Royal Horticultural Society

R3112

UNDERSTANDING THE SELECTION & USE OF LANDSCAPING ELEMENTS IN THE GARDEN

Level 3

Thursday 30 June 2011

09:30 – 10:45

Written Examination

Candidate Number:.....

Candidate Name:.....

Centre Number/Name:.....

IMPORTANT – Please read carefully before commencing.

i) The duration of this paper is **75 minutes**.

ii) **ALL** questions should be attempted.

iii) **EACH** question carries **10 marks**.

iv) Write your answers legibly in the spaces provided.

v) Use **METRIC** measurements only.

vi) Where plant names are required, they should include genus, species and where appropriate, cultivar.

vii) Please note, sufficient lined space is provided. It is not necessary that all lined space is used in answering the questions.

Ofqual Unit Code A/601/3794

ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

MARKS

Q1 a) Describe how **EACH** of the following hard landscape features may be used in the design and function of an informal ornamental garden:

i) paths; **3**
ii) fences. **3**

MARKS

b) Evaluate **TWO** permeable hard landscaping surface materials for use on an urban driveway (excluding cost considerations). **4**

Total Mark

Please turn over/.....

MARKS

Q2 Evaluate the suitability of hard landscaping features in the garden for the use of people with mobility restrictions. **10**

MARKS

Total Mark

Please turn over/.....

MARKS

Q3 a) Describe **FOUR NAMED** plants suitable for growing together in the border at the base of a north-facing wall to ensure continuity of interest in the garden. **6**

MARKS

b) State the planting distances for groups of **EACH** of the **NAMED** plants in a). **4**

Total Mark

Please turn over/.....

MARKS

Q4 a) Evaluate a range of hard landscaping materials for use in rock gardens. **4**

MARKS

b) Describe **FIVE** rock garden plants suitable for growing in a calcifuge situation. **5**

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c) Name a suitable rock for use in the situation in b). **1**

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Total Mark

Please turn over/.....

MARKS

Q5 a) Describe **TWO NAMED** plant alternatives to grass for lawn areas. **4**

MARKS

b) Describe the advantages and limitations of the plants **NAMED** in a) for a lawn. **6**

Total Mark

Please turn over/.....

MARKS

Q6 Describe the autumn maintenance of a utility lawn under **EACH** of the following headings:

i)	mowing;	**2**
ii)	scarification;	**3**
iii)	aeration;	**3**
iv)	fertiliser.	**2**

MARKS

Total Mark

Please turn over/.....

MARKS

Q7 Describe the options for dealing with wet soils in a small garden. **10**

MARKS

Total Mark

Please turn over/.....

MARKS

Q8 Evaluate the contribution of trees to the overall design and function of a garden. **10**

Total Mark

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RHS LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATE IN THE PRINCIPLES OF GARDEN PLANNING, CONSTRUCTION AND PLANTING WRITTEN EXAMINATION

09:30am Thursday 30 June 2011

R3112

UNDERSTANDING THE SELECTION AND USE OF LANDSCAPING ELEMENTS IN THE GARDEN

Candidates Registered	**107**		**Total Candidates Passed**	**53**	**67.95%**
Candidates Entered	78	72.90%	Passed with Commendation	7	8.97%
Candidates Absent	16	14.95%	Passed	46	58.97%
Candidates Deferred	5	4.67%	Failed	25	32.05%
Candidates Withdrawn	8	7.48%			

Q1 a) Describe how **EACH** of the following hard landscape features may be used in the design and function of an informal ornamental garden:

i) paths;
ii) fences.

b) Evaluate **TWO** permeable hard landscaping surface materials for use on an urban driveway (excluding cost considerations).

The first part of the question required a description of how paths and fences can be used in the design and function of an **informal** ornamental garden. Although candidates were able to list the basic functions of paths and fences, and to give examples of some of the most suitable materials, few answers related specifically to the effects that can be created in informal settings. Answers describing function, design, setting, and materials gained the highest marks. For example, in a woodland garden, paths could define a circuit walk through the wood using bark or shredded woody material, edged in timber boards or logs. The path can direct people to features like specialist bulb plantings, specimen trees, benches and viewpoints or garden sculpture. Materials for a cottage garden path could include natural or artificial stone, inset with recycled terracotta tiles on edge, or stepping stones laid in gravel and interplanted with ground cover such as Thymus.

Part b) required candidates to evaluate two alternative permeable landscape materials for urban driveways. The best answers picked out the important benefits and limitations of the selected materials including durability, ease of installation, maintenance. In general, it is not sufficient to list points of aesthetic value (e.g. concrete blocks are/are not aesthetically pleasing) as these are nearly always determined by personal choice and are a matter of opinion. Likewise statements which can apply to almost all materials such as 'comes in a range of sizes and colours' received no marks. Marks were also not given for restating part of the question (e.g. gravel is good for drainage). Some candidates described cost factors - this was excluded in the question.

Q2 Evaluate the suitability of hard landscaping features in the garden for the use of people with mobility restrictions.

When designing a garden for people with mobility restrictions, the aim is to aid access and maximise participation for people in wheelchairs, with walking aids and for those with limited agility. The designer must consider all aspects of the garden, so candidates who evaluated a **range** of elements obtained the highest marks, including steps and ramps, surface materials, paths and patios, and water features. Considerations of safety gained extra marks, as did suitable suggestions of dimensions for paths, steps, entrances and gradients. It is not sufficient to state that paths must be 'wide enough' for wheelchair users, for example. Better candidates' specified adaptations which help people to continue gardening in a practical way, e.g. raised beds and modified potting benches.

Q3 a) Describe **FOUR NAMED** plants suitable for growing together in the border at the base of a north-facing wall to ensure continuity of interest in the garden.

b) State the planting distances for groups of **EACH** of the **NAMED** plants in a).

In part a), marks were awarded for correctly named plants, providing continuity of display in shade, and able to cope with normal to very dry soil. The majority of candidates answered well, often with evergreen shrubs and climbers selected.

Part b) required candidates to state the planting distances between individual plants of the same kind in a group. No marks were given for describing planting distance from the wall, or for stating that only one of a kind would be planted. A few answers specified large trees that would normally be considered unsuitable for planting at the base of a wall, and hence received no marks for these selections.

Q4 a) Evaluate a range of hard landscaping materials for use in rock gardens.

b) Describe **FIVE** rock garden plants suitable for growing in a calcifuge situation.

c) Name a suitable rock for use in the situation in b).

This question required an evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of a range of hard landscaping materials for rock gardens. Better answers mentioned the important benefits or limitations of each material and included mention of materials other than rocks, for instance artificial stone, alpine grit or base materials for building up contours. As in Q1b), comments that could relate to a wide range of materials, or that are a matter of personal taste (e.g. sandstone has a nice colour) received no marks. Many candidates stated that natural stone was or was not sustainable or environmentally acceptable without explaining why.

The term calcifuge was not widely recognised. Calcifuge plants are intolerant of alkaline soil. The majority of candidates were not able to name and describe 5 suitable plants.

In part c), rocks other than limestone are suitable, including granite, sandstone and artificial fibreglass rock.

Q5 a) Describe **TWO NAMED** plant alternatives to grass for lawn areas.

b) Describe the advantages and limitations of the plants **NAMED** in a) for a lawn.

The first part of the question required the botanical names and descriptions of two plant alternatives to grass for lawn areas. Correct answers included plants suitable for at least a small amount of foot traffic e.g. Chamaemelum nobile and a variety of Thymus species. A few candidates specified clovers, which were accepted. Many candidates were unable to correctly state the latin names.

Part b), did not require further descriptions of the plants (e.g. purple flowers): Advantages and limitations could have included: less maintenance (mowing, edging), scented when walked on, needs special soil conditions, encourage insects, not suitable for heavy use, may become sparse/weedy, can propagate species from seed/cultivars from cuttings.

Q6 Describe the autumn maintenance of a utility lawn under **EACH** of the following headings:

i) mowing;
ii) scarification;
iii) aeration;
iv) fertiliser.

This question was well answered by most candidates. Responses containing a good level of detail about tools and equipment, methods and the reasons for carrying out the operations obtained the highest marks. A few candidates provided unnecessary comment about spring and summer maintenance, and some were unsure about the components of autumn feed.

Q7 Describe the options for dealing with wet soils in a small garden.

Most candidates were able to discuss a range of options for dealing with wet soils, although a few answers were inappropriate for a small garden situation. When describing drainage systems it is necessary to distinguish between ground that is wet due to soil conditions (e.g. structure, texture, run-off, compaction etc), and ground that is wet due to a high water table. Other suitable solutions may include planting for wet soil, hard landscaping, soil improvement, raised beds, installing a pond.

Q8 Evaluate the contribution of trees to the overall design and function of a garden.

Most candidates tackled this question by providing a long list of attributes, sometimes with an example. The best answers stated a number of important contributions, backed up by a fuller description, with named trees. As an example many candidates stated only that trees can provide structure with no further detail, (examples could be: hedging to divide a garden into separate rooms, avenues of trees along a central axis, pairs of trees planted to frame a view, top fruit trained in cordons or espaliers, all with named plants.) Candidates could have arranged their answers around four or five key points of consideration such as;

- year round decorative interest (flowers/berries/foliage/bark)
- trees for food and materials production (fruit/coppice/wood/fencing)
- screening and shelter (boundary/views/exposure/privacy)
- wildlife (food/shelter/nesting/biodiversity/insects)
- structure (height/balance/division/shape and form)

Sketches and diagrams can sometimes help to illustrate answers.
No marks were given for comments relating to maintenance.