares, reviews and analyses budgets and/or forecasts and makes evidenced recommendations for efficiencies and/or improvements. (K24, S21)	Evaluates areas of impact in business case and suggests where alternative scenarios should be considered. (K24, S21)
Business Case K26 S20	Creates a business case that identifies the target audience and appraises the benefits, the positive and negative impacts associated with the business change and ways of managing these. (K26, S20)	
Promotion K7 S18	Identifies opportunities for promoting the business, garden, open space, products or services through the business change and develops	

	a targeted promotional approach. (K7, S18)	

A fail grade would be given where the candidate does **not** meet all of the pass grading descriptors

To achieve a pass, the apprentice must meet **all** of the pass grading descriptors.

To achieve a distinction, the apprentice must meet **all** of the pass **and** distinctions grading descriptors.

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (Business Case with Presentation and Questioning)

Ref	Criteria
Knowledge	
K7	Techniques for promoting business, garden, open space, products or services.
K21	Communication techniques for different contexts, for example, verbal, published, social media, broadcast media.
K24	Techniques for financial reporting and budgeting.
K26	Techniques for developing a business case for financing future projects. Methods for identifying audience and managing targets in business cases.
Skills	
S17	Selects communication method and communicates using a range of methods to technical and non-technical audiences.
S18	Promotes products or services identifying opportunities, audience and communication channels, generating written information.
S20	Develops a business case to aid decision making and financial planning of future projects, including identifying audience and managing targets
S21	Prepares, reviews and analyses budgets, forecasts and other profit and loss reporting, including recommending efficiencies or improvements.

Assessment Method 2 Professional Discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

A professional discussion is a two-way discussion which involves both the independent assessor and the apprentice actively listening and participating in a formal conversation. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm their competency across the KSBs mapped to this method.

A portfolio of evidence will be used by the apprentice to provide evidence to support the discussion and will not in itself be assessed or contribute to the overall grade. The assessor will ask a minimum of **10 questions** from the question bank provided by the EPAO and follow up questions are allowed.

The apprentice and the independent assessor will have access to their own copies of the portfolio throughout the professional discussion, and both can refer to it as needed.

The professional discussion must be conducted on a 1:1 basis in a controlled environment free from distraction or influence. The discussion can take place face-to-face or remotely via video conferencing. The discussion will be recorded. KSBs met and answers to questions, must be recorded by the independent assessor. The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

Assessment Timing

The professional discussion will last for **90 minutes** with +/- 10% tolerance at the assessor's discretion.

Assessment Location

The professional discussion should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence. This assessment will be conducted remotely by video conferencing with a camera and microphone unless an in-person assessment is requested at gateway.

The professional discussion can take place in any of the following:

- employer's premises
- suitable venue selected by the EPAO (for example a training provider's premises)

The EPAO will have processes in place to verify the identity of the apprentice and have their camera and microphone on at all times to ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

Grading Criteria (Professional Discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence)

Grading Descriptors	Pass Descriptors	Distinction Descriptors
History and social relevance K10 K14 S27	Assesses the history of a site using a variety of techniques, considering the social and cultural relevance of garden and landscape design throughout history. Identifies historical site factors, evaluating their significance and implications for the management of the site. (K10, K14, S27)	Critically analyses the social, cultural and historical significance of a site and the implications for its management. (K10, K14, S27).
Invasive species K33 S22	Explains how they determined the objectives of an invasive species management plan, and how the plan is informed by environmental considerations, resources, legal considerations and the practicalities of implementation. (K33, S22)	
Design K16 S9 S10 S11	Evaluates how to create design briefs for horticultural projects, articulating site requirements, objectives, projected use, treatment of existing features and style. Explains how to create a design plan for a horticultural area, appraising the tools and techniques and how they communicate designs to gain agreement from clients, management or stakeholders. (K16, S9, S10, S11)	
Interpretation K15	Appraises techniques for interpreting horticultural sites including audience	Critically evaluates techniques for interpreting horticultural sites including cost versus benefit,

	requirements, message and suitability for site. (K15)	accommodation of varying levels of prior understanding in audience and integrated interpretation practice. (K15)
Operational management of horticultural sites K12 K13 K30 S7 S8	Explains how they develop, interpret and implement work specifications and operational workplans, justifying their choice of landscaping or horticultural operational methods (including associated tools, equipment and machinery), with reference to their impact on the plants and the environment. Explains how they set and monitor work quality standards and how they ensure industry standards and legislative requirements are met, including waste management and use of machinery. (K12, K13, K30, S7, S8)	Critiques horticultural or landscape works on quality deficiencies compared with industry or organisational standard. (K12, S7)
Procurement K17 K29 S26	Appraises how to procure horticultural products and services, including specification and contracting following procurement principles in line with legislation. Explains when and how to use specialists to generate findings that inform site management decisions. (K17, K29, S26)	
Management of staff/contractors K22 S19 S23 B4	Explains their approach to managing, training and mentoring staff, contractors or volunteers, and the organisational policies and legislative requirements that inform this. Explains how they establish a safety culture in	Analyses the problems associated with managing multiple teams and describes strategies for dealing with them. Analyses the effectiveness of different coaching and mentoring techniques for office-

	work teams and encourage the whole team, to participate in managing of health and safety on horticultural sites. (K22, S19, S23, B4)	based and remote team members. (K22, S19, S23)
Systems and processes K23	Explains the benefits and purpose of organisational systems and processes, their role in compliance and how to follow them. (K23)	
Customer care and relationship management K28 S25 B1 B2 B3	Explains how they provide customer service to establish and maintain effective relationships with stakeholders or clients, by analysing how good business practices, professionalism, awareness of cultural sensitivities, use of sound evidence and effective communication techniques have contributed to this. Appraises how they act with integrity and take full responsibility for their own actions. Explains how they proactively engage in formal and informal professional development opportunities, as well as staying up to date with new developments, analysing how this has enhanced their professionalism. (B1, B2, B3, K28, S25)	

A fail grade would be given where the candidate does **not** meet all of the pass grading descriptors

To achieve a pass, the apprentice must meet **all** of the pass grading descriptors. To achieve a distinction, the apprentice must meet **all** of the pass **and** distinctions grading descriptors.

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (Professional Discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence)

Ref	Criteria
Knowledge	
K10	Historical site factors, their significance and implications for management, for example, heritage, archaeology, previous use.
K12	Quality standards for horticultural sites, including industry standards, setting of organisational standards, and how to implement on site.
K13	Operational methods (including associated tools, equipment and machinery) to carry out horticultural and landscape works; their impact on plants and the environment, for example, construction of hard structures, surfaces and features, soil cultivation, propagation, lawn and tree care.
K14	Social and cultural relevance of garden and landscape design through history.
K15	Techniques for site interpretation, for example, signage, mobile phone apps, tours.
K16	Design techniques and tools for horticultural areas, for example, simple plan sketches, CAD.
K17	Services provided by contractors and specialists, for example surveys, construction specifications, planting plans.
K22	People management including legislation, performance management, recruitment, inclusion, induction, training and retention.
K23	Benefits and purpose of organisational systems and processes, their role in compliance and how to follow them
K28	Principles of customer service and managing relationships with clients and stakeholders.
K29	Procedures and principles for procurement of products and services including legislation.
K30	Components and purpose of specifications and operational work plans for horticultural sites.
K33	Invasive species and their implications for horticultural sites.
Skills	
S7	Interprets and implements operational work plans and manages resources in alignment with work plans (for example monitoring and quality assurance).

S8	Develops detailed work specifications and operational work plans incorporating input from internal or external colleagues to include waste management.
S9	Designs a horticultural area in keeping with site, for example historic interest, style, existing features.
S10	Creates design briefs for horticultural areas to be used as basis for a design, outlining objectives, site requirements, projected use, treatment of existing features and style.
S11	Communicates ideas to develop areas on site in order to gain agreement from clients, managers or stakeholders.
S19	Trains and mentors staff, contractors or volunteers.
S22	Develops an invasive species management plan, including objectives, environmental considerations, resources, legal considerations and implementation.
S23	Manages people, for example staff, contractors or volunteers.
S25	Provides customer service and manages relationships with customers and stakeholders.
S26	Procures horticultural or landscaping products or services.
S27	Assesses historic, cultural interest and values of the site and its features, their significance and implications for management, for example archaeology, veteran trees, buildings and structures and previous use.
Behaviours	
B1	Acts with integrity, for example being open and transparent in dealing with stakeholders and respecting their confidentiality. Takes full responsibility for your actions.
B2	Communicates effectively and respectfully towards clients and colleagues and takes into account cultural sensitivities and business practices
B3	Acts professionally providing a high standard of service based on sound business evidence, including managing self, staying up to date with new developments, example, machinery, techniques, legislation or technology and continued professional development
B4	Adopts and promotes a safety culture within the organisation and acts with regard to health, safety and the wellbeing for self and others.

Assessment Method 3 Site Management Plan with Questioning

A Site Management Plan involves the apprentice completing a significant and defined piece of work that has a real business benefit.

The Site Management Plan project brief is submitted at gateway. The project brief is 500 words (+/-10% tolerance). The project brief must scope out the project and should include a summary of the stages covered by the project and an overview of the tasks, as well as the specific responsibilities and duties assigned to be undertaken by the apprentice. The employer will ensure it has a real business application and value, and that Open Awards will ensure it meets the requirements of the EPA (including suitable coverage of the KSBs assigned to this assessment method. Open Awards will then sign off the project's title and scope and the apprentice will pass through gateway.

The project must be undertaken after the apprentice has gone through the gateway.

The project should be designed to ensure that the apprentice's work meets the needs of the business, is relevant to their role, and allows the relevant KSBs to be assessed for the EPA.

This assessment method includes two components:

- a project with a project output detailed in the Site Management Plan
- a question-and-answer component to ensure the apprentice is assessed against their evidence

Component 1 Site Management Plan

Apprentices will conduct a project report in the form of a Site Management Plan, which may be based on the following:

- assessment of the horticultural site
- assessment of the needs of stakeholders
- setting of objectives
- plan to achieve objectives
- submission package

The EPAO should sign off the project's title and scope to confirm its suitability at the gateway.

Delivery

The project starts after the apprentice has gone through the gateway. The apprentice will have **14 weeks** to write and submit the Site Management Plan project report.

The employer should ensure the apprentice has sufficient time and the necessary resources, within this period, to plan and undertake the project. The Site Management Plan project report must be submitted after the gateway.

The apprentice must complete their project unaided. When the Site Management Plan project report is submitted, the apprentice and their employer must verify that the submitted project report is the apprentice's own work.

The assessor will have 2 week's to review the report. The apprentice will be given 2 weeks' notice of the questioning component following submission of the Site Management Plan project report.

The independent assessor will review and assess the Site Management Plan project report holistically together with the other components of this assessment method. The independent assessor will make all grading decisions.

An illustrative example of a project would be a Site Management Plan for a greenspace, commercial site, park or garden. The Site Management Plan project report should explain the future management of the site including financing, any capital developments, stakeholders, resources.

The Site Management Plan has a word count of **6000 words**. A tolerance of +/- 10% is allowed. Appendices, references, diagrams etc will not be included in this total. The project must map, in an appendix, how it evidences the relevant KSBs for this assessment method. Apprentices will conduct the Site Management Plan in the form of paper based or electronic formats.

Component 2 Questioning Overview

The purpose of the questioning component is to test the apprentice's underpinning knowledge they used to develop the plan and explore KSBs in more depth.

The apprentice will be given **2 weeks' notice** of the questioning component following submission of the Site Management Plan.

Delivery

The independent assessor must ask a minimum of **5 questions** and follow-up questions are allowed, where clarification is required.

The questioning must last for **45 minutes**. The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the duration by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to respond to a question.

The questioning component must be conducted on a 1:1 basis in a controlled environment free from distraction or influence. The questioning component can take place face-to-face or remotely via video conferencing.

Assessment Location

The questioning should take place in a quiet room, free from distractions and influence. This assessment will be conducted remotely by video conferencing with a camera and microphone unless an in-person assessment is requested at gateway.

- the apprentice’s workplace
- a suitable venue selected by the EPAO (for example a training provider's premises)

The EPAO will have processes in place to verify the identity of the apprentice and have their camera and microphone on at all times to ensure the apprentice is not being aided.

Pass and distinction grading criteria for the Site Management Plan with questioning are in the following table.

Grading Criteria (Site Management Plan with questioning)

Grading Descriptors	Pass Descriptors	Distinction Descriptors
Plant knowledge K1 K2 S5	Identifies plants accurately (including cultivated plants and weeds), their suitability to location and cultivation requirements, demonstrating correct formatting in line with the International Code of Nomenclature. (K1, K2, S5)	Distinguishes between accepted scientific names and synonyms. Evaluates plant requirements and suitability for site. (K1, K2, S5)
Plant health K5 K20 K27 K31 S4 S14 S15 S16	Identifies biosecurity threats, including notifiable organisms, and explains their implications. Manages biosecurity on site, selecting and implementing control and prevention measures. (K5, K20, S4) Directs the management of plant health on site. Identifies health status of plants on site and requirements for growth. Assesses abiotic and biotic factors (including soils, hydrology, nutrition, climate, weeds, pests and pathogens) influencing plant health, mode of action and implications for plants. Evaluates management, prevention and control measures in line with environmental considerations, site requirements, IPM and IWM principles. (K27, K31, S14, S15, S16,)	Justifies biosecurity measures, pest and pathogen controls, and Integrated Weed Management options. Evaluates costs and benefits of selected approach. (K5, K20, K27, K31, S4, S14, S15, S16)
Site survey/research K4 K9 K25 K32 S1 S2	Researches and surveys a horticultural site using appropriate research and recording tools, covering features, abiotic factors, ecology, horticultural elements	Evaluates how to engage sectors of the community or stakeholders not currently involved with the site or hard to reach in development of a management plan. (K32, S1,

	and people. Assesses the benefits of the site. Identifies site resources including physical, financial and human. Determines significance of the site and unique attributes (sometimes called spirit of place). Analyses the relevance and implications of functional factors for site management. Engages community or stakeholders to inform and support decision made on horticultural sites. (K4, K9, K25, K32, S1, S2)	S2) Evaluates the evidence supporting the benefits of horticultural sites. (K25)
Site priorities and strategy K11 S3	Identifies implications of Governmental, local or organisational strategies or policies that impact on a horticultural site. Analyses and interprets site research and survey results, proposing appropriate management responses. (K11, S3)	
Management planning K6 K8 K19 S6	Creates a Site Management Plan to enhance and maintain a site, informed by site research and addressing user requirements, prioritising, feasibility, and interactions between elements, resourcing, risk assessment, implications of climate change and how to mitigate them. Complies with legislation and best practice guidance including health and safety, use of machinery, safeguarding, environmental, conservation, planning, designations, finance, and data protection. (K6, K8, K19, S6)	Make recommendations for a site considering future as well as current position including climate change impacts. Benchmarks against best practice and similar sites. (S6, K6, K19)
Environmental K3 K18 S12 S13 B5	Develops an environmental impact assessment that appraises the risk of environmental features, mitigates impacts on them and	

	sets out plans for improving and embedding sustainable working practices, including measurement of energy and advising on improved environmental standards, to work towards a zero-carbon economy. Creates a site waste plan compliant with legislation. (K3, K18, S12, S13, B5)	
Project management K34 S24	Selects and uses appropriate and effective project management tools and techniques to develop the Site Management Plan. (K34, S24)	Analyses and evaluates the effectiveness of the project management tools and problem-solving techniques used in the development of the Site Management Plan. (K34, S24)

A fail grade would be given where the candidate does **not** meet all of the pass grading descriptors.

To achieve a pass, the apprentice must meet **all** of the pass grading descriptors.

To achieve a distinction, the apprentice must meet **all** of the pass and distinctions grading descriptors.

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (Site Management Plan with questioning)

Ref	Criteria
Knowledge	
K1	Classification of plants using scientific, binomial, cultivars and common names as per the International Code of Plant Nomenclature
K2	Plants common in the UK and their requirements for optimal growth including cultivated plants and weeds.
K3	Implications of environmental factors for managing horticultural sites (for example ecology, waste management, biodiversity, pollution).
K4	Purpose, value, and limitations of research and recording tools for horticultural sites for example Geographic Information System (GIS) and databases
K5	Types of biosecurity threat (for example pests and diseases, invasive species), legislative requirements, prevention and response (for example, quarantine, site hygiene, sourcing, recording and reporting).
K6	Legislative requirements and best practice guidance in relation to horticultural sites, including use of machinery, environmental, conservation, planning, designations, finance and data protection.

K8	Health and safety legislation and best practice guidance including safeguarding, risk assessments and implications for public and staff on horticultural sites.
K9	Functional factors, their relevance and implications for management of horticultural sites for example, infrastructure, features, services, users, conditions, hard structures and surfaces.
K11	Government, local or organisational strategies or policies that impact on horticultural sites including garden or landscape management strategies.
K18	Principles of sustainability and sustainable supply chains, including measurement of energy use and advising on improved environmental standards to work towards a zero carbon economy, for example selection of equipment, techniques, FSC timber supplies and peat
K19	Implications of climate change for horticultural sites and how to adapt and mitigate against these for example, alleviating flood risk, extreme temperatures.
K20	Biosecurity controls for example hygiene, provenance of plant material, plant passports, quarantine, control of harmful and notifiable organisms.
K25	Benefits of horticultural sites for example health and wellbeing, ecosystem services.
K27	Principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Weed Management (IWM).
K31	Environmental factors and their impact on plant health and growth, including temperature, soils, hydrology light.
K32	Survey, research and data analysis techniques for horticultural sites, including features (for example paths, structures, utilities), abiotic factors (for example aspect, climate), ecology, horticultural elements (for example plants, soils), community engagement and people (for example usage, access, experience).
K34	Project Management techniques.
Skills	
S1	Plans and carries out a site survey to include features (for example paths, structures), abiotic factors (for example aspect, climate), ecology, horticultural elements (for example plants, soils), community engagement and people (for example usage, access, experience).
S2	Gathers site data through field and desk-based research methods
S3	Analyses and interprets survey results and other information, and proposes appropriate action.

S4	Identifies biosecurity threats, selects and implements control or prevention measures.
S5	Identifies plants and determines their suitability and cultural requirements. Formats plant names as per the International Code of Plant Nomenclature.
S6	Develops a management plan to enhance and maintain a horticultural site, including health and safety, user requirements, risk assessment, prioritising, feasibility, interactions between elements and resourcing.
S12	Carries out an environmental impact assessment.
S13	Manages waste and implements a waste management plan, for example application of waste hierarchy, segregation, composting.
S14	Manages water usage and hydrology for horticultural sites, for example drainage, mulching, irrigation.
S15	Manages soil health, for example fertility, structure, micro-biology, avoiding compaction.
S16	Manages plant health, including mitigation of environmental factors, developing sustainable control methods, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Integrated Weed Management.
S24	Manages a horticultural project.
Behaviours	
B5	Embeds sustainable working practices.

Grading

All three assessment methods are graded in the same way, i.e.:

- If one or more pass grading descriptors are not met, the assessment will be graded as a fail.
- To achieve a pass **all** pass criteria must be met.
- To achieve a distinction all pass criteria **and all** distinction criteria must be met.

Overall Grading

All assessment methods are weighted equally in their contribution to the overall EPA grade. Performance in the EPA will determine the apprenticeship grade of fail, pass, or distinction.

Independent assessors must individually grade each assessment method, according to the requirements set out in this plan. EPAOs must combine the individual assessment method grades to determine the overall EPA grade.

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be awarded an overall EPA 'fail'. To gain an overall EPA 'pass', apprentices must achieve a pass in all the assessment methods. To achieve an overall EPA 'distinction', apprentices must achieve a distinction in all three methods.

Grades from individual assessment methods should be combined in the following way to determine the overall grade of the EPA.

Business Case with presentation and questioning	Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence	Site Management Plan with questioning	Overall Grading
Any Grade	Any Grade	Fail	Fail
Fail	Any Grade	Any Grade	Fail
Any Grade	Fail	Any Grade	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Distinction	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Distinction	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

Any grade = fail, pass, or distinction

Re-sits and Re-takes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be offered the opportunity to take a re-sit or a re-take. Open Awards will provide feedback alongside the result notification to all apprentices who fail an assessment method. This feedback will be provided via the training provider, normally **within ten (10) workings days** of the assessment taking place.

Re-sits or re-takes are only to be taken in the event that the original assessment grade is a fail. A re-sit or re-take cannot be taken with the intention of increasing the original grade if an apprentice has passed their EPA. Therefore, feedback will not normally be provided to apprentices who achieve a pass or higher.

A re-sit does not require further learning, whereas a re-take does.
A re-sit/re-take may require the apprentice to re-work their original business case and/or Site Management Plan or submit a new business case/ Site Management Plan.

Apprentices will normally be asked different questions in the case of a re-sit or re-take. However, given the nature of the task it may be necessary for an assessor to ask identical or closely related questions to ensure assessment criteria have been met.

The maximum grade that can be achieved for a re-sit or re-take is a pass. Where an apprentice believes exceptional circumstances impacted on their initial assessment attempt, they must submit a formal request with supporting evidence for exceptional circumstances to be considered, directly to Open Awards **within five (5) working days** of receiving the assessment decision.

All re-sits and re-takes must be completed within nine (9) months of the gateway otherwise the entire EPA will need to be taken again.

Quality Assurance

Independent End-point Assessor Standard Requirements

Independent End Point Assessors must meet the following criteria:

- have relevant management experience of the occupation/sector and evidence of recent experience and CPD
- meet the following minimum requirements:
    - a minimum level 5 qualification in horticulture or closely related subject
    - and are members of relevant professional bodies.

Internal Quality Assurance

Open Awards will complete quality assurance on assessments before results are released. Quality assurance is completed through observations and examination of documentation on a risk-based sampling model.

External quality assurance

External quality assurance for this apprenticeship standard is undertaken by Ofqual.

Professional Recognition

This standard aligns with the following professional recognition: Member of the Chartered Institute of Horticulture.

Assessment Specification

The assessment specification can be found on our website and on IfATE's website in the published assessment plan for the standard.

Details of the indicative content that will be assessed by each assessment method of the apprenticeship standard is outlined below.

Assessment method 1: Business case with presentation and questioning

Ref	KSB to be assessed
Knowledge	
K7	Techniques for promoting business, garden, open space, products or services.
The apprentice will need to demonstrate the knowledge required to promote and market businesses, gardens, open spaces, products, or services that directly relate to the horticulture industry. Illustrative examples could include but are not confined to: • garden centres / plant nurseries, • public gardens / parks, • landscaping companies, • horticultural education / therapy programmes, • plant care services, • horticultural supply outlets. They must show an understanding of a targeted approach to promotion through a range of techniques. Illustrative examples could include, but are not limited to: • digital marketing such as social media or web page content. • traditional marketing including print advertising, public relations, or third party endorsements. • analysing consumer behaviour preferences.	
K21	Communication techniques for different contexts, for example, verbal, published, social media, broadcast media.
The apprentice will be able to indicate an understanding of a range of communication techniques in appropriate situations justifying their use. Forms of communication and their contexts include but are not limited to: • verbal communication through face-to-face and remote video conversations or meetings. • published communication including brochures, catalogues, or newsletters. • social media such as Facebook or Twitter posts. • broadcast media by radio or television. • websites/blogs. • educational programmes. • the relevant regulations and legislation for ensuring legal compliance.	
K24	Techniques for financial reporting and budgeting.
The apprentice will need to identify different financial reporting and budgeting techniques by exhibiting an awareness of specific techniques to manage finances effectively. Financial reporting techniques could include though are not restricted to: • profit and loss / cash flow statements.	

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• balance sheets. • key performance indicator (KPIs). They will need to know the techniques for preparing, reviewing, and analysing budgets and spending, with a focus on making informed recommendations.
K26	Techniques for developing a business case for financing future projects. Methods for identifying audience and managing targets in business cases.
	The apprentice will need to identify different methods to consider when creating a business case. They will understand how they will help build a case that will attract future funding. Illustrative examples of methods include though are not limited to: • a project description. • cost-benefit analysis. • project timeline / milestones. • environmental / regulatory compliance. They will know different techniques for identifying an audience within a proposal, explaining their use in audience profiling, including but not limited to: • market research. • customer profiles and personas. • surveys and questionnaires. • industry / cultural / social trend reports. The apprentice will be able to state the techniques used for managing targets within a proposal showing how objectives are met, including though not restricted to: • Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) targets. • key performance indicators. • risk management. • contingency planning.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
Skills	
S17	Selects communication method and communicates using a range of methods to technical and non-technical audiences.
	The apprentice will need to effectively demonstrate three main methods of communication: • written, • verbal, • visual presentation. The apprentice will show the ability to adapt their communication methods to accommodate both technical and non-technical audiences. The difference between technical and non-technical audiences lies in level of expertise, knowledge, and familiarity with the proposal subject. Apprentices will know how to justify their selection of different communication methods for the two audiences, and evaluate the impact.
S18	Promotes products or services identifying opportunities, audience and communication channels, generating written information.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	The apprentice will need to reveal their capabilities to promote either the products or services outlined within their business case. They will do this through demonstrating marketing analysis methods such as: • market research, • customer feedback, • strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis. • industry trends. From this analysis the apprentice will show opportunities that identify an audience or demographic. Clear channels of communication need to be identified and justified showing in writing how they have engaged their proposed audience, these could include: • verbal communication. • published communication. • social media. • broadcast media. • websites / blogs.
S20	Develops a business case to aid decision making and financial planning of future projects, including identifying audience and managing targets.
	The apprentice will be able to create a business case that may be based on either facilitating a business change or aids the progression of a new product or service. Illustrative examples of a typical business case are: • a capital project on a horticultural site/public garden • a new service in a commercial setting • a new product in a commercial setting. They will use the proposal to demonstrate decision making rationale as well as financial planning for further projects. Using their case, they will be able to demonstrate a management process that appraises the benefits as well as highlights the negative outcomes, with solutions for overcoming the latter.
S21	Prepares, reviews and analyses budgets, forecasts and other profit and loss reporting, including recommending efficiencies or improvements.
	The apprentice will need to show the ability to prepare and present financial information relating to budgets, and financial forecasting through using a range of techniques including though not restricted to: • profit and loss/cash flow statements. • balance sheets. • key performance indicators (KPIs). They will also need to demonstrate the use of proven methods for analysing and reviewing their proposal including but not restricted to: • historical data comparisons. • key performance indicators (KPIs). • cost breakdown. • break-even analysis. • scenario planning.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	Through reviewing and analysing budgets, forecasts, and profit and loss reports in their proposal, the apprentice will be able to make informed financial and strategic decisions. They will evidence recommendations for improvements/efficiencies, evaluating areas of negative/positive impact and suggesting alternative scenarios.

Assessment method 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

Ref	KSB to be assessed
Knowledge	
K10	Historical site factors, their significance and implications for management, for example, heritage, archaeology, previous use.
	The apprentice will have an in-depth understanding of the history, heritage, and previous uses of a site. They will use this information to make informed decisions on the management, maintenance, and future direction of the site, considering any legislation or designations in place to protect them. They will understand the sensitivities around changes in design, use, or management that deviate from the site history. This could include an ability to explain: • site heritage protections and designations e.g., sites of special scientific interest (SSSI), conservation areas, scheduled monument consent, and covenants in place to preserve and protect the statuses of certain sites. • why site history must be researched, consulted on, and understood before implementing any changes and the implications for not doing this, which may result in reputational damage, fines, or prosecution. • how site history can help to shape management plans, through understanding previous actions, successes, and failures. • the importance of consultation with all relevant authorities and stakeholders to gain the relevant permissions and approvals to proceed with changes in management.
K12	Quality standards for horticultural sites, including industry standards, setting of organisational standards, and how to implement on site.
	The apprentice will demonstrate clear and concise knowledge of horticultural standards and pre-defined quality standards, and how to practically implement these on-site. They will understand industry standards and the importance of benchmarking and aligning site standards with these. They will recognise the importance of communicating standards to the relevant personnel using a range of different tools and delivery methods available to them. This could include an ability to explain:

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• industry standards and benchmarks such as those set by the Royal Horticultural Society, British Standard codes of practice and recommendations (BS4428:1989 and BS7370-4:1993), Kew Gardens, Chartered Institute of Horticulture, Horticultural Trade Association, British Association of Landscape Industries, local authority benchmarking groups, etc. • standards set as part of a specified contract or service level agreement (SLA) e.g., an SLA might stipulate grass-cutting frequencies and maximum and minimum height. • embedding standards into the relevant Site Management Plan in the form of a specification that is clearly communicated and available to all relevant staff, contractors, and relevant stakeholders. • communicating and reinforcing standards on-site ensuring quality standards are achieved or rectification works are carried out to reinstate standards to the desired levels. Examples of communication might be 'toolbox talks', training sessions, team briefs, written documentation, and specifications. • inspection regimes and surveys to check quality and performance of a site against the agreed specification.
K13	Operational methods (including associated tools, equipment, and machinery) to carry out horticultural and landscape works, their impact on plants and the environment, for example, construction of hard structures, surfaces, and features, soil cultivation, propagation, lawn and tree care
The apprentice will understand how to implement different operational methods to carry out prescribed horticultural and landscape works on site. They will be able to identify the correct tools, machinery and equipment for the tasks required, and understand any mitigations necessary to ensure safety and protect the natural environment. This could include an ability to explain: • work specifications, operational work plans, safe systems of work, risk assessments and method statements which set out how to carry out task and machinery operations to the required quality and safety standards. • appropriate tool, machinery and equipment selection based on the task or operation, taking into consideration environmental impact, cost, efficiency, and safety. • the training and experience necessary to operate machinery and equipment and the importance of administering this on site. • the impact some materials and equipment can have on the natural environment such as noise, air and light pollution, carbon footprint, and soil compaction. They will understand the mitigations necessary to minimise, balance, or eradicate impacts as much as practicably possible. • any relevant legislation covering specific tools, equipment, and machinery e.g. PA1/PA6 qualifications required for handheld/knapsack herbicide spraying.	

Ref	KSB to be assessed
K14	Social and cultural relevance of garden and landscape design through history.

The apprentice will need to understand the social and cultural importance of garden and landscape design through history. They will be able to identify social and cultural trends and how these are reflected in a site's development over time. They will recognise the value that parks, gardens, and landscapes hold for providing a sense of place for communities and a connection to nature.

This may include an ability to explain:

- how garden and landscape design has evolved over time, referencing different styles and management practices. e.g., formal versus informal gardens, intensive management versus light touch maintenance allowing nature recovery.
- the increasing importance of parks, gardens, and landscapes for people's social and cultural well-being e.g., the positive impact on physical and mental health, social and community cohesion, recreational and educational benefits, and socioeconomic value.
- the environmental value of parks, gardens, and landscapes in helping to combat climate change and biodiversity loss and the opportunities that exist to inform and educate communities through green space engagement.

K15	Techniques for site interpretation, for example, signage, mobile phone apps, tours.

The apprentice will be able to identify opportunities for site interpretation and promotion through a range of different methods. They will understand their target audience or customers and know how to shape communication and education accordingly. They will understand the value of clear information and interpretation that is relevant, engaging, and appealing.

This may include an ability to explain:

- different forms of site interpretation and promotion such as welcome and information signage, interpretation boards, app-based technology, QR trails, audio and video, and face-to-face engagement through tours, surveys, or talks.
- the importance of clear themes, concise information and messaging that is targeted to achieve a specific aim or objective e.g., a wildlife interpretation board that aims to inform and educate children on nature conservation, or safety signage that gives clear safety instruction to site users.
- how technology can be utilised to inform and engage site users, reducing the need for leaflets and signage, while modernising and streamlining the efficiency of a site.
- the ability of effective interpretation to influence user perceptions (e.g. signage to explain the practice of leaving dead wood).

K16	Design techniques and tools for horticultural areas, for example, simple plan sketches, CAD.

The apprentice will have a clear and concise knowledge of landscape design and the different design techniques that can be employed, depending on the situation. They will understand how to survey a site, gather information and requirements, and how to

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	translate this information into plans and designs. They will understand the importance of clear communication with the client or stakeholders throughout the design process. This could include an ability to explain: • the process of surveying a site and the importance of gathering relevant information such as aspect, elevation, soil types, light levels, and client requirements. • different surveying techniques to gather the above information such as the client brief, visual inspections, taking measurements, using triangulation, taking photos, etc. • different design techniques such as concept plans, site plans, planting plans, 2D, and 3D rendering, and an understanding of their value and when to use them. digital design software available such as CAD (e.g. Sketchup) or Adobe and a cost-benefit analysis of these compared to paper-based designs.
K17	Services provided by contractors and specialists, for example surveys, construction specifications, planting plans.
	The apprentice will understand the value of engaging contractors and companies to carry out specialist works on-site that may be beyond the scope or skillset of in-house staff. They will understand the importance of seeking best value and quality and ensuring a fair procurement process. They will be able to give some tangible examples of when to engage specialists or contractors. This may include an ability to explain: • why engaging contractors can be useful, referencing specialist jobs and skills that require certain training, and experience, or have a high complexity e.g., asbestos removal, arboriculture surveys and works, topographical surveys, landscape design, etc. • the process for providing a specification to suppliers, seeking quotations, or going out to tender for works, adhering to any procurement rules and regulations. • the importance of contract management once works have been awarded to ensure that the desired specification or contract is met in full and in line with the financial quotation provided for the work.
K22	People management including legislation, performance management, recruitment, inclusion, induction, training and retention.
	The apprentice will be able to identify what is involved in effective people management and why it is inherently important when managing teams. They will have knowledge of recruitment and selection, induction, and training of staff. In addition, they will understand the importance of empowering staff, effective communication, and carrying out regular appraisals to monitor performance, give and receive feedback, and set objectives. This could include a clear and concise knowledge of: • recruitment and selection processes, including drafting job descriptions and job adverts, interview and selection methods and techniques.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• the importance of equality and fairness, and relevant laws that preclude, for example, age or gender restrictions in job advertisements. • induction processes and why they are essential in welcoming and training an employee into a workplace. • regular staff appraisals that foster effective 2-way communication, set objectives that are reasonable and achievable, review and implement training needs, and help to remove barriers that may be impacting the employee to carry out their role. • employees' rights, HR policies and processes, and the importance of adhering and signposting to these when required. appropriate delegation of tasks based on relevant skills and experience and the benefits of doing this.
K23	Benefits and purpose of organisational systems and processes, their role in compliance and how to follow them.
	The apprentice will demonstrate a clear knowledge of organisational systems and processes and how these play a key part in providing an organisational framework for operation and management. They will understand the clear benefits that systems and processes bring to an organisation, the role they play in compliance, and how they should be administered. This could include an ability to explain: • organisational hierarchy, line management, job descriptions, employment policies and procedures, and how these bring structure, direction, regulation, and purpose. • safety systems and processes that implement and administer workplace safety and embed a health and safety culture on site. • the benefits of systems and processes in improving efficiencies, streamlining services, providing guidance and direction, and forming a consistent framework. the importance of following organisational systems and processes and the steps that can be taken to ensure compliance. e.g., referring back to policies and procedures, staff handbooks, risk assessments, contracts of employment, and seeking HR support and advice.
K28	Principles of customer service and managing relationships with clients and stakeholders.
	The apprentice will have a clear and concise knowledge of customer service and stakeholder management. They will understand the importance of professionalism, integrity, and communication in maintaining good relationships with customers and stakeholders. In addition, they will recognise the significance of upholding agreed standards and service levels, signposting back to terms and conditions where necessary. This could include the ability to describe: • The principles of customer service, what it entails, and the consequences of not following good practice such as reputational damage and loss of earnings.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• dealing with complaints or service enquiries and handling these in a professional and appropriate manner that upholds the integrity of the service or business and aims for a positive outcome. • the importance of clear, open and honest communication at all times. written policies, terms and conditions, and service level agreements that offer guidance on expected customer service standards.
K29	Procedures and principles for procurement of products and services including legislation.
	The apprentice will understand how to produce accurate specifications to procure goods and services for a horticultural site or operation. They will be familiar with procurement rules, regulations, and legislation, and they will understand the importance of abiding by these, including penalties for not doing so. They will understand quotations and tenders and the appropriate selection criteria when awarding goods or services. This could include the ability to explain: • writing specifications that are reflective of the goods or services required that provide the same consistent information to suppliers to quote or bid against. • the different procurement rules, regulations, and legislation that are applicable depending on the value and type of procurement. • the criteria for scoring, quotes bids, and tenders to ensure fairness, and best value. This could include mention of quality, price, skills and experience, financial standing, references, and the relevant weighting of the criteria.
K30	Components and purpose of specifications and operational work plans for horticultural sites.
	The apprentice will have a clear knowledge and understanding of setting operational work plans for a horticultural site. They will clearly understand how to structure a plan, including a scope of work, detailed specifications, objectives, and timelines. They will be able to cascade these plans to all staff and contractors on-site to ensure that tasks are completed, and objectives met. This could include demonstrating an understanding of: • writing operational work plans, service level agreements, safe systems of work, risk assessments, method statements, and user guides. • the importance of carrying out benchmarking, following industry standards, and meeting relevant legislation when drafting operational work plans • delivery methods of operational work plans through verbal instruction, toolbox talks, training sessions, handouts, and team briefs. They will recognise the importance of refreshers and signposting back to operational work plans when standards slip, or processes aren't adhered to. • Monitoring agreed standards, objectives, or key performance indicators and taking remedial action where required to bring them back to the required level.
K33	Invasive species and their implications for horticultural sites.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	The apprentice will demonstrate an understanding of non-native invasive species and the negative impact they have on the natural environment. They will be able to explain the importance of control and/or eradication to protect plants, habitats, and ecosystems, in addition to legal and financial ramifications for failing to do so. This could include the apprentice being able to: • identify various plant or animal invasive species in a horticultural or landscape environment e.g., Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed, Himalayan Balsam, Asian Hornet, and the threat they pose. • describe legal responsibilities and legislation in relation to reporting, controlling, or eradicating invasive species and the penalties for not doing so e.g., the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 specifying that landowners must prevent the spread of Japanese Knotweed or face fines. • outline a range of biological, cultural, chemical, and physical control methods, that are selected on their effectiveness, cost, and with minimal environmental impact. • understand how to draft and interpret an invasive species management plan.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
Skills	
S7	Interprets and implements operational work plans and manages resources in alignment with work plans (for example monitoring and quality assurance).
	The apprentice will have learnt and understood the purpose and importance of operational work plans. They will also have learnt and understood the function of monitoring and quality insurance. They will be able to interpret an operational work plan and manage resources in such a way as to implement it. This could include an ability to explain how: • an operational work plan can help organise workload and make best use of resources. • operational work plans help ensure business success. • monitoring and quality assurance are essential for maintaining high standards and reducing wasteful working practices.
S8	Develops detailed work specifications and operational work plans incorporating input from internal or external colleagues to include waste management.
	The apprentice will have learnt and understood the legislative requirements which govern waste management. They will be able to demonstrate the correct way to draw up detailed work specifications and operational work plans. They will be able to demonstrate the correct way to work with internal and external colleagues to draw up detailed work plans.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
This could include an ability to explain: • how and why internal and external colleagues can help in drawing up detailed work specifications and operational work plans. • what elements a good operational work plan should include. • how proper waste management protocols can be of benefit to the business as a whole.	
S9	Designs a horticultural area in keeping with site, for example historic interest, style, existing features.
The apprentice will have learnt and understood the importance of elements such as historic interest, existing features and local ecology in horticultural design. They should be able to interpret the significance of such elements, and they will demonstrate the correct way to design a horticultural area which successfully incorporates such features. This could include an ability to explain how: • design sympathetic to historic interest, style, local ecology, and existing features can help enhance enjoyment and value of a site. • existing features can be woven into a design. • local ecology and environmental factors should be considered within a horticultural design.	
S10	Creates design briefs for horticultural areas to be used as basis for a design, outlining objectives, site requirements, projected use, treatment of existing features and style.
The apprentice will have learnt and understood what a design brief is and how it is used in the development of a successful final design. They will be able to demonstrate the correct way to draw up a clear and concise design brief. They will be able to interpret the parameters required to deliver a finished brief that could be used to develop a design for a horticultural area. This could include an ability to explain: • the ways in which a clear and well thought out design brief can help to develop a successful design. • site conditions and factors that may affect the final design, for example physical/aesthetic factors, major attributes and site limitations, and external factors beyond the boundaries of the site. • how a design brief contributes to the eventual design and build process.	
S11	Communicates ideas to develop areas on site in order to gain agreement from clients, managers or stakeholders.
The apprentice will be able to initiate discussion and secure agreement from several different interested parties. They will be able to communicate ideas to clients, managers, and stakeholders, presenting them effectively and clearly.	

Ref	KSB to be assessed
This could include an ability to: • present ideas in an engaging and convincing way. • respond to questions, misgivings, objections and doubts from clients, managers and stakeholders. • adapt communication methods to appeal to, and communicate with, multiple stakeholders, often with different vested interests.	
S19	Trains and mentors staff, contractors or volunteers.
The apprentice will have learnt and understood the importance of training and mentoring in career development and how and why it benefits both employees/volunteers and the business. They will be able to demonstrate the correct way to draw up training and continuing professional development plans. They will be able to identify the training needs and requirements for a team of staff, contractors, and volunteers. This could include an ability to explain: • how mentoring can be implemented in a work or volunteering setting. • how volunteers and staff can benefit from regular training and continuing professional development. • how training might be managed without impacting on day-to-day workloads. • the advantages and disadvantages of training at the workplace and in an off-site or formal educational setting.	
S22	Develops an invasive species management plan, including objectives, environmental considerations, resources, legal considerations and implementation.
The apprentice will have learnt and understood the impact invasive species can have on the environment. They will have learnt and understood how to identify relevant invasive species and the legal requirements for managing and controlling them. They will be able to write a management plan for controlling identified invasive species including objectives, resources, environmental considerations, legal considerations, and implementation. The management plan could include: • why invasive species need to be controlled, including an explanation of their effect on the wider environment. • what legal considerations must be taken into account when drawing up and implementing an invasive species management plan. • how to make sure available resources are used to best effect in managing invasive species.	
S23	Manages people, for example staff, contractors or volunteers.
The apprentice will understand the use of different approaches to managing staff, contractors, and volunteers to optimise good relations and results. They will have learnt	

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	and understood protocols for managing disputes and disciplinary situations. They will be able to apply a range of management techniques in a working environment. This could include an ability to discuss: • what qualities make a good manager. • how good people management can benefit the business as well as staff, contractors, and volunteers. • how they might handle a situation causing tension in the workplace.
S25	Provides customer service and manages relationships with customers and stakeholders.
	The apprentice will have learnt and understood the importance of good customer service and the importance of positive relationships with stakeholders. They will be able to identify and respond to customer and stakeholder needs. They will be able to demonstrate the correct way to implement protocols for settling customer complaints and will need to understand and implement techniques for managing stakeholder relationships. This could include an ability to explain: • effective protocols for settling disputes. • strategies for enhancing customer and stakeholder experience. • how good customer and stakeholder relationships can benefit the business.
S26	Procures horticultural or landscaping products or services.
	The apprentice will have learnt and understood how to source horticultural and landscaping products and services. They will be able to demonstrate the correct way to evaluate bids for products and services required according to existing procurement guidelines. They will be able to interpret order sheets, estimates and delivery schedules in such a way as to procure products and services in a transparent and timely way. This could include an ability to explain: • ways to research and quality assess suppliers of horticultural or landscaping products or services. • how to assess requirements for products and services effectively and accurately. • how to evaluate and consider environmental impact, cost, practicality and efficiency in the procurement process. • how to mitigate against setbacks and changes to original procurement terms.
S27	Assesses historic, cultural interest and values of the site and its features, their significance and implications for management, for example archaeology, veteran trees, buildings and structures and previous use.
	The apprentice will have learnt and understood techniques for evaluating and assessing a site. They will be able to demonstrate the correct way to read a plan of an existing site

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	showing complex and multiple features including archaeology, ecology, and existing architecture. They will have learnt and understood legislation regarding protection of existing features. This could include an ability to explain: • the significance of features with archaeological and/or ecological value and why these should be protected within an existing site. • how to consider historic and cultural interest when drawing up plans for developing a site. • how to uphold restrictions imposed by legislative protection, such as tree protection orders. • how to communicate and promote the importance of managing legacy assets to staff, contractors, volunteers, stakeholders and visitors.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
Behaviours	
B1	Acts with integrity, for example being open and transparent in dealing with stakeholders and respecting their confidentiality. Takes full responsibility for your actions.
	The apprentice will be able to show that they can appreciate and respect the need for confidentiality when dealing with stakeholders. They will demonstrate the implementation of measures which will protect confidentiality in day-to-day operations. They will be able to show that they are aware of the need for accountability and responsibility for actions in the workplace. This could include an ability to explain: • why integrity and confidentiality are important in business transactions. • measures they take during their day-to-day work practices that are specifically designed to protect confidentiality. • how to maintain an open and respectful relationship with stakeholders.
B2	Communicates effectively and respectfully towards clients and colleagues and takes into account cultural sensitivities and business practices.
	The apprentice will demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively with clients and colleagues. They will be able to show that they understand their responsibility to respect cultural sensitivities. They will demonstrate the ability to behave in such a way that they uphold best business practice when dealing with clients and colleagues. This could include an ability to explain: • how to ensure communication with clients and colleagues is effective. • obligations and duties towards clients and colleagues, and how to make sure these are fulfilled in a day-to-day work setting.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• ways in which business practices ensure cultural sensitivities.
B3	Acts professionally providing a high standard of service based on sound business evidence, including managing self, staying up to date with new developments, example, machinery, techniques, legislation or technology and continued professional development.
The apprentice will be able to show that they can manage workload effectively. They will demonstrate the ability to identify and implement continued professional development for themselves and colleagues. They will be able to show they have taken steps to keep up to date with all developments relevant to the role. This could include an ability to explain: • how to use business evidence to enhance standards of service. • how they keep up to date with new legislation, techniques, machinery and professional development. • how to use digital and other tools to implement effective management of time and workload.	
B4	Adopts and promotes a safety culture within the organisation and acts with regard to health, safety and the wellbeing for self and others.
The apprentice will be able to demonstrate the ability to assess the safety implications of any given work situation. They will be able to show that they can implement safety precautions for themselves and colleagues. They will be able to demonstrate the ability to promote safe practices to colleagues. This could include an ability to explain: • which safety considerations might apply to the working environment. • how the assessment of risk is carried out in any given situation. • how to implement safety precautions for colleagues and themselves.	

Assessment method 3: Site Management Plan with questioning

Ref	KSB to be assessed
Knowledge	
K1	Classification of plants using scientific, binomial, cultivars and common names as per the International Code of Plant Nomenclature.
The apprentice will understand how to name plants using the scientific binomial (2-name) system and why it is important. They will understand the terms genus, species, and cultivar and be able to differentiate between botanic (Latin) names and common names, providing some relevant examples. This could include an ability to explain:	

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• why a botanical name is the correct name for a plant in any language and that many plants do not have a common name. • that common names are variable, even within one country – in England a Bluebell refers to *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* or *Hyacinthoides hispanica*, but in Scotland, a Bluebell refers to *Campanula rotundifolia*. • how a botanical name gives information or describes a physical characteristic of the plant, e.g., *alba* = white, macrophylla = large-leaved, or rotundifolia =round-leaved. • how the binomial system gives a plant two names, a genus name and a species name, which together provide each plant with its unique name, e.g., *Ilex aquifolium*. • how a genus is a group of one or more closely related species in the same plant family and a species is a group of individuals that breed naturally to produce offspring with the same characteristics. • how to write and format botanical names correctly (genus name with an initial capital letter in italics or handwritten underlined. Species name all in lower-case letters and in italics or underlined when handwritten). • that the word 'cultivar' is a contracted term for 'cultivated variety'. A cultivar is a group within a species that has minor differences from the type species and has occurred and is maintained in cultivation rather than in the wild. • that the cultivar name follows the species name, is written in single quotes, has a capital initial for each word, and is written in Roman type, e.g., *Panicum virgatum* 'Heavy Metal'.
K2	Plants common in the UK and their requirements for optimal growth including cultivated plants and weeds.
	The apprentice will have a clear understanding of plants commonly found in the UK, their physical form, habit, and characteristics. They will understand the growth habits of various plants and weeds e.g., annuals, biennials, perennials, tender perennials, half-hardy annuals, hardy annuals, shrubs and trees; herbaceous, woody, evergreen, and semi-evergreen. They will understand requirements for optimal growth and factors that may impact growth. This could include an ability to explain. • the five distinct phases in the life cycle of flowering plants - seed, juvenile, adult, senescence, and death. • knowledge of common plants, their requirements for optimal growth, and factors affecting establishment, growth, and maintenance e.g., light levels, water, drainage, aspect, weed competition etc. • botanical features and physical characteristics that can be used to identify the plant. • cultivation requirements of the plant, including its geographical origin (where relevant), distribution of species (where relevant) and hardiness. • the principal UK soil types and how these affect plant establishment and growth in a range of situations e.g., clay, loam, sandy etc.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• horticultural use e.g., ornamental, productive, architectural, wildlife attracting, or a perceived weed etc.
K3	Implications of environmental factors for managing horticultural sites (for example ecology, waste management, biodiversity, pollution).
	The apprentice will understand the relevance of environmental factors for sustainably managing horticultural sites. They will understand the importance of protecting and maintaining site ecology and biodiversity and ensuring that site activities don't impact these factors negatively. They will demonstrate knowledge of sustainable waste and pollution management to protect the natural environment. This could include an in-depth understanding of. • site ecology including flora, fauna, and habitat, and the relevant legislation in place to protect these e.g., Environmental Protection Act 1990, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, tree preservation Orders, conservation areas, sites of special scientific interest, etc. They should understand environmental impact assessments or other types of surveys used to assess ecology, vegetation, or biodiversity. • horticultural biodiversity that promotes the creation and maintenance of habitats for native species to retain or gain a foothold in an otherwise adverse environment. Key driver: to restore where necessary a degree of ecosystem function to areas that are currently degraded and where the biodiversity is lacking. • waste management procedures and policies and sustainable procurement e.g., strategies should seek to reduce and eradicate waste, reusing or recycling materials where possible, with disposal the last option. Policies and procedures should be written, formally adopted, and reviewed regularly to ensure they keep abreast with relevant legislation and best practice. • pollution factors such as chemical, air pollution, flooding, contamination, pesticide, and herbicides, etc., and the importance of minimising and eradicating these when producing Site Management Plans to protect the health of staff, site visitors, and the environment. Pesticides and chemical fertilisers should not be used where possible. Minimal use may be acceptable as part of an integrated pest management strategy with a full explanation given. Robust controls must also be in place for any external contractor use.
K4	Purpose, value, and limitations of research and recording tools for horticultural sites for example Geographic Information System (GIS) and databases
	The apprentice will have a clear and concise knowledge of the research and recording tools available for their site. They will understand the various purposes of these tools

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	and systems, the value they bring, their limitations, and the challenges in maintaining and updating them to keep abreast with any changes. This could include demonstrating an understanding of • the types of recording tools and systems used for horticultural sites e.g., GIS Mapping, inspection software, plant databases, herbariums, logbooks, maintenance records etc. • the purpose of these tools and systems e.g., plant databases are knowledge banks that promote plant diversity and record the contribution of plants to the environment, society, and the economy, a Herbarium is a collection of dried plant specimens that are stored and catalogued for study, GIS mapping allows the accurate plotting of site assets, layers and features over time. • the limitations of these tools and systems such as cost, resources, advancements in technology or systems e.g., movement from paper-based to digital records or software that becomes outdated, inaccurate data entry at source, and failure to update or review data, especially when changes are made. GIS mapping for example is only accurate if assets and data is re-plotted or amended when changes occur.
K5	Types of biosecurity threat (for example pests and diseases, invasive species), legislative requirements, prevention and response (for example, quarantine, site hygiene, sourcing, recording and reporting).
	The apprentice will be able to identify and cite examples of key biosecurity threats for UK Horticulture and Landscaping and apply appropriate biosecurity measures for their site. They will have a good understanding of relevant legislation, compliance, and the steps to take in response to a biosecurity threat on a site. This could include an ability to explain: • types of biosecurity threat such as, ash dieback, oak processionary moth, horse chestnut leaf miner, box tree moth, Japanese knot Weed, European hornet etc. The detrimental impact these biosecurity threats hold to the natural environment and the importance of education and raising awareness to help combat these threats. • applicable biosecurity legislation or policies e.g., The Plant Biosecurity Strategy for Great Britain (2023-2028), Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, and The Weeds Act 1959 that should be followed and adhered to. • the threat invasive or non-native species pose to UK plants and ecology in that they can out compete and threaten ecosystems, habitats or native species. These are invasive either due to lack of natural control mechanisms (such as herbivores), rapid rate of spread (by seed or vegetatively), or suppression of other species (such as allelopathy or competition for resources).

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• the importance of regular surveying and monitoring of these biosecurity threats and the need to document, record and map these accurately. • site hygiene and how to minimise the spread of any biosecurity threats by good practice, record keeping, informing, and educating. This might include physical barriers and controls to stop the spread, eradication of a threat promptly when sited or reported, good signage and communication, quarantine procedures, consulting or informing relevant authorities or bodies, and the cleaning or sterilising of tools and equipment.
K6	Legislative requirements and best practice guidance in relation to horticultural sites, including use of machinery, environmental, conservation, planning, designations, finance and data protection.
	The apprentice will demonstrate a clear understanding and knowledge of legislative requirements and best practice guidance for horticultural sites. They will be aware of industry standards and benchmarks for quality, health and safety, the environment and conservation, financial and planning regulations, and any relevant data protection governance. This may include an understanding of. • Industry benchmarking and best practice guidance e.g., Green flag award and guidance manual, RHS guidance and training, STRI (Sports Turf Institute Research), Parks for London's Green Space Quality Manual' (GSQM), CABE Space guidance on parks management, local authority management plans, corporate greenspace strategies, local plans, central government guidance on nature and conservation. • Guidance on machinery use such as Risk Assessments, Safe Systems of Work documents, HSE advice, manufacturers handbook. • Data protection laws, rules and policies both internally through policies and central guidance and legislation such as the Data Protection Act 2018. • Conservation and Environmental Protection Legislation and Guidance such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990, conservation areas and tree preservation orders, biodiversity net gain legislation, DEFRA guidance and other relevant bodies such as Woodland Trust, Forestry commission. • Financial regulations and procurement rules and frameworks when purchasing goods and services for a horticultural site and the need for accurate record keeping for auditing purposes. • Planning laws and regulations and planning application processes. The apprentice should understand the importance of consultation and lodging the correct applications with the relevant departments, in addition to be aware of the penalties for carrying out works without the relevant planning.
K8	Health and safety legislation and best practice guidance including safeguarding, risk assessments and implications for public and staff on horticultural sites.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	The apprentice will have a clear and concise knowledge of health and safety legislation and how it relates to a horticultural site. They will understand how to protect staff, contractors, and members of the public on site by identifying and mitigating against risk following appropriate legislation, best practice and by implementing relevant control methods. This could include an ability to explain: • applicable, relevant legislation and regulations e.g., Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992, The Working at Height Regulations, Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002 (COSHH), The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 • risk assessments, safe systems of work and personal protective equipment and their importance in identifying hazards, eliminating, and minimising risk to protect staff and any other stakeholders. • the importance of appropriate accident, incident and near miss reporting for auditing and compliance purposes and avoiding future incidents by improving systems e.g., RIDDOR is the law that requires employers, and other people in charge of work premises, to report and keep records of work-related accidents, including those to staff and members of the public, which cause deaths and work-related accidents which cause certain serious injuries (reportable injuries). • The process for monitoring health and safety onsite, including ad-hoc and routine inspections, auditing, and the testing of machinery and equipment e.g., LOLER (Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998) and PUWER (Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998) • Safeguarding systems and processes to help avoid harm, or risk of harm, by preventing people who are deemed unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults from gaining access to them through their work.
K9	Functional factors, their relevance and implications for management of horticultural sites for example, infrastructure, features, services, users, conditions, hard structures and surfaces.
	The apprentice will understand the functional factors that combine to make a successful horticultural site. They will understand the function of each factor and the value they bring. They will demonstrate knowledge of how to manage and maintain these factors within budget to ensure they are safe and meet legislation and quality standards. This could include demonstrating an understanding of. • the different types of functional factors their purpose and value. These may include horticultural features or planting displays, infrastructure or hard landscaping, different surfaces such as pathways, sports turf, or parking surfaces, and how they all combine to provide a specific function or service. • the challenges in maintaining these factors within budget and resource and the implications for not doing to meet relevant legislation, safety standards, and

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	service levels set e.g., a poorly maintained golf course is likely to cause safety issues, reputational damage, and not comply with industry standards on course maintenance or quality. • The importance of capturing functional factors within relevant documents such as site plans, maps, management plans and records so that they are documented, visible to relevant personnel, and can be appropriately managed and maintained.
K11	Government, local or organisational strategies or policies that impact on horticultural sites including garden or landscape management strategies
The apprentice will understand and be able to respond in practice to the impact of local, regional, or national strategy or policy on their site. They will demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the types of applicable policies and why they are important in protecting the environment, green infrastructure, and communities. This may include the ability to describe. • national, regional and local strategies in place to protect and enhance the environment such as biodiversity net gain, tree and woodland provision, and nature recovery strategies. Strategic policies can identify the location of existing and proposed green infrastructure networks, for example, and set out appropriate policies for their protection and enhancement. • the funding and support available to implement certain strategies e.g., the Woodland Trust providing funding for tree planting and woodland creation schemes or biodiversity net gain credits for offsetting development with natural infrastructure. • the importance of local nature partnerships, health and wellbeing boards and enterprise partnerships when developing green infrastructure strategies and benchmarking standards. • an understanding of the opportunities, limitations and restrictions that strategies and policies present and the importance of adhering to them legally and morally.	
K18	Principles of sustainability and sustainable supply chains, including measurement of energy use and advising on improved environmental standards to work towards a zero carbon economy, for example selection of equipment, techniques, FSC timber supplies and peat
The apprentice will understand the impact of horticulture on the wider environment. They will understand the importance of sustainable practices and working towards a net zero carbon economy, with specific reference to the reduction of the negative impacts of horticultural practices. They will understand the contribution of horticulture to the three pillars of sustainability (economic viability, social equity and environmental protection). This may include an ability to explain: • the negative factors that horticultural processes can have on the environment e.g. machinery and waste streams that produce carbon and pollution, energy production to heat and power buildings and facilities, the use of raw materials,	

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	and the negative impacts that transportation and logistics can have on the environment. • a knowledge of sustainable horticultural practices such as, water conservation and management, soil carbon management with no dig systems and no peat, avoiding the use of plastics, renewable energy sources, electric tools and machinery in place of internal combustion engines, and selection of sustainable building materials etc. • the importance of monitoring and recording energy and resource use so that it can be reviewed and practically reduced, using relevant industry standards and best practice. • carbon net zero, carbon sequestration and how this can be achieved on site through formal policies and plans. For example, net zero may be achieved on site by off-setting activities by green energy sources and the planting of woodland areas to sequester carbon. • relevant legislation and guidance that site management should be guided by such as central net zero targets.
K19	Implications of climate change for horticultural sites and how to adapt and mitigate against these for example, alleviating flood risk, extreme temperatures.
	The apprentice will have a clear and concise knowledge of climate change factors and how these may affect their site throughout the year. They will understand the risk climate change presents to a site and will be able to identify and implement practical steps to mitigate against these risks to protect the environment, people and communities. This will include an ability to explain. • the impact of climate change on existing planting, and how and why incorporating more resilient planting can make a difference. Impacts may include, extended growing seasons, warmer springs and autumns, a wider range of plant species can be grown, notwithstanding extreme weather events, nutrient depletion, and soil erosion due to extreme rainfall, prolonged dry spells and warmer conditions, which may encourage the spread of certain pests and diseases. • suitable adaptation or mitigation measures such as reducing or re-using plastics, planting diversely for wildlife and to sequester carbon, considering water use and management, adopting an integrated pest management approach (IPM), considering biosecurity at all times and quarantining new plants, managing soil profiles, considering plant characteristics/aspect, experiment/look up how plant relatives grow in the wild, consider range or distribution, managing your site in a pro-nature way, regarding your site as a habitat which you can make pro-nature decisions about, and consider disease resistance, regardless of native status, and plants' 'opportunism', both positively and negatively. • The importance of not using peat or chemical pesticides/herbicides, or intensively managing horticulture so that it impacts the soil profile, biodiversity, ecology, or the wider environment e.g., allowing grass to grow for nature recovery which has lots of positive benefits to the environment. The importance of not introducing

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	invasive species onto site or any other processes that impact the natural environment.
K20	Biosecurity controls for example hygiene, provenance of plant material, plant passports, quarantine, control of harmful and notifiable organisms.

The apprentice will understand the importance of adhering to biosecurity measures. They will follow plant health principles to avoid imported pest and disease changing the landscape and horticultural practice adversely. They will understand good plant hygiene and the importance of accurate record keeping and reporting processes in relation to biosecurity.

This includes the ability to explain:

- the importance of understanding plant origins and their endemic environments.
- how plants and growing media can be hosts for pests, including pathogens in water, especially where there is poor drainage.
- plant health policies and procedures of prospective suppliers to ensure they come from a reputable source that follows best practice and adheres to rules and regulations e.g., plant passports.
- the importance of good nursery hygiene, monitoring quarantine areas and the surrounding landscape and taking any reactive measures required.
- bio secure plant disposal methods e.g., incineration or removal and disposal by approved contractors.
- an understanding of plant health and the ability to identify deficiencies, pest, and diseases by visual inspection.
- an understanding of legal obligations and legislation in relation to plant health such as those set out by DEFRA http://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/
- certification available to improve supply chain biosecurity http://planthealthy.org.uk/
- control methods against invasive non-native species such as good practice in cultivation methods, encouraging or introducing natural enemies (biological controls) as a first line of control.
- the importance of taking all possible steps to remove invasive weeds or pests, ensuring they are not allowed to spread, and dispose of them in a responsible way.

K25	Benefits of horticultural sites for example health and wellbeing, ecosystem services.

The apprentice will be able to identify distinct benefits that horticultural sites have on both people interacting with them, and wider society. They will understand and be able to describe the individual or societal issues and be able to describe the nature of the benefits horticultural sites provide to address them.
This could include an ability to explain how:

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• practising horticulture improves mental and physical health. • interacting with/spending time in green spaces improves mental and physical health. • horticultural sites can contribute to flood management, help address noise and air pollution, and absorb CO2 from the atmosphere. • horticultural sites can play an important role in best practice soil management. • green spaces provide a connection to nature for communities, allow space for exercise, recreation and wellbeing, and increase property values in their vicinity.
K27	Principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Weed Management (IWM).
The apprentice will be able to identify different methods of pest/weed control that may be appropriate and describe the importance of having a diversified approach. The apprentice will need to understand that over-reliance on any one method goes against the ethos of IPM/IWM. The apprentice could demonstrate this by: • identifying biological controls such as nematodes. • identifying manual controls such as hoeing, hand-picking, and hosing-off of pests. • suggesting the encouragement of natural predators and parasites of pests. • suggesting the use of appropriate chemicals where essential, knowledge of legislation covering operator usage/Health and safety, and potential environmental impacts. • identifying alternatives to chemicals such as flame weeders, electrocution, and hot water/foam treatments. • explaining the importance of preventative measures such as effective watering and fertilizing of plants. • recognising the commercial implications of different methods (e.g., time, resource and cost required to undertake manual weed control).	
K31	Environmental factors and their impact on plant health and growth, including temperature, soils, hydrology light
The apprentice will have a clear and concise knowledge of the environmental factors required for plants to survive and flourish – light, water/humidity, carbon dioxide and nutrition. The apprentice will need to understand how plants respond in different ways to variations in these and other external factors, and how these affect management and maintenance of horticultural sites.	

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	This could include an ability to explain: • seasonal variations in growth, including particularly vigorous growth during spring and early summer due to increased temperatures and hours of sunlight/day length. • the importance of watering plants, especially during their establishment period. • the negative impacts of compacted and/or waterlogged soil conditions. • the effects of drought periods on plants, reducing their rate of growth and potentially damaging or killing plants. • the impact of autumn frosts and high winds that are catalysts to deciduous plants and trees dropping their leaves. • the effects of low winter temperatures, frosts, and snow, resulting in checked growth, damaged plants, and plant losses. • the different soil types and profiles and how these impact drainage, growth rate, health etc.
K32	Survey, research and data analysis techniques for horticultural sites, including features (for example paths, structures, utilities), abiotic factors (for example aspect, climate), ecology, horticultural elements (for example plants, soils), community engagement and people (for example usage, access, experience).
	The apprentice will need to understand the importance of gathering historical as well as current information about sites in order to complete a comprehensive survey. This includes identifying relevant information regarding utilities, access, and historically/culturally important features. They will also be able to describe the importance of understanding the climate, soil conditions and ecological appraisal of sites. The apprentice could show this knowledge by explaining. • the importance of identifying all of the different stakeholders of a site, from landowner to employees or local community and relevant consultation. • the importance of communication with stakeholders to discover the existence of asset plans and areas of access required by utilities companies. • The importance of communication with stakeholders to discover the existence of ecological surveys, invasive weed surveys, arboriculture surveys and similar documents. • the importance of internet research to gather information. • areas where the expertise of outside consultants/contractors is required, such as playground inspections, arboriculture surveys, invasive weed surveys and so on. • how to undertake a basic soil test to identify soil pH and soil texture. • the importance of different growing conditions for plants around a site, and how this affects site management. This may include shaded planting or grass areas, or compacted areas of grass prone to flooding. • identifying interpretation features or other community engagement techniques employed on the site.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• identifying rights of way in existence on sites, potentially including reference to resources such as Ordnance Survey mapping to identify these. • how to measure accurate visitor numbers to gauge human traffic on site.
K34	Project Management techniques.
The apprentice will need to understand the importance of assessing feasibility of projects, effective time management, task scheduling, appropriate division of tasks/sub-projects, and robust feedback/verification procedures. They will understand the benefits of working in a systematic way, how it strengthens their peer work practice, and the commercial implications of effective project management. The apprentice could demonstrate this knowledge by describing: • the importance of researching projects to assess their feasibility and likely obstacles that may be met. • project management tools such as MS Project, story boards and Gantt charts. • techniques for sub-dividing using work breakdown structure methodologies, assigning project roles and responsibilities clearly. • project management resources such as online applications for sub-dividing projects, allocating responsibilities and setting deadlines. • the importance of identifying the various stakeholders with interests in a project, regularly communicating with them and managing expectations. • the use of timesheets to ensure effective use of staff.	

Ref	KSB to be assessed
Skills	
S1	Plans and carries out a site survey to include features (for example paths, structures), abiotic factors (for example aspect, climate), ecology, horticultural elements (for example plants, soils), community engagement and people (for example usage, access, experience).
The apprentice will have identified the boundaries of a site and the responsibilities under their remit. They will have sourced relevant external documents (e.g. invasive weed surveys) and information about utilities on site and been able to sufficiently interpret them to understand their own responsibilities, liabilities and ongoing duties. The apprentice will also have assessed the health/condition of the soft and hard landscaped areas of the site and recognised the impact this will have on the site's ongoing management. Varying with each project, the site survey could include: • a visual interpretation of the site showing its boundaries, this may be an overmarked satellite image or survey document.	

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• a detailed description of site conditions including location, aspect, microclimates, soil conditions, light conditions. • comments on the health of plants, grass, and trees on site. • inclusion, where possible, of relevant historical documents such as invasive weed surveys, relevant site heritage, or planning documents in the appendices of the document. • identification of ongoing responsibilities such as requirements for arboriculture surveys or playground inspections. • description of community engagement techniques being employed on the site. • identification of vehicular and pedestrian access routes around the site.
S2	Gathers site data through field and desk-based research methods.
	The apprentice will have learnt and understood various field and desk-based research methods appropriate for informing a comprehensive site survey. They will have been able to demonstrate their ability at sourcing relevant documents, as well as conducting field-based analysis of site conditions. This could include showing how to: • undertake a basic soil pH and manual soil texture test. • understand the different light conditions around the site. • source relevant documents from the appropriate stakeholder, such as an asset plan for utilities or ecological survey. • use internet-based satellite resources to gather images of the site. • use internet-based research to understand the history of the site and identify relevant historical or cultural factors. • checked whether the site sits in a conservation area or a site of special scientific interest or other covenants/planning restrictions.
S3	Analyses and interprets survey results and other information, and proposes appropriate action.
	The apprentice will be able to interpret their ongoing responsibilities from their site survey and any related documents sourced as part of the survey. This includes addressing any issues identified with the condition of the soft and hard landscaped areas, and proposing how they will be tackled. The apprentice will also recognise any requirement for ongoing surveys (such as outsourcing regular arboriculture surveys if required) and demonstrate the correct way of facilitating these. The apprentice could show this skill by: • identifying gaps in flowerbeds that need to be addressed, along with suitable plant suggestions. • Suggesting ways to tackle compacted or otherwise poor-growing areas of lawn. • Identifying any noxious plants that potentially pose a threat to people interacting with the site, such as Giant Hogweed (*Heraclium mantegazzianum*).

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• suggesting ways to ensure that repeat external surveys (such as arboriculture/playground surveys) are carried out at their required intervals. • suggesting ways to ensure that in-house surveys and checks (such as the assessing the condition of signage and ensuring tree stakes are removed when no longer required) are carried out at appropriate intervals. • suggesting ways that a site can be enhanced or developed to improve aesthetic, environmental, or financial value.
S4	Identifies biosecurity threats, selects and implements control or prevention measures.
	The apprentice will understand the global threat posed by plant biosecurity issues, and they will be aware of the existence of the plant passport scheme and their associated responsibilities. They will also be able to identify a range of control methods and explain when they may be appropriate. The apprentice will also understand the threats posed by invasive non-native species, and be able to identify Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant Hogweed (*Heraclium mantegazzianum*) and Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*). The apprentice will also be aware of important biosecurity threats to trees. The apprentice could show this skill by: • explaining the importance of cleaning tools and machines to prevent the spread of diseases; this includes hired-in machinery and plant. • showing an understanding of different biosecurity vectors e.g. wooden pallets. • explaining the importance of sourcing plants as locally as possible. • showing awareness of the Plant Passport system and an understanding of their responsibilities when sourcing plants. • explaining the importance of raising awareness of biosecurity threats among, staff, contractors and the wider public through communication and information. • Showing an awareness of rules, regulations and legislation in place to protect threats and the implications for not following these. • demonstrating an awareness of Ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*), Oak Processionary Moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) and *Phytopthora ramorum*. • showing an awareness of notifiable pests such as Citrus longhorn beetle (*Anoplophora chinensis*).
S5	Identifies plants and determines their suitability and cultural requirements. Formats plant names as per the International Code of Plant Nomenclature.
	The apprentice will be able to identify common, ornamental plants, and interpret technical information around their requirements (light/hardiness etc). They will be able to use this information to explain their suitability for a particular site, and for particular locations within a site. They will also be able to demonstrate the correct way to write the scientific names of plants, using italics and upper/lowercase letters appropriately.

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	• The apprentice could demonstrate these skills by identifying several common ornamental plants, using their scientific names (Latin). • writing the scientific names of plants correctly - using italics, the first letter of the Genus as a capital, and the entire specific epithet in lowercase. • explaining the difference between herbaceous perennials, annuals, biennials, and shrubs. • By understanding how to interpret the light requirements of different plants e.g., full sun, shade, and partial shade. • By understanding how to interpret the soil conditions required by different plants e.g., clay, sandy, and loamy soils, relevant drainage, and pH. • By explaining how to find information about the requirements for different plants (e.g. by using the internet or books).
S6	Develops a management plan to enhance and maintain a horticultural site, including health and safety, user requirements, risk assessment, prioritising, feasibility, interactions between elements and resourcing.
	The apprentice will be able to clearly demonstrate how to develop a sound management plan for a chosen site. They will need to show tangible benefits of the management plan, and that they have considered all relevant stakeholders throughout the process. They will have highlighted health and safety considerations and mitigated against risk, set out the associated costs and resources required, and defined responsibilities and timelines. This could include defining: • the short- and long-term benefits of the Site Management Plan in terms of horticultural, environmental, aesthetic, and financial value. • a stakeholder consultation process, with results shaping how the management plan is developed. • a clear risk assessment that defines hazards, risks, and control methods. • capital and revenue costs of the proposals, and how these will be funded, monitored, and controlled. • the resources required - labour, machinery, equipment, and materials, and the responsibilities of the personnel involved. • a clear timeline for the management plan, outlining key stages, phases, frequencies, and review dates.
S12	Carries out an environmental impact assessment.
	The apprentice will have learnt and understood how to carry out an environmental impact assessment of the site and be able to demonstrate why this is important when formulating Site Management Plans. This could include demonstrating a clear understanding of: • the environmental factors present on site such as trees, soil, wildlife, watercourses, and eco-systems, outlining their importance.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• the survey and assessment methods required for each environmental factor and the importance of presenting the data clearly so it can be interpreted. • the deviations or mitigations that may be required to the Site Management Plan based on the results of the environmental impact assessment. • the sensitivities around environmental impact and the importance of clearly communicating with relevant authorities and bodies where proposals impact the environment. e.g., tree planting may require an Environmental Impact Assessment from the Forestry Commission. • the requirement for outside expertise for specific items e.g., bat surveys.
S13	Manages waste and implements a waste management plan, for example application of waste hierarchy, segregation, composting.
	The apprentice will be able to clearly define a waste management plan that considers all waste streams associated with the site. They will demonstrate an understanding of sustainable waste disposal, associated costs, and environmental considerations, alongside biosecurity and safety. This could include the apprentice: • showing a clear understanding of the different types of waste streams and how they should be handled, separated, and stored safely. • demonstrating an understanding of any relevant legislation or licence requirements for the handling of waste e.g., waste carriers' licence. • highlighting opportunities for avoiding, eliminating, and reusing waste before considering recycling or waste disposal options. • including a relevant risk assessment for safe waste processing, handling, and disposal. • outlining a cost-benefit analysis of the chosen recycling or waste disposal method e.g., the viability of chipping or shredding of green waste bi-product to sell commercially or to use as compost for growing operations.
S14	Manages water usage and hydrology for horticultural sites, for example drainage, mulching, irrigation.
	The apprentice will have learnt and understood how to manage water sustainably on-site. They will be able to identify water requirements and considerations for the successful running of a project, including supply, storage, and distribution. They will be able to describe different methods of drainage and understand where to apply them. In addition, they will have a sound understanding of the importance of water conservation and be able to highlight ways to practically do this on-site. This could include demonstrating: • an appraisal of the water required on-site, and their plans to get this supplied to the desired location through irrigation or transportation. • an understanding of the risks associated with water management, such as legionella, flooding, and contamination, and the control measures required to mitigate against these.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
	• methods to conserve water, such as mulching around trees or borders, drip irrigation, rainwater storage, or sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) • an awareness of the additional watering requirements of new plants and trees.
S15	Manages soil health, for example fertility, structure, micro-biology, avoiding compaction.
The apprentice will be able to demonstrate the correct way to manage soil health to minimise any negative impact generated by activities on-site. They will have a clear understanding of the soil profile and how to implement management practices that will improve or maintain optimal soil health. This could include an ability to explain how to: • minimise site compaction through appropriate management of footfall, machinery, and on-site activities. • combat compaction through aeration, spiking, scarification, air spading, or cordoning off certain areas e.g., tree root zones. • measure and maintain soil pH, why this is important for plants and trees, and how this can be managed through good cultural practices. • improve soil profiles through digging in organic matter, mulching, adding minerals, or in some cases adopting a 'no dig' approach. • prevent damage to soil structure by ensuring soil is not moved or cultivated in wet conditions.	
S16	Manages plant health, including mitigation of environmental factors, developing sustainable control methods, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Integrated Weed Management.
The apprentice will be able to demonstrate how to manage plant health in a sustainable way. They will have learnt and understood the range of factors required to keep plants in good health. They will have a clear understanding of how to control and adapt these factors to ensure optimal growing conditions. This could include the ability to: • recognise and manage the fundamental factors required to keep plants healthy, such as light levels, temperature, water, drainage, weed and pest control, and fertilisation. • outline some of the methods used in an integrated pest and weed management approach, including chemical, physical, cultural, and biological controls. • highlight the value of sustainable control methods such as reducing the use of pesticides and herbicides through an integrated management approach. • Understand the importance of evaluating the cost and benefit of different control methods before implementation.	

Ref	KSB to be assessed
S24	Manages a horticultural project.

This could include the ability to demonstrate how to:

- assign roles, responsibilities, and timelines to the project, ensuring effective and clear communication with the project team throughout.
- manage and monitor risk, ensuring risk assessments and method statements are in place and followed, and personal protective equipment is always worn.
- supervise staff, contractors, and other personnel on-site ensuring the project is running smoothly and efficiently.
- oversee quality assurance against agreed standards and implement rectification works where required.
- manage project sponsors, key stakeholders, and external partners through regular communication and project updates when required.

Ref	KSB to be assessed
Behaviours	
B5	Embeds sustainable working practices.

The apprentice will demonstrate the ability to embed sustainable practices when developing a management plan that takes into consideration the preservation of natural resources and energy. They will be able to implement steps to reduce or sequester carbon, aiming for a carbon net-zero environment. In addition, they will show that they can minimise and manage waste sustainably and responsibly.

This could include:

- methods to conserve natural resources such as water, heating, and lighting using a range of innovative methods and sustainable alternatives e.g., solar energy.
- strategies to offset carbon through carbon sequestration or reduction of fossil fuels e.g., switching to electric mowers from internal combustion engines.
- the implementation of environmentally friendly management practices that minimise the impact on the environment e.g., organic pest and weed control that reduces or eradicates the use of herbicides and pesticides.
- implementing sustainable office practices such as the use of LED bulbs and reducing/eliminating the printing of documents.
- a waste management plan that clearly defines how to eradicate, reuse, recycle, compost, and dispose of waste with environmental protection as a priority.
- communication and coaching the project team on sustainable working practices to help embed the culture.

Open Awards Policies

Current versions of the following Open Awards policies are accessible through the Secure Portal.

These policies include:

- End Point Assessment Pricing Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
- Data Protection
- Enquiries and Appeals Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Sanctions Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Fair Access Policy

In addition, the current version of the following relevant document may be obtained by training providers, employers or apprentices by contacting Open Awards directly:

- Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessment Remotely

Support

For information about Open Awards support offer, including information on our policies, quality assurance, re-sits, appeals, complaints and general enquiries, please see our website: **www.openawards.org.uk** or contact our customer service team on 0151 494 2072 or via email at **enquiries@openawards.org.uk**.

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