



RHS use only			
A	B	C	Total

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

### UNIT 2

Thursday 16th 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.

**Excluding Examiner Comments**

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**RHS Level 3 Certificate in Plant Growth, Garden Planning and Applied Propagation - UNIT 2**

Candidate Name: .....

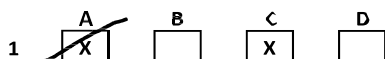
Centre Name: .....

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			
	A	B	C	D
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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17	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**Excluding Examiner Comments**

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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 of the following best describes how a supervisor should ensure legal compliance with PPE provision for volunteers in a public garden?

- a) By advising volunteers to bring their own PPE suitable to the task
- b) By providing PPE and recording its issue, condition, and appropriate use
- c) By checking PPE use whenever a near-miss or incident is reported
- d) By allowing experienced volunteers to assess their own PPE needs

### Question 2

Which of the following horticultural practices would be most effective in reducing a garden's environmental impact, while also enhancing the experience of garden visitors?

- a) Replacing some large lawns with wildflower meadows to increase biodiversity and provide seasonal interest
- b) Bark mulches can replace herbicides while also eliminating all weed growth and maintenance for paths
- c) Drip irrigation systems ensure the garden achieves 'water neutral' status and reduces environmental stress
- d) Choosing peat-free compost has been shown to produce healthier plants and more vibrant flowering displays

### Question 3

Which of the following is a direct impact of climate change on the use of hard landscaping materials in public gardens?

- a) Increased use of gravel mulches to suppress weeds without the use of synthetic herbicides
- b) Increased glare and heat retention from paving surfaces during periods of high temperatures
- c) Increased use of reclaimed and recycled materials to reduce embedded carbon
- d) Increased emphasis on replacing concrete with timber to lower construction energy use

### Question 4

Which of the following statements best demonstrate how a public garden can verify that its horticultural practices are current, effective, and sustainable?

- a) Relying on staff experience and traditional horticultural techniques passed down over time
- b) Choosing suppliers based on a combination of sustainability and long-term relationships
- c) Using trial results, sustainability audits, and peer-reviewed guidance to inform practice
- d) Reviewing qualitative and quantitative visitor feedback at the end of the season

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### Question 5

Which of the following is the clearest example of unlawful harassment in a productive garden setting?

- a) A team member being overlooked for promotion because they lack formal qualifications
- b) A volunteer raising a concern about safety and later being excluded from meetings
- c) A supervisor repeatedly making jokes about a volunteer's age, after being asked to stop
- d) A staff member with a disability being asked whether they need extra support during a task

### Question 6

Which of the following is the most significant advantage of an inclusive culture for visitor engagement in a public garden?

- a) It supports the creation of accessible and inclusive interpretation and events that engage a broad range of visitors
- b) It aims to improve visitor satisfaction by developing events and interpretation focused on the main demographic group
- c) It reduces the requirement for staff training in customer service because inclusivity is assumed to develop naturally
- d) It prioritises heritage and tradition in programme design to maintain established working practices

### Question 7

Which of the following best describes a key feature of a prairie-style planting scheme?

- a) Strong emphasis on the control and suppression of natural ecological succession by excluding disturbance and maintenance activities
- b) Strong emphasis on imported species, rather than native plantings, which therefore do not support local or national biodiversity
- c) Strong emphasis on promoting dense swathes of growth, through precision irrigation due to the low water-holding capacity of open soils
- d) Strong emphasis on seasonal interest achieved through a high diversity of flowering herbaceous species arranged in naturalistic patterns

### Question 8



The image shown left shows a garden with one wide, main path. There are also smaller paths going into different parts of the garden.

Which garden design principle is most clearly demonstrated in this layout?

- a) Harmonisation of paths
- b) Wayfinding strategies
- c) Hierarchy of paths
- d) Spatial strategy

### Question 9

Which of the following outlines the legally correct order of steps for obtaining permission to fell a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) in the UK?

- a) Carry out risk assessment → Apply to the local planning authority with justification → Await formal written consent → Proceed with felling
- b) Notify neighbours → Submit a felling notice to the Forestry Commission → Wait for 6 weeks cooling off period → Fence off area and begin work
- c) Submit application to DEFRA to fell the tree → Begin felling once confirmation email is received → Submit arboricultural report after completion
- d) Contact a qualified tree surgeon → Inform the local authority on the day of felling → Send in safe felling certificate to the tree officer at the local authority

### Question 10

A garden manager is using a Gantt Chart to plan early, mid-season and late crops in an allotment garden. What is the main benefit of using a Gantt chart in this situation?

- a) It calculates seed rates and plant spacing needs
- b) It records scouting data for Integrated Pest Management
- c) It monitors budgets linked to garden management plans
- d) It schedules crop related tasks throughout the year

### Question 11

**Assistant Head Gardener  
Heritage Walled Garden**

Location:	North Yorkshire
Salary:	£28,000 - £32,000 per annum depending on experience
Contract Type	Full-time, permanent
Closing Date	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2025
Qualifications	Level 3, Horticulture

We are seeking a knowledgeable Assistant Head Gardener to lead the horticultural operations at our restored 19th century walled garden.

**Key responsibilities**

- Assist with planning and managing the horticultural aspects of the garden
- Strong plant knowledge
- Practical gardening skills
- Experience supervising staff or volunteers
- Able to work flexibly, including some weekends
- Energetic and physically fit, aged 25 – 45 to meet physical demands of the post

**We offer**

- Supportive and inclusive working environment
- Training opportunities
- Free onsite parking and uniform
- Beautiful surroundings
- Varied and rewarding work

Which part of this job advert shown left does not comply with the Equality Act 2010?

- a) Requiring a Level 3 qualification in Horticulture
- b) Stating applicants should be aged between 25–45
- c) Asking applicants to supervise staff and volunteers
- d) Requesting availability for some weekend work

### Question 12

In a public garden, what is the best way to manage instruction manuals for horticultural power tools such as hedge trimmers, leaf blowers, and ride-on mowers?

- a) Keep manuals accessible to staff and use them during induction and refresher training
- b) Store manuals off-site to prevent damage, requesting them when incidents occur
- c) Deliver peer-to-peer user training, requesting the user manuals when questions arise
- d) Display laminated excerpts in machinery stores, with originals available on request

### Question 13

Which of the following best describes the role and purpose of project management tools?

- a) To replace the need for detailed communication between stakeholders and project team managers
- b) To provide a structured framework for organising, scheduling, and monitoring project tasks and resources
- c) To ensure that projects always finish ahead of the agreed schedule and under budget
- d) To guarantee that risk factors and unforeseen delays will not occur during implementation

### Question 14

Which of the following most accurately defines the primary purpose of conducting a cost-benefit analysis when planning a capital investment in a garden?

- a) To assess whether the proposed investment can be implemented within the constraints of the current operational budget
- b) To evaluate whether the projected long-term benefits of the investment outweigh the associated financial and non-financial costs
- c) To estimate the number of users or visitors required to justify the initial and ongoing expenditure
- d) To benchmark the projected outcomes of the investment against comparable developments in similar garden settings

### Question 15

Which of the following statements best describes the key difference between a garden management plan and a garden maintenance plan?

a)	<b>Garden Management Plan</b> provides strategic, long-term guidance <b>Garden Maintenance Plan</b> details short-term, task-specific operations	b)	<b>Garden Management Plan</b> details short-term, task-specific operations <b>Garden Maintenance Plan</b> provides strategic, long-term guidance
c)	<b>Garden Management Plan</b> focuses on visitor engagement and access <b>Garden Maintenance Plan</b> outlines daily staff duties	d)	<b>Garden Management Plan</b> is required for historic gardens <b>Garden Maintenance Plan</b> is only used in public gardens and similar settings

### Question 16

Which of the following best defines a method statement?

- a) A document that identifies hazards and evaluates the level of risk associated with a specific task
- b) A detailed written document which contains the Health and Safety policies and procedures for a garden
- c) A post-task report, which is used to assess performance and identify lessons learnt for the future
- d) A detailed written document describing how a specific task will be carried out safely and effectively

### Question 17

Which of the following best explains how the design concept of cohesion contributes to an exceptional visitor experience in a garden?

- a) The layering of annual and perennial planting to create ecological niches across different parts of the site
- b) The consistent use of colour, materials, forms, or planting styles that create harmony across different spaces
- c) The consistent use of colour, materials, forms, or planting styles that create contrast across different spaces
- d) A strategy for maximising biodiversity through the introduction of varied native plant species to harmonise

### Question 18

Which of the following is considered the most effective and widely used technique for engaging local communities in a public garden setting?

- a) Developing social media channels exclusively to deliver community engagement strategies for the garden
- b) Basing interpretation and garden development strategies around global environmental themes
- c) Measuring the impact of strategies and initiatives through local media coverage and public visibility
- d) Creating outreach programmes, co-created events, and volunteer opportunities tailored to local interests

### Question 19

Which of the following best defines and applies the concept of a sensory garden?

- a) A space designed to stimulate one or more of the five senses through carefully selected plants, textures, sounds, and features
- b) A space designed to stimulate a single sense, such as scent, using aromatic plants to support aromatherapy and related therapeutic goals
- c) A space that supports sensory integration by helping users practise oral and motor skills as part of a structured therapeutic programme
- d) A space that soothes and calms users by offering a peaceful retreat with soft colours, diffused lighting, and minimal sensory stimulation

**Question 20**

Which of the following best illustrates the difference between formal and informal sources of feedback in a public garden setting?

- a) Formal feedback includes social media comments and suggestion boxes; informal feedback includes structured annual visitor surveys
- b) Formal feedback includes scheduled staff appraisals; informal feedback includes spontaneous visitor comments made during events
- c) Formal feedback includes anonymous staff surveys; informal feedback includes direct emails sent by volunteers
- d) Formal feedback includes staff surveys; informal feedback includes reports and findings from award judges

**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 garden styles and areas.

- a) Explain **TWO** key design criteria that should be considered when developing an alpine or rock garden.

**4**

- b) Explain how plant selection is influenced by the following types of rock garden:

**2****2**

Total Mark

Candidate name

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**Question 2** (8 marks)

**MARKS**

This question relates to the selection of crops and planning cropping.

Scenario:

*A garden is considering the use of protective structures to extend the cropping season in their kitchen garden.*

Evaluate the potential environmental and management trade-offs of using protective structures in small-scale productive growing settings.

**8**

Total Mark

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**Question 3** (8 marks)

**MARKS**

This question relates to optimising yield.

Scenario:

*You have been asked to advise on soil improvement strategies for a new urban food growing project developed on nutrient-poor ground.*

- a) **OTHER THAN** the application of compost or organic matter, explain **TWO** distinct **NAMED** sustainable techniques that can be used to increase soil fertility.

**4**

- b) State **ONE** advantage and **ONE** limitation of **EACH** technique.

**4**

Total Mark

Candidate name

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**Question 4** (8 marks)

**MARKS**

In productive growing systems, the results of horticultural trials and research are often adopted to improve practice.

- a) State **TWO** specific benefits of adopting trial results or research findings in productive growing.

**2**

- b) Explain **THREE** challenges that may limit the adoption of trial results or research findings by growers.

**6**

Candidate name

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Total Mark

### Question 5 (4 marks)

This question relates to managing people in a garden.

Garden managers are responsible for evaluating the performance of staff to support their productivity and development.

Describe in detail **ONE** method a Garden Manager could use to evaluate staff performance.

## MARKS

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Candidate name

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Total Mark

### Question 6 (6 marks)

**MARKS**

This question relates to the setting of maintenance standards.

Outline how visitor feedback can be used to set quality standards in a public or heritage garden.

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Total Mark

### Question 7 (8 marks)

Discuss how the effective management of equality and diversity principles can contribute to a high-quality visitor experience in public gardens.

## MARKS

8

Candidate name

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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

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Centre name

Question C1

Compare and contrast how trees are used in formal versus informal gardens.

Your answer must consider tree species selection, spatial arrangement, and seasonal interest and how these contribute to the intended character of formal and informal gardens.

**15 marks**

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Question C2

Raised beds have become increasingly popular in productive gardening over the past decade.

Explain the reasons behind this trend by discussing the key advantages and potential limitations of raised bed systems.

Use relevant examples to support your answer.

**15 marks**

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Question C3

This question relates to managing material resources in a garden.

Critically evaluate how poor resource management can affect the maintenance of a named garden area.

15 marks

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Question C4

Explain how and why gardens are often created as spaces for nature-based therapy.

In your answer, you should:

- describe what nature-based therapy involves.
- discuss how gardens can support specific aspects of physical wellbeing.
- use examples to support your answers.

15 marks

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