

Open Government Status:

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**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION
AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ARBORICULTURE AND FORESTRY ADVISORY GROUP**

Development of Vocational Related Qualifications (VQs)

Paper for AFAG Meeting: 25th-26th of September 2007

1. ISSUES

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide AFAG members with an update on the development of vocational related qualifications (VQs) for health and safety developed by HSE in conjunction with two awarding bodies operating in the land-based sector. It seeks members' views on a proposal to develop the qualifications to make them appropriate for arboriculture and/or forestry.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 This work is central to the Agriculture and Food sector's "Education, Skills and Competence in Agriculture" project. The aim of this project is to reduce the incidence of fatal and major injuries in the industry by tackling the culture of unwise risk taking through education and training.

2.2 The project is expected to contribute to the PSA targets in respect of fatal and major injuries in agriculture by reducing the level of unwise risk taking and raising the skills and competencies of those working in the industry.

2.3 A key objective within the project is the development and promotion of a benchmark suite of VQs for health and safety in agriculture and horticulture. These qualifications are entirely different from National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). The main differences are set out below:

- NVQs (or SVQs in Scotland) work by testing ability in the workplace and individuals need to prove that they can perform certain work-related tasks. They are assessed in a combination of ways including by compiling a portfolio – candidates build up evidence of what they have done at work; and by observation – an assessor watches the work being performed and checks that tasks are undertaken correctly. NVQs usually require at least one year or more to complete.
- VQs are designed to help improve knowledge or skills in a particular area. They make a good starting point for beginners and are also a good way of moving up a level. Vocational qualifications are usually taken in a college or through a training provider but are still totally different to traditional qualifications. They have a much greater focus on learning practical skills. Assessment can take many forms including online multiple choice tests, assignments or written exams. They are of short duration, usually expressed in terms of guided learning hours.

2.4 The health and safety VQs are based upon the learning outcomes set out in the ‘Strategic Agreement for a Portfolio of Vocationally Related Qualifications to Improve Health and Safety in Agriculture and Horticulture’ developed by HSE and key industry stakeholders in early 2003. The learning outcomes are shown in **annex 1**.

3. STRUCURE AND QUALIFICATIONS

3.1 The qualifications are offered by two awarding bodies in the land-based sector (Lantra Awards and the NPTC). The VQs have been accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and are found on the national qualifications framework. The qualifications are currently available at three levels:

VQ	GUIDED LEARNING HOURS	CERTIFICATE TITLE	TARGET MARKET
Level 2	20	Working Safely in Agriculture/Horticulture	Anyone working in the sector or about to join it
Level 3	30	Controlling Risks to Health and Safety in Agriculture/Horticulture.	supervisors, skilled employees, unit managers, union or worker safety representatives and farmers/growers who are self-employed or employing only family members
Level 4	30	Managing Health and Safety in Agriculture/ Horticulture	Farmers, growers, managers and owners of agricultural and horticultural enterprises with a management structure

3.2 The VQs certificates will be awarded to candidates achieving the assessment requirements at each level. Lantra Awards offer a traditional paper based system of assessment whilst the NPTC offer assessment via their Global On Line Assessment tool (GOLA). Awarding bodies have agreed a common pricing structure. Lantra Awards have developed a one-day training package at level 2 for delivery by their instructor network and are currently engaged in the development of a web-based package for level 3.

3.3 The qualifications are assessed by the following assessment methods:

VQ	ASSESSMENT METHOD(S)	EVIDENCE GENERATED
Level 2	Multiple-choice test paper (30 questions in 1 hour)	Marked test papers
Level 3	Unit 1: Multiple-choice test paper (30 questions in 1 hour) Unit 2: Workplace- based assignment (Risk assessment)	Marked test paper Portfolio of evidence
Level 4	Unit 1: Written examination paper (7 questions in 2 hours) Unit 2: Workplace- based	Marked test paper

	assignment (Health and safety management)	Portfolio of evidence
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4. UPTAKE OF QUALIFICATIONS

4.1 Feedback from colleges in the land-based sector indicates that the level 2 qualification is seen to be of most benefit to students undertaking traditional agricultural/horticultural courses. In particular, the level 2 VQ is seen as being an essential pre-requisite for students who are required to undertake work placements on farms/holdings as a component of their course work. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) have confirmed that colleges should be able to gain funding for the students undertaking these VQs.

4.2 It is proposed that these VQs will be incorporated within other agricultural /horticultural qualifications such as Level 2 National Certificates and Level 3 Advanced National Certificates to ensure wider uptake. This will be subject to acceptance by industry stakeholders during the consultation process

4.3 Achievement of VQs has been recognised by professional industry schemes such as BASIS and NRoSO. Members of these schemes can obtain CPD points by attending relevant training courses and/or attaining the qualifications. CPD is becoming an essential element of other professional industry schemes (eg Pig Industry Professional Register) and this represents an opportunity to encourage uptake as and when such schemes become available.

5. PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP THE VQS TO INCLUDE ARBORICULTURE AND/OR FORESTRY

5.1 Currently, the target market for the VQs is mainstream farming and production horticulture. The assessment questions and work placed based assignments have been created to address issues in these industries and promotional activity has targeted workers in these areas. However, there have also been much interest in developing the qualifications in order to broaden their appeal to other areas of the land based sector, including arboriculture and forestry.

5.2 Should these proposals be supported by stakeholders, the most straightforward (and cost effective) option would be to broadly retain the existing VQ structure, including the learning outcomes (with minor modifications where necessary), and assessment methods. However, there would be a need to review the assessment criteria in order to ensure it was fit for purpose and in line with stakeholder requirements. For example, the content could be mapped to the requirements set out in the HSE publication “Managing health and safety in forestry” (INDG294) There would also be a need for resources to develop appropriate question sets, assignments and learning materials for training providers. By “adopting” the existing VQ package, the length of time required for accreditation could be significantly reduced compared to developing a “new” qualification. The titles of the certificates at each level would be adjusted to reflect the industry covered. For example: Level 2 Certificate in Working Safely in Arboriculture or Level 3 Certificate in controlling risks to health and safety in Forestry etc as appropriate.

5.3 Experience with the agricultural/horticultural VQs has demonstrated the need for positive and dynamic stakeholder support both in developing and promoting the qualifications. This is particularly important to encourage uptake within the industry.

5.4 Further information on the VQs may be found on the following websites
www.lantraawards.co.uk www.nptc.org.uk. www.hse.gov.uk
www.healthandsafetypractices.co.uk

5.5 AFAG members are requested to consider these proposals and submit their views to HSE at the AFAG meeting on 25/09/07. The HSE agriculture and food sector contact for this project work is Alastair Mitchell (telephone 01905 743600 or alastair.mitchell@hse.gsi.gov.uk)

ANNEX 1

LEVEL 2

Learning Outcomes Upon successful completion of this unit the learner/candidate will:	Assessment Criteria The learner has achieved the learning outcomes because he/she can demonstrate knowledge of:
1. Be aware of the effects accidents and ill health can have on businesses and people	1.1 Recognise the effects that work related accidents, incidents and ill-health can have on people 1.2 Recognise the effects that work related accidents, incidents and ill-health can have on a business
2. Know his/her role in the business with regard to health and safety	2.1 Identify the responsibilities of an employee with regard to health and safety in the workplace 2.2 Identify the responsibilities of an employer with regard to health and safety in the workplace 2.3 Identify what responsibilities the employee has in the use, care and replacement of PPE provided for use at work
3. Know how to co-operate with others to improve health and safety	3.1 Indicate the benefits of co-operating with others to improve health and safety standards 3.2 Identify when and on what issues he/she would expect to be consulted by his/her employer 3.3 State ways in which he/she might contribute to a positive, vibrant health and safety culture in the workplace
4. Understand how his/her work can affect the health and safety of others	4.1 Identify how his/her work can affect the health and safety of others
5. Know the consequences of safe versus unsafe behaviour and the impact that has on attitude of others towards risk	5.1 Recognise examples of unsafe behaviour in the work place 5.2 Recognise examples of safe behaviour in the workplace 5.3 Identify possible consequences of unsafe behaviour in the workplace
6. Be aware of major sources of accidents and ill health in agriculture/horticulture	6.1 Identify the main sources of accidents in agriculture/horticulture 6.2 Identify the main sources of ill-health in agriculture/horticulture
7. Know appropriate measures to control the risks in agriculture/horticulture	7.1 Identify appropriate measures to control risks 7.2 The importance of following manufacturers' instructions for the use of equipment, materials and products 7.3 Identify the significance of a risk assessment and safe system of work prepared by employer 7.4 Identify risks in the workplace associated with the following and examples of control measures: - workplace transport

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - working at height - machinery - manual handling - noise - dust - electricity <p>7.5 Indicate what to do in the event of an accident</p>
8. Understand the importance of checking that measures to protect health and safety in agriculture/horticulture are properly maintained and used as instructed	8.1 Identify the benefits of regular checks of vehicles, work equipment and safety equipment
9. Be aware of the particular risks to children, vulnerable adults and visitors from agricultural/horticultural activities	<p>9.1 Name groups of people who are most at risk in the typical agricultural/horticultural working environment</p> <p>9.2 Recognise the significance of awareness and supervision</p> <p>9.3 Identify how and why the health and safety of vulnerable groups of people might be at risk in the agricultural/horticultural working environment</p>
10. Be aware of jobs in agriculture/horticulture which require specific standards of training and competence	10.1 Identify specific work activities / equipment in agriculture/horticulture for which recognise standards of training /competence are available or required

LEVEL 3 – Unit 1

Learning outcomes Upon successful completion of this unit the learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner has achieved the learning outcomes because he/she can:
1. Understand how people's knowledge, experience and attitude affect their perception of risk	<p>1.1 Identify the effect of the age and/or inexperience on perception of risk in the workplace</p> <p>1.2 Identify different attitudes (as inferred by behaviour) to Health and Safety in the workplace and which attitude shows greatest perception of risks</p> <p>1.3 Recognise methods of increasing peoples awareness of risk in the workplace and identifying those who may be particularly at risk</p>
2. Know the hierarchy of measures to control risk and how the principle of ' <i>so far as is reasonably practicable</i> ' will affect their application	<p>2.1 Identify measures to control risks and their order of preference</p> <p>2.2 Recognise the meaning of the term '<i>so far as is reasonably practicable</i>'</p> <p>2.3 How the principle '<i>so far as is reasonably practicable</i>' affects the application of measures to control risk</p>
3. Know how to investigate accidents and incidents to establish causes	<p>3.1 Recognise when to investigate accidents and incidents</p> <p>3.2 Identify documentation/materials required for gathering evidence and recording investigation</p> <p>3.3 State when to report to authorised person/persons/HSE Incident Contact Centre</p> <p>Recognise the benefits that can come from investigating accidents and incidents in the workplace</p>

	3.4 Indicate who might be involved in investigation
4. Know how to implement procedures to enact the health and safety policy	4.1 Identify who in the workplace would need to be familiar with relevant sections of the Health and Safety Policy 4.2 Indicate ways to implement procedures of Health and Safety Policy
5. Know how to carry out a workplace inspection and, where appropriate, report findings to management	5.1 Indicate what a workplace inspection might consist of 5.2 Indicate who should carry out a workplace inspection 5.3 Identify persons that must be informed of recommendations
6. Know the main health and safety law applying to agriculture/horticulture including:	6.1 Identify main legislation applicable to the following activities: Fork lift trucks All terrain Vehicles Chainsaws Pesticides Work at height Manual handling Noise Dust 6.2 Recognise the difference between a Code of Practice, an HSE Approved Code of Practice and HSE guidance 6.3 Indicate sources of up-to-date advice and guidance regarding Health and Safety Law
7. Know measures to reduce risks from lone working in agriculture/horticulture	7.1 Define lone working 7.2 Recognise measures to reduce risks of lone working

LEVEL 3 – Unit 2

Learning outcomes Upon successful completion of this unit the learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner has achieved the learning outcomes because he/she can:
1. Know the difference between hazard and risk	1.1 Give examples of typical farm/horticultural hazards and the risks associated with them.
2. Know how to complete task specific risk assessments appropriate to agriculture/horticulture	2.1 Carry out a task specific risk assessment workplace transport, plus 2 other task specific risk assessments from the following list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falls from Height • Machinery operation • Manual Handling • Dust
3. Know control measures which meet appropriate good practice standards in agriculture/horticulture	3.1 Identify areas that can be improved to meet current best practice standards in the workplace 3.2 Identify appropriate control measures for the area/tasks specified

4. Know who may need to be informed of the significant findings of risk assessments	4.1 Identify all groups of people who may be at risk in the workplace.
5. Know how to instruct workers and/or contractors about relevant control measures	5.1 Develop a communications strategy to show how significant findings can be communicated to all relevant groups of people in the workplace, including methods for checking understanding.
6. Be aware of sources of guidance /good practice standards in agriculture / horticulture	6.1 Identify sources of guidance on industry best practice, and where such guidance may be obtained. 6.2 Identify other sources of health and safety guidance relevant to his/her workplace
7. Understand how purchasing and selection decisions can reduce risks to health and safety when considering (a) new or replacement equipment (b) selection of contractors	7.0 Prepare a checklist to ensure that the purchase of a new item of work equipment will meet both operational and health and safety requirements 7.1 Prepare a checklist for the selection of a competent contractor

LEVEL 4 – Unit 1

Learning outcomes Upon successful completion of this unit the learner will:	Assessment Criteria The learner has achieved the learning outcomes because he/she can:
1. Know the main requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations	1.0 Outline the main requirements of the regulations & relate them to the agricultural/horticultural working environment including: 1.1 Risk assessment 1.2 Principles of prevention to be applied 1.3 Health & safety arrangements 1.4 Health surveillance 1.5 Health & Safety assistance 1.6 Information for employees 1.7 Co-operation & co-ordination 1.8 Working with contractors 1.9 Capabilities & training 1.10 Temporary workers 1.11 Protection of young persons

<p>2. Know how to devise a statement of policy for health and safety</p>	<p>2.0 Describe the information that needs to be included in a typical health and safety policy including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Statement of general policy 2.2 Responsibilities 2.3 Health & safety risks 2.4 Consultation with employees 2.5 Safe plant & equipment 2.6 Safe handling & use of substances 2.7 Information, instruction & training 2.8 Competency for tasks & training 2.9 Accidents, first aid & ill-health 2.10 Monitoring 2.11 Emergency procedures 2.12 Public Safety
<p>3. Understand the importance of consultation arrangements to ensure health and safety of employees</p>	<p>3.0 Describe examples of matters/situations in which employers should consult employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Outline the main legal requirements for consultation in the work place
<p>4. Know how to evaluate recommended control measures using the application of 'so far as is reasonably practicable'</p>	<p>4.0 Identify and evaluate recommended control measures using the application of 'so far as is reasonably practicable'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Understanding risk control terminology 4.2 Understanding the hierarchy of risk control principles & their application to agriculture/horticulture 4.3 Implementing & maintaining risk control measures in agriculture/horticulture
<p>5. Understand the importance of monitoring health and safety standards</p>	<p>5.0 Describe the importance of monitoring health and safety standards to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 The key differences between active & reactive monitoring 5.2 Examples of active & reactive monitoring 5.3 Benefits of monitoring 5.4 Implications of not monitoring health and safety standards
<p>6. Understand the factors affecting the priority for action following workplace inspections, risk assessments or health and safety audits</p>	<p>6.0. Assess the factors affecting the priority for action following workplace inspections, risk assessments or health and safety audits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1 Assessing the relative importance of health & safety risks
<p>7. Be aware of suitable indicators to measure the health and safety performance of the organisation and those within it</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.0 Defining health and safety performance 7.1 Reviewing health and safety performance 7.2 Indicators to measure health and safety performance
<p>6. Know how to communicate the significant findings of the risk assessment to staff in a positive manner</p>	<p>6.0 Describe alternative communication strategies designed to relate the significant findings of the risk assessment to staff in a positive manner.</p>

LEVEL 4 – Unit 2

Learning outcomes Upon successful completion of this unit the learner will:	Assessment Criteria The learner has achieved the learning outcomes because he/she can:
1. Understand the key elements of successful health and safety management as outlined in HSE publication HSG65	1.0 Outline the key elements of successful health and safety management from HSE publication HSG65 to include: 1.1 Devising policy 1.2 Organising resources 1.3 Planning and implementing 1.4 Measuring performance 1.5 Reviewing performance
2. Understand how a health and safety policy might be used to protect workers, including any vulnerable individuals, and how the policy might be implemented	2.0 Describe how a health and safety policy might be used to protect workers to include: 2.1 Identifying vulnerable individuals in agriculture/horticulture 2.2 Implementing a policy to protect workers in agriculture/horticulture 2.3 Implementing a policy to protect vulnerable individuals in agriculture/horticulture
3. Know what health and safety information must be communicated outside the organisation	3.0 Demonstrate knowledge of situations in agriculture/horticulture in which health and safety information must be communicated outside the organisation including: 3.1 Details of information that must be communicated 3.2 Relevant legal requirements
4. Identify tasks/activities in agriculture /horticulture where legislation requires specific standards of training or competence	4.0 Demonstrate knowledge of tasks/ activities and legislation in agriculture/horticulture that require specific standards of training or competence, including: 4.1 Operating plant such as fork lift trucks and telescopic handlers 4.2 Riding All Terrain Vehicles/Quad bikes 4.3 Applying pesticides 4.4 Operating chainsaws 4.5 Others

