



Qualification Specification:

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Garden Design

- Qualification No: 610/1245/2

OCN NI Level 2 Extended Certificate in Garden Design

- Qualification No: 610/1246/4

Version: 2.1



1. Specification Updates

Key changes have been listed below:

Section	Detail of change	Version and date of Issue
Qualification	On new spec format	V2.0 – April 2026
Qualification	Extended to 31 July 2032	V2.0 – April 2026

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3. Introduction to Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI)

The Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI) is a UK recognised awarding organisation based in Northern Ireland. We are regulated by CCEA Regulation to develop and award regulated professional and technical (vocational) qualifications from Entry Level up to and including Level 5 across all sector areas. In addition, OCN NI is also regulated by Ofqual to award qualifications in England.

OCN NI is also an educational charity that advances education by developing nationally recognised qualifications and recognising the achievements of learners. We work with centres such as Further Education Colleges, Private Training Organisations, Voluntary & Community Organisations, Schools, SME's and Public Sector bodies to provide learners with opportunities to progress into further learning and/or employment. OCN NI's Strategic Plan can be found on the OCN NI website www.ocnni.org.uk.

For further information on OCN NI qualifications or to contact us, you can visit our website at www.ocnni.org.uk. The website should provide you with details about our qualifications, courses, contact information, and any other relevant information you may need.

OCN NI Contact Details

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4. About this Specification

This specification details OCN NI's specific requirements for the delivery and assessment of the **OCN NI Level 2 Certificate and Extended Certificate in Garden Design**.

This specification will provide guidelines for centres to ensure the effective and correct delivery of these qualifications. OCN NI qualification specifications are based on research and engagement with the practitioner community to ensure they provide appropriate skills and knowledge for learners.

The qualification specification will detail the following aspects of the OCN NI Level 2 Certificate and Extended Certificate in Garden Design.

- **Qualification Features:** this includes the key characteristics and features of these qualifications, such as their intended audience, purpose, and credit value.
- **Centre Requirements:** this details the prerequisites and obligations that centres must fulfil to be eligible to deliver and assess these qualifications. These include guidelines on staff qualifications, resources, and required procedures.
- **Structure and Content:** this details the structure and content of the qualifications including units, and any specific content that learners will be required to study.
- **Assessment Requirements:** this details assessment criteria and assessment methods for these qualifications, ensuring that summative assessment approaches are clear.
- **Quality Assurance:** the quality and consistency of delivery and assessment of these qualifications are of paramount importance to OCN NI. The mandatory quality assurance arrangements including processes for internal and external quality assurance that all centres offering these qualifications must adhere to are detailed.
- **Administration:** guidance on the administrative aspects of delivering these qualifications, including registration, certification, and record-keeping.
- Reference to other handbooks and policies as appropriate to the qualifications.

It is important to note that OCN NI will communicate any significant updates or changes to this specification in writing to our centres. Additionally, we will make these changes available on our official website at www.ocnni.org.uk.

To stay current, please refer to the online version of this specification as it is the most authoritative and up-to-date publication. Be aware that downloaded and printed copies may not reflect the latest revisions.

4.1 Additional Support

OCN NI offers a comprehensive range of support services designed to assist centres in meeting the delivery and quality assurance requirements of OCN NI qualifications. These services include:

- **Specimen Assessment Materials:** These booklets are created to assist learners in demonstrating the fulfilment of assessment criteria and organising the quality assurance prerequisites for each individual unit.
- **Qualification Support Pack:** A support pack has been developed to support centres in the delivery of these qualifications. The pack includes planning and assessment templates, guides to best practice, etc.
- **Professional Development for Educators:** OCN NI provides opportunities for professional development tailored to meet the various needs of practitioners and quality assurance staff. Centres can join our training sessions, available in both face-to-face and online formats, or explore a wealth of training materials by visiting www.ocnni.org.uk
- **OCN NI Subject Advisors:** Our team of subject advisors offers vital information and support to centres. They provide guidance on specification details, non-exam assessment advice, updates on resource developments, and various training opportunities. They actively engage with subject communities through an array of networks to facilitate the exchange of ideas and expertise, to support practitioners to provide quality education programs to learners.

All centres can access information, support and guidance to support the delivery and quality assurance of these qualifications by contacting their designated Business Development Advisor or by contacting us on [Contact Us | OCN NI](#)

5. About these Qualifications

5.1 Qualification Regulation Information

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Garden Design

Qualification Number: 610/1245/2

OCN NI Level 2 Extended Certificate in Garden Design

Qualification Number: 610/1246/4

Operational start date: 01 August 2022

Review date: 31 July 2032

The qualifications' operational start and end dates define the regulated qualifications' lifecycle. The operational end date is the final date for learner registration, while learners have until the certificate end date to complete the qualifications and receive their certificates.

It is important to note that all OCN NI regulated qualifications are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RQF), which can be found at [Ofqual Register](#). This register is maintained by Ofqual in England and CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland. It contains information about qualifications that are regulated and accredited. It is a key resource for learners, employers, and educational institutions to verify the status and recognition of qualifications.

Centres must adhere to administrative guidelines diligently, with special attention to the fact that fees, registration, and certification end dates for the qualification may be subject to changes. It is a centre's responsibility to make itself aware of updates on any modifications to ensure compliance with the latest requirements. OCN NI provides centres with timely updates through various channels including website, newsletters and through this specification. Information on qualification fees can be found on the Centre Login section of the OCN NI website www.ocnni.org.uk.

5.2 Sector Subject Area

A subject sector area is a specific category used to classify academic and vocational qualifications. Subject sector areas are part of the educational and qualifications framework to organise and categorise qualifications. The sector subject for these qualifications is:

Subject Area: 3.2 Horticulture and forestry

5.3 Grading

Grading for these qualifications is pass/fail.

5.4 Qualifications' Aim and Objectives

Qualifications' Aim

The aim of the OCN NI Level 2 Certificate and Extended Certificate in Garden Design is to enable the learner to develop the skills and knowledge in order to create garden designs from initial project brief through to design drawings and specifications.

Qualifications' Objectives

The objectives of the OCN NI Level 2 Certificate and Extended Certificate in Garden Design are to enable learners to understand the function of the following within garden design:

- plant identification, features and uses
- plant and soil science
- design influences and process
- plant selection and care
- hard landscaping materials and features
- graphic design

5.5 Target Learners

These qualifications are targeted at learners who wish to pursue a career in garden design including current landscape gardeners wishing to gain a qualification in garden design.

5.6 Entry Requirements

There are no specific entry requirements for these qualifications though learners should be a minimum of 16 years of age.

5.7 Progression

The OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Garden Design will allow learners to progress to the OCN NI Level 2 Extended Certificate in Garden Design and/or to higher level qualifications in the area of Garden Design and/or into employment.

5.8 Delivery Language

These qualifications are exclusively available in English. If there is a desire to offer these qualifications in Welsh or Irish (Gaeilge), we encourage you to get in touch with OCN NI. They will assess the demand for such provisions and, if feasible, provide the qualification in the requested language as appropriate.

6. Centre Requirements for Delivering these Qualifications

6.1 Centre Recognition

New and existing OCN NI recognised centres must apply for and be granted approval to deliver these qualifications prior to the commencement of delivery.

6.2 Qualification Approval

Once a centre has successfully undergone the Centre Recognition process, it becomes eligible to apply for qualification approval. The centre's capability to meet and sustain the qualification criteria will be assessed. Throughout the qualification approval process, OCN NI will aim to ensure that:

- centres possess suitable physical resources (e.g., equipment, IT, learning materials, teaching rooms) to support qualification delivery and assessment
- centre staff involved in the assessment process have relevant expertise and/or occupational experience
- robust systems are in place for ensuring ongoing professional development for staff delivering the qualifications
- centres have appropriate health and safety policies concerning learner equipment use
- qualification delivery by centres complies with current equality and diversity legislation and regulations
- as a part of the assessment process for these qualifications, it may be useful for learners to have access to a practical work setting

6.3 Centre Staffing

To offer these qualifications centres are mandated to establish the following roles as a minimum, although a single staff member may serve in more than one capacity*:

- Centre contact
- Programme Co-ordinator
- Assessor
- Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

*Note: An individual cannot serve as an IQA for their own assessments.

6.4 Tutor Requirements

Tutors responsible for delivering these qualifications are expected to possess a high degree of occupational competency. They should meet the following criteria:

- **Occupational Competency:** Tutors should demonstrate a clear understanding of the subject matter, including up-to-date knowledge. They should also have a minimum of one year's relevant experience in this area. This competence should enable them to effectively impart knowledge and practical skills to learners.
- **Qualifications:** Tutors should hold qualifications at a level that is at least one level higher than the qualification they are teaching. This ensures that they have the necessary academic foundation to provide in-depth guidance and support to learners.

These requirements collectively ensure that learners receive instruction from highly qualified and experienced instructors, thereby enhancing the quality and effectiveness of their educational experience.

6.5 Assessor Requirements

The assessment of these qualifications takes place within the centre and is subjected to OCN NI's rigorous quality assurance procedures. The achievement of individual units is based on the criteria defined in each unit.

Assessors play a pivotal role in ensuring the validity and fairness of assessments. They are required to meet the following criteria:

- **Occupational Competency:** Assessors should possess a high degree of occupational competency in the relevant subject matter. This expertise enables them to accurately evaluate and measure a learner's knowledge and skills. They should also have a minimum of one year's experience in the area they are assessing. Additionally, they should hold qualifications at a level that is at least one level higher than the qualification they are assessing, ensuring their in-depth understanding of the subject matter.
- **Assessment Expertise:** Assessors should have direct or related experience in the field of assessment. This includes knowledge of best practices in designing, conducting, and grading assessments. Their expertise ensures that assessments are both fair and valid.
- **Assessors Qualification:** Assessors should hold or be currently undertaking a recognised assessor's qualification; or must have attended the OCN NI Assessment Training.
- **Comprehensive Assessment Oversight:** Assessors are responsible for evaluating all assessment tasks and activities comprehensively. They must

thoroughly review and assess each element to ensure a fair and accurate representation of a learner's skills and knowledge.

These rigorous requirements uphold the quality and integrity of the qualification's assessment process, ensuring that learners receive a fair and reliable evaluation of their competencies.

6.6 Internal Quality Assurer Requirements

The Internal Quality Assurer plays a crucial role in the centre's internal quality assurance processes. The centre must designate a skilled and trained IQA who assumes the role of an internal quality monitor responsible for verifying the delivery and assessment of the qualifications.

The Internal Quality Assurer for these qualifications must meet the following criteria:

- **IQA Expertise:** IQA should have direct or related experience in the field of verification and have at least one year's occupational experience in the areas they are internally quality assuring. This includes knowledge of best practices in designing, conducting, and grading assessments. Their expertise ensures that assessments are both fair and valid.
- **IQA Qualification:** IQA should hold or be currently undertaking a recognised IQA qualification; or must have attended the OCN NI IQA Training.
- **Thorough Evaluation of Assessment Tasks and Activities:** IQA are tasked with conducting in-depth reviews and assessments of all assessment tasks and activities. Their responsibility is to ensure a comprehensive and meticulous oversight of each element to guarantee a just and precise reflection of a learner's abilities and knowledge and to ensure that all assessment and quality assurance requirements are fulfilled.

7. Qualification Structure

7.1 Qualification Purpose

The OCN NI Level 2 Certificate and Extended Certificate in Garden Design are unitised qualifications on a scale of pass or fail. Learners are expected to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, ensuring a level of proficiency. The learner will be expected to understand and apply the principles of garden design from initial site assessment and brief to the production of design drawings including plans, sections, elevations and 3-dimensional images for garden design. The learner will be expected to understand the influences that have led to historic and modern-day garden design styles and be able to specify plants for a planting scheme. In order to produce appropriate garden design learners will be expected to take into account the impact of soil characteristics on plant growth, how to select plants for different situations and provide plant aftercare as well as selecting appropriate hard landscaping materials for a given site and brief.

7.2 Qualification Level

In the context of the OCN NI Level 2 Certificate and Extended Certificate in Garden Design it is essential to understand the significance of qualification levels, as they play a pivotal role in assessing the depth and complexity of knowledge and skills required for successful attainment. These qualifications align with Level 2, which signify a moderate level of difficulty and intricacy. It's important to note that qualification levels in the educational framework range from Level 1 to Level 8, complemented by three 'entry' levels, namely Entry 1 to Entry 3.

7.3 Qualification Size

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

This represents the total amount of time a learner is expected to spend to complete the qualification successfully. It includes both guided learning hours (GLH) and independent study or additional learning time.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

These are the hours of guided instruction and teaching provided to learners. This may include classroom instruction, tutorials, or other forms of structured learning.

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Garden Design	
Total Qualification Time (TQT):	150 hours
Total Credits Required:	15 credits
Guided Learning Hours (GLH):	120 hours
OCN NI Level 2 Extended Certificate in Garden Design	
Total Qualification Time (TQT):	300 hours
Total Credits Required:	30 credits
Guided Learning Hours (GLH):	240 hours

7.4 How to Achieve the Qualifications

To achieve the **OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Garden Design** learners must complete a total of 15 credits, to include the mandatory unit for 6 credits and the remaining 9 credits can be taken from any of the optional units.

To achieve the **OCN NI Level 2 Extended Certificate in Garden Design** learners must complete all units for a total of 30 credits.

8. Assessment Structure

These qualifications are assessed through internal assessment and each unit is accompanied by specific assessment criteria that define the requirements for achievement.

8.1 Assessment Guidance: Portfolio

The portfolio for these qualifications is designed to provide a comprehensive view of a learner's skills and knowledge. It is a holistic collection of evidence that may include a single piece of evidence that satisfies multiple assessment criteria. There is no requirement for learners to maintain separate evidence for each assessment criterion.

It is essential that the evidence in the portfolio reflects the application of skills in real-world situations. Learners should ensure that they provide multiple examples or references whenever the assessment criteria require it.

8.2 Understanding the Units

The units outlined in this specification establish clear assessment expectations. They serve as a valuable guide for conducting assessments and ensuring quality assurance efficiently. Each unit within this specification follows a consistent structure. This section explains the operational framework of these units. It is imperative that all educators, assessors, Internal Quality Assurers, and other personnel overseeing the qualification review and familiarise themselves with this section to ensure a comprehensive understanding of how these units function.

- **Title:** The title will reflect the content of the unit and should be clear and concise.
- **Level:** A unit can have one of six RQF levels: Entry, One, Two, Three, Four or Five. All units within these qualifications are Level 2.
- **Credit Value:** This describes the number of credits ascribed to a unit. It identifies the number of credits a learner is awarded upon successful achievement of the unit. One credit is awarded for the learning outcomes which a learner, on average, might reasonably be expected to achieve in a notional 10 hours of learning.
- **Learning Outcome:** A coherent set of measurable achievements.
- **Assessment Criteria:** These enable a judgement to be made about whether or not, and how well, the students have achieved the learning outcomes.
- **Assessment Guidance and Methods:** These detail the different assessment methods within the unit that may be used.
- **Unit Content:** This provides indicative content to assist in teaching and learning.

9. Qualification Summary by Unit

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Garden Design

Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification: 150 hours
 Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for this qualification: 120 hours

In order to achieve the OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Garden Design the learner must successfully complete a total of 15 credits, to include the mandatory unit for 6 credits and the remaining 9 credits can be taken from any of the optional units.

OCN NI Level 2 Extended Certificate in Garden Design

Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification: 300 hours
 Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for this qualification: 240 hours

In order to achieve the OCN NI Level 2 Extended Certificate in Garden Design , the learner must successfully complete all units for a total of 30 credits.

Unit Reference Number	OCN NI Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit Value	GLH	Level
Mandatory unit					
Y/650/3471	CBF867	Garden Design Process	6	48	Two
Optional units					
A/650/3472	CBF868	Plant Identification, Features and Uses	3	24	Two
D/650/3473	CBF869	Plant and Soil Science	3	24	Two
A/650/3481	CBF870	Plant Selection and Care	6	48	Two
D/650/3482	CBF871	Hard Landscaping Materials and Features	3	24	Two
F/650/3483	CBF872	Garden Graphical Design	3	24	Two
H/650/3484	CBF873	Garden Design Influences	6	48	Two

10. Unit Content

Title	Garden Design Process
Level	Two
Credit Value	6
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	48
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF867
Unit Reference No	Y/650/3471
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to understand and apply the principles of garden design from initial site assessment and brief to the production of design drawings.	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand the process and principles of garden design.	1.1. Illustrate the process and principles of garden design from initial drawings through to the presentation plan.
2. Be able to produce a site survey and analysis for garden design.	2.1. Conduct a survey and assessment on a given site to include the recording of the following: a) existing structures b) boundary c) hard and soft landscaping elements d) plants 2.2. Select appropriate scale and paper size for survey drawings. 2.3. Produce a site survey and site analysis drawings to scale based on recordings made in AC 2.1.
3. Be able to produce a concept design and costings.	3.1. Produce a concept board which supports the design development for a given design brief. 3.2. Develop at least three preliminary design ideas including sketches and photos based on concept board produced and design brief identified in AC 3.1. 3.3. Select with justification the most appropriate design idea from those developed in AC 3.2. to develop a concept design and costings.
4. Be able to produce garden design drawings.	4.1. Apply primary and secondary design principles to produce the following garden design drawings based on design idea selected in AC 3.3: a) presentation plan b) section elevation c) 3-dimensional sketch
5. Be able to produce a scale plan that features appropriate visual spacing.	5.1. Describe the importance of visual balance in addressing a design brief. 5.2. Produce a scale plan which features appropriate visual spacing with the use of positive and negative space.

Assessment Guidance

The following assessment method/s may be used to ensure all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are fully covered.

Assessment Method	Definition	Possible Content
Portfolio of evidence	A collection of documents containing work undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet required skills outcomes OR A collection of documents containing work that shows the learner's progression through the course	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion
Practical demonstration/assignment	A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log
Coursework	Research or projects that count towards a learner's final outcome and demonstrate the skills and/or knowledge gained throughout the course	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Tutor notes/record Learner log/diary
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests

Title	Plant Identification, Features and Uses	
Level	Two	
Credit Value	3	
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	24	
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF868	
Unit Reference No	A/650/3472	
Unit purpose and aim(s): This unit will enable the learner to accurately identify different plants and their features, describe their use in the garden, and be able to specify plants for a planting scheme.		
Learning Outcomes		Assessment Criteria
1. Be able to apply the binomial system of naming plants.	1.1. Use the binomial system to accurately identify the following: a) 20 trees b) 20 shrubs c) 10 plants suitable for hedging d) 25 herbaceous plants.	
2. Understand the use of trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials in garden design.	2.1. Define the terms tree, shrub and herbaceous perennial. 2.2. Describe using examples the use of trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials in garden design.	
3. Be aware of the ornamental features of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants.	3.1. Describe the different ornamental features exhibited by trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants.	
4. Understand the use of hedges in garden design.	4.1. Describe using examples the use of hedges in garden design.	
5. Understand the use of bulbs for year round planting.	5.1. Describe, with examples, how bulbs may be used in different situations and seasons.	
6. Know how to specify plant material required for a garden design.	6.1. Describe how to specify plant material for a given garden design including size, quantity and accurate plant and variety names.	
Assessment Guidance		
The following assessment method/s may be used to ensure all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are fully covered.		
Assessment Method	Definition	Possible Content
Portfolio of evidence	A collection of documents containing work undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet required skills outcomes OR A collection of documents containing work that shows the learner's progression through the course	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion
Practical demonstration/assignment	A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log

Coursework	Research or projects that count towards a learner's final outcome and demonstrate the skills and/or knowledge gained throughout the course	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Tutor notes/record Learner log/diary
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests

Title	Plant and Soil Science	
Level	Two	
Credit Value	3	
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	24	
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF869	
Unit Reference No	D/650/3473	
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner understand soil science including types and structure and the impact of soil characteristics on plant growth.		
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
1. Understand the processes involved in plant growth and development.	1.1. Describe the basic process of photosynthesis and factors that affect its rate and impact on plant growth and development. 1.2. Describe the process of transpiration and its importance to plant growth and development.	
2. Understand texture, profile and characteristics of soils.	2.1. Describe what is meant by the term soil texture. 2.2. Summarise the information provided by a soil profile and how it is used. 2.3. Describe the characteristics of clay, sandy and silty soils.	
3. Understand soil structure and how it may be improved.	3.1. Define the term soil structure. 3.2. Describe three methods for the improvement of soil structure. 3.3. Define the term bulky organic material. 3.4. Identify three bulky organic materials and how they can be used to improve soil structure.	
4. Understand soil pH, nutrients and plant growth.	4.1. Describe what is meant by soil pH and its impact on nutrient availability. 4.2. Describe how soil pH may be adjusted. 4.3. Describe with examples what is meant by the terms calcifuge and calcicole. 4.4. Describe the role of major mineral nutrients and trace elements and their impact on plant growth.	
Assessment Guidance		
The following assessment method/s may be used to ensure all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are fully covered.		
Assessment Method	Definition	Possible Content
Portfolio of evidence	A collection of documents containing work undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet required skills outcomes OR A collection of documents containing work that shows the learner’s progression through the course	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion

Practical demonstration/assignment	A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log
Coursework	Research or projects that count towards a learner's final outcome and demonstrate the skills and/or knowledge gained throughout the course	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Tutor notes/record Learner log/diary
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests

Title	Plant Selection and Care
Level	Two
Credit Value	6
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	48
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF870
Unit Reference No	A/650/3481
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to understand how to select plants for different situations and provide plant aftercare.	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand planting and aftercare of trees and shrubs, and herbaceous perennials.	1.1. Describe how sites should be selected for given trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials. 1.2. Describe the ground preparation required for trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials. 1.3. Describe the importance of appropriate planting depth of trees. 1.4. Describe the appropriate aftercare of trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials.
2. Understand different trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants available as nursery stock and their uses.	2.1. Describe the appropriate use of trees typically available as nursery stock. 2.2. Describe the sizes and forms of shrubs and herbaceous plants typically available as nursery stock and their uses.
3. Understand plant breeders' rights.	3.1. Define plant breeders' rights. 3.2. Describe how plant propagation for garden use is affected by plant breeders' rights.
4. Understand plant selection and adaptations.	4.1. Identify for each of three different environmental conditions five appropriate plants. 4.2. Describe how soil, aspect, wind, frost and microclimate affect plant selection and growth. 4.3. Describe leaf and stem adaptations exhibited by plants growing in sun, drought, shade and wind.
5. Understand pest, disease, weed and invasive plant species control.	5.1. Summarise the process used for checking the condition of plants. 5.2. Define the following terms: a) pest and disease b) weed c) invasive plant species 5.3. Summarise key aspects of current legislation in relation to invasive plant species. 5.4. Identify four common invasive plant species. 5.5. Describe what is meant by the terms a) contact b) systemic c) residual pesticides 5.6. Describe one cultural and one chemical control method for invasive plant species.
6. Understand the use of fertilizers in gardens.	6.1. Define the terms organic and inorganic fertilizers. 6.2. Describe why fertilizers are applied in gardens. 6.3. Identify two organic and two inorganic fertilizers and the nutrients each supplies.

- 6.4. Describe the appropriate application process for two organic and two inorganic fertilizers.
- 6.5. Describe how to minimize environmental pollution when applying fertilizer.

Assessment Guidance

The following assessment method/s may be used to ensure all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are fully covered.

Assessment Method	Definition	Possible Content
Portfolio of evidence	A collection of documents containing work undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet required skills outcomes OR A collection of documents containing work that shows the learner's progression through the course	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion
Practical demonstration/assignment	A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log
Coursework	Research or projects that count towards a learner's final outcome and demonstrate the skills and/or knowledge gained throughout the course	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Tutor notes/record Learner log/diary
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests

Title	Hard Landscaping Materials and Features	
Level	Two	
Credit Value	3	
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	24	
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF871	
Unit Reference No	D/650/3482	
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to select appropriate hard landscaping materials for a given site and brief and understand how to use these materials within the garden design process.		
Learning Outcomes		Assessment Criteria
1. Understand hard landscaping materials, terms and features.	1.1. Describe different hard landscaping materials used in garden design. 1.2. Identify different garden terms and features used in hard landscaping.	
2. Be able to select appropriate hard landscaping for a given garden site and design brief.	2.1. Select appropriate hard landscaping materials to produce a presentation plan for a given garden site and design brief.	
3. Understand the use and construction of hard landscaping features.	3.1. Describe hard landscaping features which may enhance a garden design. 3.2. Describe different ways hard landscaping features can be constructed.	
4. Be able to select hard landscaping materials and corresponding details.	4.1. Select and apply at least three hard landscape design details for the given garden site and design brief identified in AC 2.1.	
Assessment Guidance		
The following assessment method/s may be used to ensure all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are fully covered.		
Assessment Method	Definition	Possible Content
Portfolio of evidence	A collection of documents containing work undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet required skills outcomes OR A collection of documents containing work that shows the learner’s progression through the course	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion
Practical demonstration/assignment	A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log
Coursework	Research or projects that count towards a learner’s final outcome and demonstrate the skills and/or knowledge gained throughout the course	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Tutor notes/record Learner log/diary
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners’ work	Electronic portfolio E-tests

Title	Garden Graphical Design	
Level	Two	
Credit Value	3	
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	24	
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF872	
Unit Reference No	F/650/3483	
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to develop graphic presentation skills to produce drawings including plans, sections, elevations and 3-dimensional images for garden design. Learners will understand industry standard conventions and symbols as well as developing their own style of graphic presentation.		
Learning Outcomes		Assessment Criteria
1. Be able use drawing equipment and materials for garden design.	1.1. Describe how different drawing equipment can be used for garden design. 1.2. Select and use drawing equipment for given garden design adhering to relevant health and safety guidelines.	
2. Understand the application of geometrical shapes in garden design.	2.1. Assess the application of geometrical shapes in different garden designs.	
3. Know how to use common conventions and symbols used in garden design.	3.1. Use appropriate graphic techniques to represent both hard and soft landscaping features.	
4. Be able produce a plan drawing.	4.1. Use appropriate techniques to produce a plan drawing for a given garden including: a) title block b) use of different pen lines c) appropriate scaling d) labelling e) dimensions f) use of industry standard graphic symbols for hard and soft landscape features g) north indicator	
5. Be able to produce a section elevation and 3-dimensional drawing.	5.1. Produce a section elevation and a 3-dimensional drawing for the garden plan drawing identified in AC 4.1.	
Assessment Guidance		
The following assessment method/s may be used to ensure all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are fully covered.		
Assessment Method	Definition	Possible Content
Portfolio of evidence	A collection of documents containing work undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet required skills outcomes OR A collection of documents containing work that shows the learner's progression through the course	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion
Practical demonstration/assignment	A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log
Coursework	Research or projects that count towards a learner's final	Record of observation Learner notes/written work

	outcome and demonstrate the skills and/or knowledge gained throughout the course	Tutor notes/record Learner log/diary
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests

Title	Garden Design Influences	
Level	Two	
Credit Value	6	
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	48	
OCN NI Unit Code	CBF873	
Unit Reference No	H/650/3484	
<i>Unit purpose and aim(s):</i> This unit will enable the learner to understand the influences that have led to historic and modern day garden design styles, and to develop the skills to use and blend these styles in creative garden design.		
Learning Outcomes		Assessment Criteria
1. Understand historic garden design styles.	1.1. Illustrate different historic garden design styles with reference to their design concept and hard and soft landscape features. 1.2. Assess how different given present day gardens have been influenced by the historic garden design styles identified in AC 1.1.	
2. Understand influences on garden design.	2.1. Illustrate different modern garden design styles from 1930s to present day with reference to the design concept and hard and soft landscape features. 2.2. Describe how trends in fashion, art and culture have historically influenced garden design styles up to the present day. 2.3. Select three contemporary garden designs assessing the influence of modern garden design styles on each.	
3. Be able to incorporate garden design styles in the garden design process.	3.1. Select a series of garden design styles and produce at least three different creative mood boards. 3.2. Use the mood boards produced in AC 3.1 to develop garden designs for three different given sites.	
Assessment Guidance		
The following assessment method/s may be used to ensure all learning outcomes and assessment criteria are fully covered.		
Assessment Method	Definition	Possible Content
Portfolio of evidence	A collection of documents containing work undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet required skills outcomes OR A collection of documents containing work that shows the learner’s progression through the course	Learner notes/written work Learner log/diary Peer notes Record of observation Record of discussion
Practical demonstration/assignment	A practical demonstration of a skill/situation selected by the tutor or by learners, to enable learners to practise and apply skills and knowledge	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Learner log

Coursework	Research or projects that count towards a learner's final outcome and demonstrate the skills and/or knowledge gained throughout the course	Record of observation Learner notes/written work Tutor notes/record Learner log/diary
E-assessment	The use of information technology to assess learners' work	Electronic portfolio E-tests

11. Quality Assurance of Centre Performance

11.1 Internal Assessment

When delivering and assessing these qualifications, centres must align with stakeholders' expectations and address learners' needs by implementing a practical and applied programme. Centres have the flexibility to customise programmes to meet local requirements and establish connections with local employers and the broader vocational sector.

The Assessor should work with the Internal Quality Assurer to ensure that the assessment is planned in line with OCN NI requirements. Assessment Plans must be developed and approved by the Internal Quality Assurer prior to the delivery of the qualification.

All units within these qualifications must undergo internal assessment. Learners must provide evidence that they have appropriately met all assessment criteria required for that grade.

The assessment format for all units involves a task conducted after the delivery of the unit's content, or part of it, if multiple tasks are used. Tasks may exhibit in various forms, encompassing practical and written types. Please refer to 'OCN NI's Assessment Definitions Guide' for additional details.

A task constitutes a distinct activity completed independently by learners, separated from teaching, practice, exploration, and other activities guided by tutors. Tasks are assigned to learners with a specified start date, completion date, and explicit requirements for the evidence to be produced. Some tasks may include observed practical components and require diverse forms of evidence.

A valid assignment will enable a clear and formal assessment outcome, which meets the requirements of the assessment criteria. Assessment decisions are based on the specific assessment criteria given in each unit and set at each grade level. The way in which individual units are written provides a balance of assessment of understanding, practical skills and vocational attributes appropriate to the purpose of qualifications.

It is the Assessor's role to ensure that learners are appropriately prepared for assessment, this begins from induction onwards. Assessors should ensure that learners understand how assessment tasks are used to determine the award of credit, the importance of meeting assessment timelines, and that all learners work must be independently created, where source documents are used this should be appropriately referenced, learners should be aware of what would constitute plagiarism and the possible consequences.

When conducting the assessment, Assessors must ensure they do not provide direct input, instructions or specific feedback which may compromise the authenticity of the work submitted.

Once the Assessor has authenticated the learners work, they must transparently demonstrate the rationale behind their assessment decisions. Once a learner completes all assigned tasks for a unit, the Assessor will allocate a grade for the unit. Refer to the 'Unit Grading Matrix' for additional information on the grading process.

Once the Assessor has completed the assessment process for the task, the assessment decision is recorded formally, and feedback is provided to the learner. The feedback should show the learner the outcome of the assessment decision, how it was determined or where the criteria has been met, it may indicate to the learner why achievement of the assessment criteria has not been met. It must be clear to the learner that this Assessment outcome is subject to verification.

For further information on assessment practice, please see the 'OCN NI Centre Handbook'. Assessment Training is also available and can be booked through the OCN NI Website.

11.2 Internal Quality Assurance

The role of the Internal Quality Assurer is to ensure appropriate internal quality assurance processes are carried out. The Internal Quality Assurer must oversee that assessments are conducted in accordance with relevant OCN NI policies, regulations, and this specification.

The Internal Quality Assurer must ensure assessments are fair, reliable, and uniform, thereby providing a consistent standard for all learners.

Internal Quality Assurers are required to provide constructive feedback to Assessors, identifying areas of strength and those that may require improvement. This feedback contributes to the ongoing professional development of Assessors.

Contributing to the standardisation of assessment practices within the centre is an important function of this role. This entails aligning assessment methods, grading criteria, and decision-making processes to maintain fairness and equity.

Internal Quality Assurers will actively engage in the sampling and monitoring of assessments to ensure the consistency and accuracy of assessment decisions. This process helps identify trends, areas for improvement, and ensures the robustness of the overall assessment system.

For further information on Internal Quality Assurance practice, please see the 'OCN NI Centre Handbook'. Internal Quality Assurance Training is also available and can be booked through the OCN NI Website.

11.3 Documentation

For internal quality assurance processes to be effective, the internal assessment and Internal Quality Assurance team needs to keep effective records.

- The programme must have an assessment and Internal Quality Assurance plan. When producing a plan, they should consider:
 - the time required for training and standardisation activities
 - the time available to undertake teaching and carry out assessment,
 - consider when learners may complete assessments and when quality assurance will take place
 - the completion dates for different assessment tasks
 - the date by which the assignment needs to be internally verified
 - sampling strategies
 - how to manage the assessment and verification of learners' work so that they can be given formal decisions promptly
 - how resubmission opportunities can be scheduled.

The following documents are available from OCN NI and document templates can be found in the Centre Login section of the OCN NI website www.ocnni.org.uk:

- A1 – Learner Assessment Record per Learner
- Learner Authentication Declarations
- Records of any reasonable adjustments applied for and the outcome – please see 'OCN NI's Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy' for further information
- M1 Internal Quality Assurance Sample Record
- M2 Feedback to Assessor
- Records of any complaints or appeals

11.4 External Quality Assurance

All OCN NI recognised centres are subject to External Quality Assurance. External quality assurance activities will be conducted to confirm continued compliance with the CCEA Regulation General Conditions of Recognition, OCN NI terms and conditions and the requirements outlined within this qualification specification.

The External Quality Assurer is assigned by OCN NI. The External Quality Assurer will review the delivery and assessment of these qualifications. This will include, but is not limited to, the review of a sample of assessment evidence and evidence of the internal quality assurance of assessment and assessment decisions. This will form the basis of the External Quality Assurance report and will help OCN NI determine the centre's risk.

The role of the External Quality Assurer serves as an external overseer of assessment quality, working to uphold consistency, compliance, and continuous improvement within the assessment process. Their role is crucial in ensuring that assessments are valid, reliable, fair, and aligned with the required standards and regulations.

For further information on OCN NI Centre Assessments Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy, please see the OCN NI Centre Handbook.

11.5 Standardisation

As a process, standardisation is designed to ensure consistency and promote good practice in understanding and the application of standards. Standardisation events:

- make qualified statements about the level of consistency in assessment across centres delivering a qualification
- make statements on the standard of evidence that is required to meet the assessment criteria for units in a qualification
- make recommendations on assessment practice
- produce advice and guidance for the assessment of units
- identify good practice in assessment and Internal Quality Assurance

Centres offering these qualifications must carry out internal standardisation activities prior to the claim for certification.

Centres offering units of an OCN NI qualification must attend and contribute assessment materials and learner evidence for standardisation events if requested.

OCN NI will notify centres of the nature of sample evidence required for standardisation events (this will include assessment materials, learner evidence and relevant Assessor and Internal Quality Assurer documentation). OCN NI will make standardisation summary reports available and correspond directly with centres regarding event outcomes.

12. Administration

12.1 Registration

A centre must register learners for these qualifications within 20 days of commencement of the delivery of the programme.

For further information on learner registration please see the OCN NI Centre Handbook and the QuartzWeb Manual, available through the Centre Login section of the OCN NI website. Administration training is also available and can be booked through www.ocnni.org.uk.

12.2 Certification

Once all internal quality assurance activities have been successfully completed, the centre can claim certification for the learner(s).

Certificates will be issued to centres within 20 working days from completion of a satisfactory external quality assurance activity, if appropriate, alternatively from the submission of an accurate and complete marksheet.

It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that certificates received from OCN NI are held securely and distributed to learners promptly and securely.

For further information on the uploading of results please see the QuartzWeb Manual for guidance, administration training is also available and can be booked through [OCN NI](#)

12.3 Charges

OCN NI publishes all up-to-date qualification fees in its Fees and Invoicing Policy document. Further information can be found on the centre login area of the OCN NI website.

12.4 Equality, Fairness and Inclusion

OCN NI's are committed to ensuring all learners have an equal opportunity to access our qualifications and assessment, and that our qualifications are awarded in a way that is fair to every learner.

OCN NI is committed to making sure that:

- learners with a protected characteristic are not, when they are undertaking one of our qualifications, disadvantaged in comparison to learners who do not share that characteristic
- all learners achieve the recognition they deserve for undertaking a qualification and that this achievement can be compared fairly to the achievement of their peers

For information on reasonable adjustments and special considerations please see the OCN NI Centre Handbook and Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy held in the back office of the OCN NI website.

12.5 Retention of Evidence

OCN NI has published guidance for centres on the retention of evidence. Details are provided in the OCN NI Centre Handbook and can be accessed via the OCN NI website.

OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Garden Design**Qualification Number: 610/1245/2****OCN NI Level 2 Extended Certificate in Garden Design****Qualification Number: 610/1246/4**

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