



Royal
Horticultural
Society

Sharing the best in Gardening

RHS Registered Charity No. 222879/SC038262

RHS School of Horticulture
RHS Level 4 Diploma in Horticultural Practice

Fact Sheet



Diploma in Horticultural Practice

Level 1

Level 1 Introductory

Level 1 Award

Level 2

Level 2 Diploma

Level 2 Certificate: Theory

Level 2 Certificate: Practical

RHS Apprenticeships

Level 3

Level 3 Diploma

Level 3 Certificate: Theory

Level 3 Certificate: Practical

RHS School of Horticulture:
L3 Diploma in Horticultural
Practice

Level 4

RHS School of
Horticulture:
L4 Diploma in Horticultural
Practice

Level 5

Level 6

RHS Master of Horticulture

The *RHS Level 4 Diploma in Horticultural Practice* is a work based qualification, designed to give a broad overview of the theory, practice and management of horticulture. RHS diploma students work at RHS Garden Wisley, alongside studying the theory of horticulture through eight different modules per year.

As the UK's foremost horticultural charity, the RHS offers its students unique training and learning experiences unparalleled in the industry. In 2015, our practical training courses became accredited for the first time, giving students a solid and recognised basis from which to go on to further study or employment. The *Level 4 Diploma in Horticultural Practice* is only available through study at RHS Garden Wisley and is a continuation from the Level 3 Diploma in Horticultural Practice.

As employees of the RHS, students receive a salary at the same time as learning. Working alongside expert RHS Horticulturists throughout two years teaches our students vital work and employability skills at the same time as achieving horticultural excellence. Students also have access to our Science and Advisory teams, as well as the world-class horticultural collections of the RHS Lindley Library.

Students spend approximately a third of their working time on learning experiences including lectures, trips, skills master-classes and self-study time. Experiences include trips to RHS shows including the Chelsea Flower Show. Assessment takes place throughout the year by a variety of methods designed to test both horticultural and communication skills.



Course Content

The course is made up of eight compulsory modules per year, supported by further, non-assessed training to enhance experiences and to develop additional skills. In the first year Students study the Level 3 Diploma in Horticultural Practice, moving on to Level 4 in year 2.

Year 1: The Level 3 Diploma in Horticultural Practice

INDUCTION

An introduction to the garden and to the course itself. Students become acquainted with staff and how the course is structured. Academic work is introduced with support on producing quality coursework and managing time effectively.

HORTICULTURAL OPERATIONS

The core skills required to successfully operate in a garden situation. The main subjects covered are:

Plant Collections Management | Turf Care | Tree Management

PLANT CARE, ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Running throughout the year, Plant Care, Establishment and Maintenance gives a thorough overview of the skills required to successfully care for plants in different settings. It covers plant selection, methods of establishment as well as management of different styles of planting including weed control, pruning and seasonal clearance.

HORTICULTURAL TAXONOMY, BOTANY AND PLANTSMANSHIP

An introduction to the structure and classification of plants, and the tools employed in defining and ordering the plant kingdom. This module teaches the knowledge and skills involved in successful plant identification and aids understanding of the underlying taxonomic systems.

PLANT HEALTH

Intended to inform about the current issues in plant health and to equip students with the tools needed to facilitate integrated approaches to pest management.

HORTICULTURAL HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY AND DESIGN

This module looks at the history of garden design and of plant collections, before covering the function which horticulture now fulfils in society. It then focusses on garden design and design principles, and the possible future directions in which horticulture may evolve.

PRODUCTIVE GROWING

An overview of growing edible crops including annual and perennial vegetables, soft fruit and top fruit. The growing cycle from propagation to harvest is covered, as well as maintenance, pest and disease control and how to maintain productivity.

PROPAGATION

An introduction to, and overview of the theory and practice of horticultural propagation necessary for work in an ornamental garden.

SOILS AND GROWING MEDIA

An in-depth look at the root zone to inform on how to keep plants happy and healthy. Students learn about different soil types and structures, and how to accurately analyse these for the most informative results. Soil amelioration for different purposes is covered, as well as a look at growing media and associated environmental concerns.

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Delivery of a suite of skills including IT, communication, presentation and professionalism, designed to ensure excellent necessary skills when going out into the workplace.



Year 2: Level 4 Diploma in Horticultural Practice

HORTICULTURAL MANAGEMENT

The core skills required to successfully manage a garden throughout the year. Covering business practices, people management, health and safety, the environment and various further skills increasingly necessary for the successful running of a public garden.

ORNAMENTAL PLANTING

A look at different styles of ornamental planting and the issues associated with each. How to design planting schemes with good plantsmanship in mind, and how to best maintain areas with different planting styles.

HORTICULTURAL TAXONOMY, BOTANY AND PLANTSMANSHIP II

Further knowledge of horticultural taxonomy and botany encompassing a more in-depth look at plant families including phenotypes and genetics. The module will also look at the problems of invasive alien species, and the purpose and future of herbariums and seed banks.

PLANT HEALTH II

Further study on plant health and the current issues facing horticulture. To include biosecurity and quarantine measures, risk analysis and a systems approach.

GARDEN DESIGN

A look at garden design and project management. Includes design knowledge and awareness, drawing skills, budgeting and spatial management.

LANDSCAPE CONSTRUCTION

Concentrating on the skills needed to implement new planting schemes and designs. Initial site survey will be covered, as well as hard landscaping knowledge and skills.

PROPAGATION AND PROTECTED GROWING ENVIRONMENTS

Further propagation techniques and a look at growing plants under glass, including technology and specimen management.

RESEARCH PROJECT

An opportunity for student centred learning on an approved subject of personal choice. Critical thought, interpretation and analysis are required.

MANAGE AND BUILD PROJECT

An opportunity for students to put into practice the skills they have learned on modules throughout the two years at Wisley.

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Delivery of a suite of skills including IT, communication, presentation and professionalism, designed to ensure excellent necessary skills when going out into the workplace.

Learning and Assessment

Learning takes place within the gardens and through a formal lecture series at RHS Wisley. Tutors are experts in their field and use the gardens' significant resources in hands-on teaching sessions.

Assessment is carried out in a variety of ways to allow everyone's skills to shine. Both practical and academic skills contribute to the final Diploma.

Final assessments include:

- Work based assessment
- Essays and reports
- Identification tests
- Planting scheme
- Skills journal
- Survey and design



Requirements:

Before starting on the course you will need a Level 2 qualification in Horticulture, some work experience in a horticultural environment and loads of enthusiasm.

If this is for you:

Applications are open in December and January for a September start. Vacancies are advertised on the RHS website at:

rhs.org.uk/Vacancies

Further information:

rhs.org.uk/RHSSchoolofHorticulture

Accommodation is available at RHS Wisley