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| A            | B | C | Total |
|              |   |   |       |

## RHS Level 3 Certificate in Plant Growth, Garden Planning and Applied Propagation

### UNIT 1

Wednesday 15th October 2025

09:30 - 11:30

Candidate Name: .....

Candidate Number: .....

Centre Name: .....

### Instructions

This paper contains three sections which may be answered in any order. Candidates should answer:

- **Section A** – all questions (20 marks)
- **Section B** – all questions (50 marks)
- **Section C** – only **TWO** from **FOUR** questions (30 marks).

Place a cross (X) in the box identifying the two Section C questions you have answered.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>C 1</b>               | <b>C 2</b>               | <b>C 3</b>               | <b>C 4</b>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### Please note:

- The duration of this paper is **120** minutes.
- Write all answers legibly in the spaces provided and use black or blue ink only.
- Use **METRIC** measurements only.
- Where plant names are required, they should include genus, species and where appropriate, cultivar.
- Where a question requires a specific number of answers, only the first answers given will be marked regardless of the number of answers offered.
- Please note, when the word '**distinct**' is used within a question, it means that the items have different characteristics or features.

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RHS Level 3 Certificate in Plant Growth, Garden Planning and Applied Propagation - UNIT 1

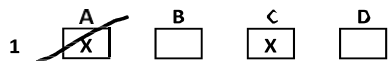
Candidate Name:..... Centre Name:.....

Candidate Number: .....

SECTION A  
RESPONSE GRID

Instructions

Place a cross (X) in the box you believe is the correct answer. If you make a mistake, score through the box and place a cross in the correct box as follows:



| Question | Answer                   |                          |                          |                          |
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|          | A                        | B                        | C                        | D                        |
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| 20       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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## Section A

Answer all questions in this section.

This section is worth 20 marks and each question is worth 1 mark.

### Question 1

Which document should you check before using a new growing media, with ingredients you have not used before, in a propagation unit?

- a) Maintenance logs
- b) First aid records
- c) COSHH assessment
- d) RIDDOR reports

### Question 2

Which of the following is the correct order of steps, when writing a risk assessment for a horticultural task?

- a) Identify hazards → Assess risks → Control risks → Record and review
- b) Evaluate risks → Identify hazards → Implement controls → Record findings
- c) Control risks → Review → Identify hazards → Assess risk
- d) Record findings → Review → Identify hazards → Implement controls

### Question 3

Which of the following statements most clearly explains what 'Best Practice' means, when managing a heritage garden?

- a) Making incremental change to improve outcomes
- b) Meeting the legally required minimum standard
- c) Developing your own methods and techniques
- d) Adopting methods and techniques based on trials

### Question 4

Which of the following statements best reflects how environmental sustainability directly influences the management of heritage gardens?

- a) Develop energy efficiency measures in offices and visitor centres, to reduce impact on horticultural practice
- b) Adapting irrigation, soil management, and plant selection, while balancing the conservation of historic character
- c) Applying strict adherence to historical planting palettes, avoiding the introduction of new species to preserve authenticity
- d) Controlling or reducing visitor access to limit the impact of wear and tear on historic landscapes

### Question 5

What is one key way horticulture adds to climate change?

- a) Over extraction of water for irrigation leading to aquifer depletion
- b) Loss of soil fertility from nutrient depletion due to monocultures
- c) Soil cultivation leading to the break down of organic matter
- d) Introducing invasive species that out compete native plants

### Question 6

Why was the Equality Act of 2010 created?

- a) To restrict the working week to no more than 48 hours
- b) To reduce the administration relating to disability inclusion
- c) To consolidate and to simplify anti-discrimination laws
- d) To prioritise economic growth over individual rights

### Question 7

Which of the following is a good reason for creating an inclusive culture in a community garden?

- a) To increase fairness, respect and community engagement
- b) To allow allocation of roles based on assumptions of ability
- c) To apply Best Practice in the cultivation of plantings
- d) To attract grant funding by appearing to be inclusive

### Question 8

Which feature was usually found in a *hortus conclusus*?

- a) Fountains featuring *giochi d'acqua* (water tricks) for courtly amusement
- b) Topiary sculptures representing kings and queens
- c) A ha-ha separating the garden from surrounding wilderness
- d) High walls or hedges providing seclusion and symbolic enclosure

### Question 9

Which of the following is the most appropriate technique to evaluate horticultural heritage on a site?

- a) Developing the garden's historical statement of significance through archival research, planting records, contemporary visitor surveys
- b) Assessing historical provenance by testing soil samples for current fertility and comparing these with historical productivity records
- c) Using remote sensing techniques such as satellite imagery to map the garden's extent, relative to surrounding heritage landscapes
- d) Reviewing documentation such as legal or planning designations, such as Listed status or registration with Historic England

### Question 10

This question relates to statements of significance as part of conservation theory (as applied to horticultural spaces).

Which principle is the most important, when prioritising works?

- a) Start with features that are significant to visitors, using methods that avoid major changes
- b) Start with urgent work that addresses threats to significance, using the least invasive method
- c) Use volunteers to reinterpret significant features creatively, based on group ideas
- d) Start with work that brings in income, so areas of significance can be conserved later

### Question 11

Which of the following best summarises the impact of plant exploration on world populations of people?

- a) Plant exploration expanded the diversity of cultivated crops globally, supporting population growth and altering diets, although it sometimes led to ecological disruption and cultural displacement
- b) Plant exploration expanded the diversity of new crops, but had limited impact on altering diets; although it sometimes led to the preservation of native plant species through hybridisation
- c) Plant exploration expanded the diversity of cultivated crops globally, supporting population growth and benefitting all societies equally by sharing resources across continents
- d) Plant exploration did not expand the diversity of cultivated crops and had very limited impact before the 20th century due to slow transportation and bureaucracy

### Question 12

Which of the following is a correct example of the predictive nature of plant names?

- a) *Pinus sylvestris* — indicates a cultivated, ornamental pine species
- b) *Armeria maritima* — suggests the plant is of the sea or coast
- c) *Digitalis purpurea* — implies the plant has blue flowers and succulent leaves
- d) *Campanula rotundifolia* — refers to a plant with round, bell-shaped flowers

### Question 13

Which of the following best explains the value of plant records in the management of living plant collections?

- a) They promote public education by displaying plant names and countries of origin serving as a visitor attraction tool
- b) They are designed to comply with the UK plant passport and phytosanitary protocols and procedures
- c) They provide essential data for conservation, research, and the long-term management of living collections
- d) They are used in the tracking of fertiliser, irrigation and pesticide applications in heritage gardens

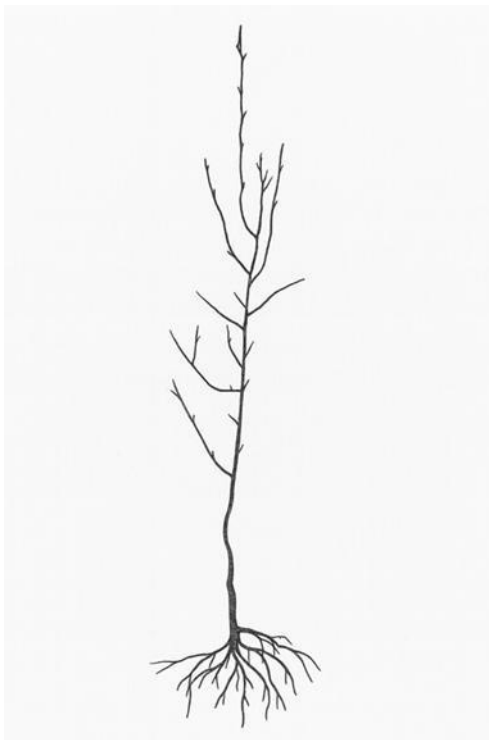
**Question 14**

What are the key characteristics of plants selected for aesthetic purposes?

- a) Seasonal variation in flowers, fruit, leaf or form that enhances visual impact
- b) Plants that can be considered to be 'right plant, right place' for sustainable impact
- c) Native perennials which create vibrant, wildlife-friendly garden compositions
- d) Fast-growing species to ensure long-lasting structural stability in plantings

**Question 15**

A client is wanting you to order some trees for planting.  
They have provided you with this image.



Should you order:

- a) Unfeathered maidens
- b) Pleached trees
- c) Multi-stem trees
- d) Feathered maidens



### Question 16

Which of the following statements most accurately reflects the need to match plant selection to specific environmental conditions?

- a) Successful plant establishment depends more on regular maintenance than on compatibility between plant requirements and environmental conditions
- b) Recent trials demonstrate that as long as light levels are sufficient, most plants can tolerate a range of aspects, topographical features and soil types
- c) Best Practice suggests that plant species with similar visual characteristics tend to share very similar cultivation requirements
- d) Optimal cultivation requires aligning plant requirements such as shade tolerance, soil pH preference, and moisture requirements with site conditions

### Question 17

Which of the following best describes the role of nutrition during the propagation of plant material?

- a) Young propagules require carefully balanced nutrition to support root development without promoting excessive shoot growth
- b) Nutrient-rich substrates should always be used to accelerate top growth immediately after propagation
- c) Nutrient availability has minimal impact during propagation, as all seed and cuttings rely solely on stored reserves
- d) Nutritional inputs are only important after plants have been fully hardened off and established

### Question 18



What is the primary function of the piece of equipment shown in the image above?

- a) To increase airflow across plant foliage to reduce the risk of fungal infection
- b) To reduce greenhouse temperature by improving positive air circulation indoors
- c) To provide accurate air temperature and relative humidity data for climate monitoring
- d) To measure substrate moisture levels by drawing air through the growing medium

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**Question 19**

What is one advantage of using fog in plant propagation instead of traditional mist systems?

- a) Fog systems are easier to install and require less technical maintenance than mist units
- b) Fog produces smaller water droplets, improving humidity without wetting the leaf surface
- c) Fog increases leaf temperature, which speeds up root initiation in softwood cuttings
- d) Fog delivers foliar feed directly to the leaves through high-pressure nutrient misting

**Question 20**

Why is clonal selection often used when propagating hedging plants?

- a) It ensures variety of growth, shape, and foliage, creating interest and texture for formal settings
- b) It ensures uniform growth, shape, and foliage, creating a consistent appearance in the hedge
- c) It reduces the cost of production by using open-pollinated seeds instead of cuttings
- d) It increases genetic diversity, improving resistance to emerging plant health threats

**End of section A.**

**Please continue to Section B.**

Section B

Answer all questions in this section.  
This section is worth 50 marks.

MARKS

Question 1 (8 marks)

This question relates to Managing Plant Propagation.

Explain **FOUR** differences between an Annual Propagation Plan, and a Propagation Protocol.

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2

Total Mark

Question 2 (7 marks)

MARKS

This question relates to seed dormancy.

a) Define vernalisation in the context of seed dormancy.

2

b) How is a knowledge of vernalisation used when propagating plants from seed?

5

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Candidate number

Centre name

Total Mark

Question 3 (6 marks)

This question investigates how plants are used to create structure in a garden.

Describe **THREE** distinct features that help a plant to provide structure to a garden.

1.

2.

3.

MARKS

2

2

2

Total Mark

MARKS

Question 4 (4 marks)

This question relates to plant procurement and plant production systems.

What is the difference between plants that are containerised and plants that are container grown?

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How do these differences impact on plant selection?

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Total Mark

### Question 5 (4 marks)

This question relates to combining plants when creating a garden.

A client has asked for a planting that has rhythm.

Explain **TWO** distinct ways that this can be achieved.

**MARKS**

4

Total Mark

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MARKS

Question 6 (5 marks)

This question relates to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

State **FIVE** impacts of the Convention on Biological Diversity on horticultural practice.

5

Total Mark

MARKS

Question 7 (8 marks)

This question relates to the history of horticultural space.

How have political and societal changes impacted on urban green space since 1900?

8

Total Mark

Candidate name

Candidate number

Centre name

Question 8 (8 marks)

This question relates to the importance of horticultural heritage.

Explain how stories and traditions can help people to bring horticultural heritage to life.

MARKS

8

Total Mark

**End of section B.**

**Please continue to Section C.**

## Section C

There are **FOUR** questions in this Section. You must only answer **TWO** questions.

Please write your answers on the following pages.

Each question is worth 15 marks. This section is worth 30 marks.

**NOTE:**

You **MUST** indicate which question you are answering by placing a cross in the appropriate box on the **FRONT** of this exam paper.

please turn over.....

Candidate name

Candidate number

Centre name

Question C1

This question relates to Tudor gardens (1485–1603).

Describe the main features and design ideas used in Tudor gardens.

Then explain how these features reflect the political, social, and cultural influences of the Tudor period.

**15 marks**

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Question C2

Evaluate the role of reliable information in the effective management of gardens.  
In your answer, you should:

- identify and provide examples of different types of information sources
- explain the criteria used to assess the reliability of these sources
- discuss how reliable information supports informed decision-making

15 marks

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Question C3

Choose one well-known garden designer. Explain their core design principles and describe how these principles could be applied in the design of a modern domestic garden.

15 marks

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**The Royal Horticultural Society, Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB.**  
**Charity Registration Number: 222879/SC038262**





