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RHS Master of Horticulture
The RHS's most prestigious qualification

Fact Sheet

RHS Master of Horticulture

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 RHS School of Horticulture:
L3 Diploma in Horticultural
Practice

Level 4

 RHS School of Horticulture:
L4 Diploma in Horticultural
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RHS Master of Horticulture

The Master of Horticulture (MHort) is the Royal Horticultural Society's most prestigious qualification designed for those who wish to grow their career in a flexible way.

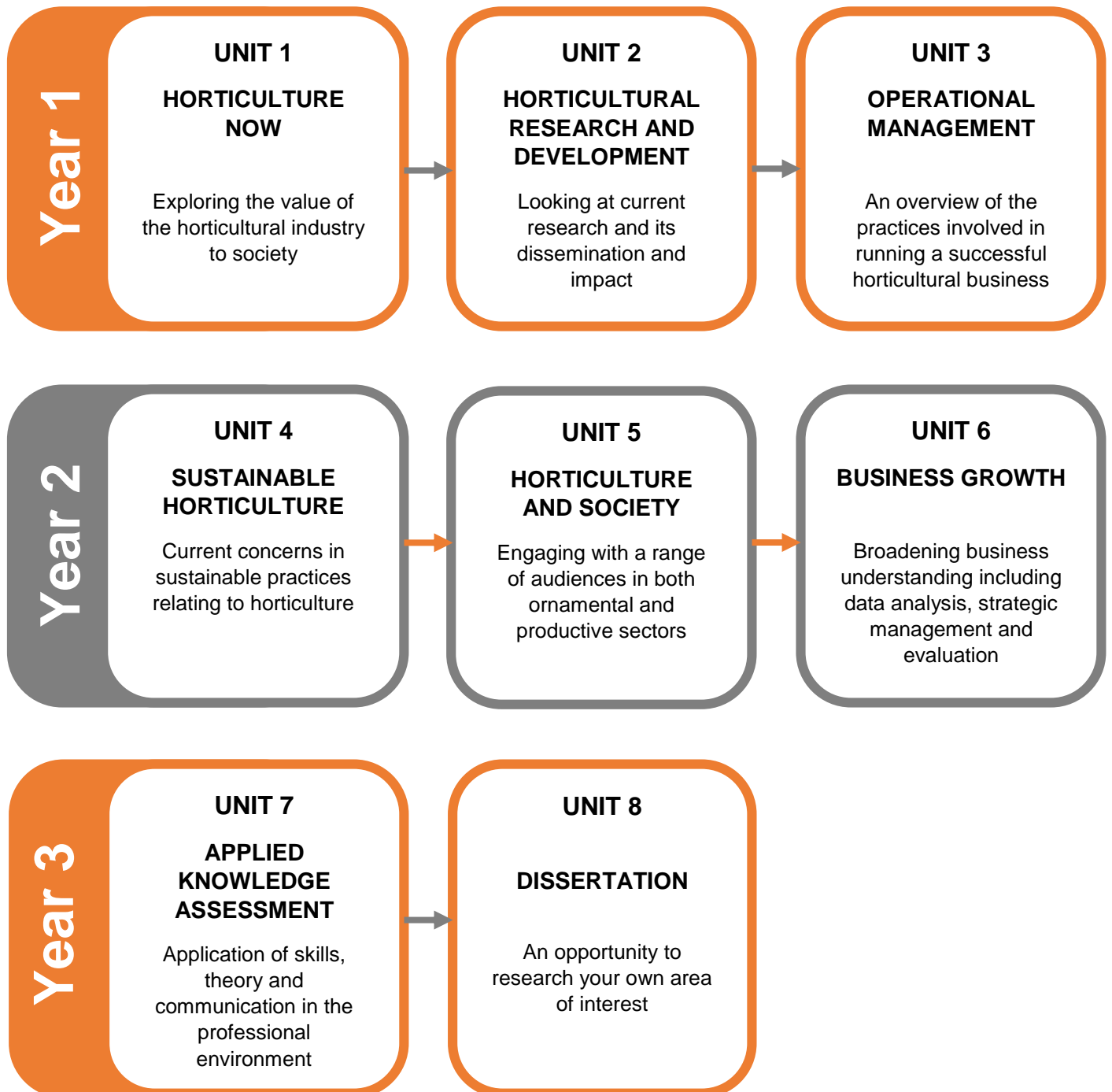
A degree-level award studied over three to five years, the MHort provides an affordable and high-quality learning experience, which links candidates to a range of professional networks and provides improved managerial skills. The MHort is recognised by the Education Reform Act 1988 as a degree level equivalent, and holders of the award may use the designation MHort (RHS) after their name.

This award will appeal to those who are motivated to self-study within a structured learning and assessment environment. Interaction for the award is mainly through the MHort Virtual Learning Environment allowing candidates to work within their own time constraints to meet the deadlines required by a varied assessment programme from anywhere in the world. By the end of the award, successful candidates have an overview of the horticultural industry within a global context. Alongside this, they develop improved research, analytical, communication and decision-making skills that will provide a better understanding of horticultural challenges and appropriate management strategies.

In the first year, candidates broaden their understanding of the horticultural environment, and develop appropriate skills to underpin their future study. In subsequent years candidates have the opportunity to select scenarios within the assessment to deepen their knowledge in areas that are of interest to them and are relevant to their careers. The final year provides the opportunity to demonstrate how they would apply their knowledge in a practical setting, and for candidates to carry out research on a topic of their choice, producing an in-depth academic work.

RHS Master of Horticulture Award Content

The award is made up of eight Units within which you will cover a broad range of knowledge and skills. Whatever your area of work, you will gain a solid grounding of basic concepts, as well as being able to specialise in your chosen area. In year two you will apply the Unit concepts to your field, and in year three the dissertation allows you to select an area to research in more detail.



On successful completion of the full Award, you may use the designation **MHort (RHS)** after your name.

HORTICULTURE NOW

Horticulture is a wide-ranging profession that encompasses anything from food production to therapeutic gardens. This unit will allow candidates to explore the value of the horticultural industry to society, within the context of social, political, financial and environmental factors. Using wide-ranging sources of information candidates become aware of the diverse range of businesses, organisations and bodies that influence and support the development of the horticultural sector. Unit 1 allows candidates to develop academic skills that will support their studies for the rest of the course.

HORTICULTURAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

An extensive range of information is available to the horticultural profession in both digital and print media. This unit enables the candidate to develop skills in finding technical information from appropriate sources and to consider its application. Candidates will develop an understanding of how technical research is disseminated with the consequent impact this can have on improved plant husbandry, establishment techniques and plant or crop quality in both production and landscape horticulture. Unit 2 also considers potential criteria and sources of funding for research across diverse industry sectors.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Operational management provides candidates with a thorough overview of the practices involved in running a horticultural business within today's challenging environment. The approach taken in Unit 3 considers operational management in terms of organisational ethos, legal and financial obligations, responsibilities, and external factors. Candidates will be able to reflect on the necessary characteristics and responsibilities for horticultural management whilst understanding the underlying theoretical methods.

SUSTAINABLE HORTICULTURE

Sustainability is a global watchword, and horticulture is close to its heart. This unit considers the current concerns in sustainable practices relating to horticulture. Unit 4 explores how the horticultural manager may value, defend, and manage designed landscapes or productive areas in the future. Social and ethical responsibilities along with global implications are a vital part of horticultural management.

HORTICULTURE AND SOCIETY

How can the diverse sectors of horticulture effectively engage with a range of audiences to enable them to understand the relevance of the industry to society? This unit helps the candidate to explore the opportunities and challenges involved in working with different garden and business audiences in addition to communities, and identifies appropriate techniques. In addition, an understanding of consideration of ethics, health and safety, welfare and accessibility will be developed.

BUSINESS GROWTH

This unit builds on knowledge and skills developed in Unit 3, Operational Management, to broaden the candidates' understanding of strategic management. It develops the ability to interpret and evaluate data to make informed decisions whilst understanding how internal and external drivers bring about effective change. Candidates will be required to apply strategic thinking, and to monitor and evaluate an existing business.

APPLIED KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT

The Applied Knowledge Assessment brings together all the learning and skills acquisition accomplished in the two preceding years of the MHort allowing the candidate to show their application of their theoretical understanding to practical horticultural scenarios. In addition, there is an emphasis on being able to communicate effectively in the professional environment. This unit requires the candidate to attend the assessment at an RHS site in England.

DISSERTATION

The dissertation provides an opportunity for the candidate to identify an area of study in which they can carry out research. This may be related to their work place or an area in which they wish to develop their career. Unit 8 is an opportunity to show a high level of engagement with a subject, demonstrating an awareness of the latest research and gaps in knowledge and devising relevant research methodology. The final work shows how the candidate has analysed and evaluated the information they have discovered and made this into a robust academic document.

Delivery and Assessment

Delivery

Delivery takes place through the RHS MHort Virtual Learning Environment, allowing you to study at a time and place to suit you.

Additionally, each year has an optional physical guidance event at RHS Wisley, at which you are able to find out more about the units coming up, be guided in academic, communication and assessment skills, and gain face to face guidance from the MHort team. From 2019 there will be an annual MHort conference allowing candidates to share their research, as well as to hear from and meet with others in the industry.

Unit introductions and guidance, resource assistance and assessments are available on the VLE, along with discussion forums and academic guides to support you through the process and allow you to communicate with fellow candidates and Unit Leaders.

Each Unit has a Unit Leader who oversees the programme, in addition to Unit Assessors to provide specialist sector knowledge and expertise. Unit Leaders and Assessors will support you through each Unit and provide detailed feedback on your assessments.

MHort as an Award

The MHort is an educational Award, rather than a conventional academic course. This means that the programme is predominantly based on self-led research rather than teaching, and is often based on real-world examples. This format allows you to build the skills required in a work environment in a practical and strategic way within the context of the industry right now.

Assessment

Most assessment is carried out on the Virtual Learning Environment where work is submitted to Unit Assessors and feedback is provided. Most assessments are approximately six weeks in duration allowing you to fit your study around your life and work.

Assessments allow you to build solid communication structures, including the production of academic written work, formal reports and more informal methods commonly used in the workplace. You will be guided in all of these methods on the VLE, helping you to hone your communication styles to different audiences.

The Applied Knowledge Assessment is a two day event which comprises the entire assessment for Unit 7. Candidates attend RHS Wisley and are assessed on knowledge and skills gained throughout the award in time limited, problem solving exercises. It is a rewarding two days where you are able to utilise your new skills.





Entry Requirements

For entry into the MHort programme, you must hold the following:

- At least four years of full time work experience in horticulture, at least one of which should be in a supervisory role or a position of relevant responsibility
- A full Level 3 qualification in Horticulture, such as the RHS Level 3 Diploma or a National Diploma

The above allow you to get the most out of the programme by drawing on your own experience and knowledge.

If you are unsure if you meet the entry requirements, please email the MHort team at mhort@rhs.org.uk and we will be happy to discuss your individual situation with you.

Time requirements

Study is usually completed over three years, although the flexible, modular structure allows completion over up to five years depending on personal circumstances.

The amount of time you need to spend studying will depend on your own experience. You should expect to spend time on assessments most weeks, and to plan time carefully.

Optional sessions are provided at RHS Wisley once a year, plus a conference for your continued guidance and development. The only time you are required to attend in person is for Unit 7, the Applied Knowledge Assessment.

Benefits

MHort Candidates have access to all four RHS libraries in the UK, in addition to a bespoke selection of e-books and online academic journals to assist with study. An online subscription to Horticulture Week magazine is also available.

RHS Student membership is provided for all MHort candidates, giving free access to all RHS Gardens, a subscription to The Garden magazine, discounted rates on RHS Shows tickets and access to RHS advisory teams among many other benefits. See rhs.org.uk for more details.

Fellow MHort candidates will add to your professional network across the globe. MHort alumni often cite this as one of the most significant benefits of the programme.

Frequently Asked Questions

I am well established in one sector of the Horticultural industry, will the MHort cater for my specialist needs?

Absolutely. The MHort is designed to give you a broad understanding of industry context in year 1, before allowing you to apply the Unit concepts to your own sector in year 2. You will therefore learn more about linked sectors, whilst having the time to develop your own specialisms and research useful to your employment.

Who are the MHort Unit Leaders and Assessors?

The MHort team is made up of industry experts and educators from across the sector. The breadth of experience in the team gives you access to a wide range of knowledge and expertise, and allows feedback to be given from someone who understands your sector in depth.

What if I have specific learning requirements?

Specific learning requirements are no barrier to achieving the MHort. As this is a management level qualification we expect all candidates to achieve a good level of communication skills. We can assist your study with reasonable adjustments on receipt of the relevant paperwork. As the MHort is not publicly funded, candidates are not eligible for grants or equipment from the DSA.

What if I am ill or busy, or need to defer?

If you are ill you may apply for an extension on an assessment of up to three weeks. If life becomes busy for any reason and there is not enough time to complete the MHort work, you may defer and pick up the programme again the following year.

Is there any financial support available?

The MHort is not currently eligible for any grants or funding.

Is this a Masters Degree?

The MHort is recognised as a Level 6 degree level qualification under the Education Reform act 1988, it is not a Masters Degree.

Do you accept international applicants?

Absolutely, having candidates from around the world is part of what makes the MHort a dynamic learning programme. Please get in touch if you have any concerns about learning at distance, but many international candidates complete the programme each year.



Next Steps and Contact

If this is for you

Applications open from June to the end of August each year for an October start.

Fill in the application form and follow the instructions for submission available at rhs.org.uk/MHort. We will contact you at the end of August to let you know if your application has been successful.

Payment

A list of course fees for the coming year is available on the MHort web page. You may pay module by module, or for the entire course up front at a discounted rate.

You can pay via Paypal or card via a secure system on our VLE, or if your employer is funding your study we will send an invoice in advance.

Questions?

If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to contact our friendly team at mhort@rhs.org.uk and we will be happy to help.



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