

Modern Apprenticeship in Greenkeeping and Sportsturf

Overview

These apprenticeships are designed to support the development of apprentices working in:

- Greenkeeping
- Sportsturf

Duration

This apprenticeship is expected to take up to 24 months to complete

Level

SCQF Level 6. More information on SCQF can be found [here](#).

Qualification achieved

The apprentice will achieve a qualification specific to their chosen pathway.

- Diploma in Greenkeeping at SCQF Level 6 (GW18 46)
- or
- Diploma in Sportsturf at SCQF Level 6 (GW16 46)

Introduction

Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Pathways

Meta skills

Roles and responsibilities

Before the apprenticeship

During the apprenticeship

At the end of the apprenticeship



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Apprenticeships aim to provide mixture of on-the-job (in the workplace) and off-the-job (through day or block release) learning to enable people to develop the knowledge, skills and expertise required by businesses today.

Designed by employers to attract new talent, tackle critical skills shortages and develop existing workforces, apprenticeships can both help people to enter the world of work and develop the skills of those already in work

About Scottish Apprenticeships

Scottish Apprenticeships are for everyone and reflect the Government's commitment to promoting a world-class, inclusive, work-based learning system. They are administered by **Skills Development Scotland**, the National Skills Agency. Skills Development Scotland has a remit to contribute to the nation's economic growth and it does this by supporting individuals and businesses alike to develop and apply their skills in the workplace.

The Scottish Apprenticeship system focuses on three specific key elements:

- the **learning outcomes** aligned to the specific work situations of an apprentice's job;
- the **knowledge, skills and behaviours** that will be developed by apprentices, enabling them to work competently and confidently; and
- the **meta-skills** that will be developed by apprentices to help them to manage themselves, collaborate with others and interact with change.

Throughout their apprenticeship, apprentices will be supported and guided by their employer, mentor and learning provider, and will have their growing competence measured by an assessor to ensure they can perform their job to the standard required. On successful completion, apprentices will be awarded nationally recognised competence-based and/or professional qualifications in their chosen field.

About this standard and framework document

Working in partnership with businesses and stakeholders, this standard and framework document has been written to provide apprentices and employers with an overview of the key features of this apprenticeship. Please read this alongside the [Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Occupation Profile at SCQF Level 6](#).

Find further information on apprenticeships [here!](#)

Role of the apprentice

This apprenticeship is designed to support senior operative and technician roles across the Greenkeeping sector.

There are a number of roles available at this level, such as greenkeeper. The apprenticeship will provide apprentices with the skills and knowledge required to become competent in their chosen job role and includes a balance of technical, business, and interpersonal skills areas, designed to ensure apprentices have an appropriate set of skills to operate competently in senior operative and technician land use job roles.

Within the Greenkeeping apprenticeship, apprentices can choose between two specialist pathways: Greenkeeping and Sportsturf.

The following apprenticeship outcomes are mandatory and common to both Greenkeeping and Sportsturf pathways.

- Develop an awareness of environmental good practice
- Developing meta-skills and personal practice
- Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security

and if not previously achieved:

- Contributing to performing work activities
- Using equipment and machinery

Greenkeeping

Apprentices who choose the **Greenkeeping specialist pathway** must achieve seven of the following **optional apprenticeship outcomes**

- Assess and carry out maintenance of equipment and machines
- Communicate information and knowledge
- Contributing to performing work activities
- Co-ordinate the control of weeds, pests, diseases and disorders
- Co-ordinate the establishment of crops or plants
- Estimate resource requirements and programme work for land-based projects
- Identify and name plants using their botanical names
- Implementing sports turf surface management plans
- Maintain irrigation systems
- Maintain land drainage systems
- Maintaining grassed and planted areas
- Maintaining wildflower-rich amenity grasslands
- Plan and set out sports areas
- Prepare and apply plant protection products to control weeds, pests, diseases or disorders
- Prepare and operate a powered vehicle with attachments
- Prepare and operate a tractor with attachments
- Understanding the importance of environmental good practice in land use
- Using equipment and machinery

Sportsturf

Apprentices who choose the **Sportsturf specialist pathway** must achieve seven of the following **optional apprenticeship outcomes**

- Assess and carry out maintenance of equipment and machines
- Communicate information and knowledge
- Contributing to performing work activities
- Co-ordinate the control of weeds, pests, diseases and disorders
- Co-ordinate the establishment of crops or plants
- Implementing sports turf surface management plans
- Maintain irrigation systems
- Maintain land drainage systems
- Maintaining grassed and planted areas
- Maintaining wildflower-rich amenity grasslands
- Plan and set out sports areas
- Prepare and apply plant protection products to control weeds, pests, diseases or disorders
- Prepare and operate a powered vehicle with attachments
- Prepare and operate a tractor with attachments
- Understanding the importance of environmental good practice in land use
- Using equipment and machinery

Knowledge, skills and behaviours

This apprenticeship is designed to develop apprentices' careers by developing their knowledge and understanding of their role, by increasing their skills and by enhancing their behaviours.

Employers from a variety of sectors have helped to identify the key knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices working in Land use occupations need to develop. Throughout their apprenticeship, apprentices should be regularly assessed to ensure they can demonstrate both know-how and ability in their chosen specialist pathway.

The knowledge, skills and behaviour below are common to all apprenticeships. A full list of the specific **knowledge, skills and behaviours** for each pathway can be found in the Occupation Profile for Greenkeeping and Sportsturf at SCQF Level 6.



Skills and Knowledge

- Carrying out risk assessments
- Communicating relevant safety and work-related information to others
- Completing and storing all relevant
- Dealing effectively with issues within the scope and limitations of own responsibilities
- Disposing of waste
- Maintaining safety and security of tools and equipment
- Monitoring progress of work
- Obtaining relevant information
- Reporting issues which cannot be solved
- Understanding how issues around climate change, sustainability and wider environmental issues are directly relevant to workplace activities



Behaviours

- Acting with honesty and integrity
- Adapting to change
- Considering sustainability within own role
- Developing own skills and knowledge
- Operating effectively within teams
- Prioritising Health and Safety
- Taking responsibility for own actions

Meta-skills sit alongside and complement technical knowledge, skills and behaviours. As technology, society and the way we work change at an ever-increasing pace, so meta-skills are the over-arching and future-focused attributes that enable other skills to be developed through consideration, reflection and implementation.

Meta-skills support improved performance and productivity, greater adaptability and resilience to change. For apprentices, meta-skills are a critical asset, supporting their ability to cope and excel in the face of change, to solve problems, to collaborate with others and to create successful futures. There are three categories, each with four meta-skills.

Managing yourself - focus, integrity, adaptability and initiative

Connecting with others - communication, feeling, collaboration and leadership

Interacting with change - curiosity, creativity, sense-making and critical thinking



Developing meta-skills in Greenkeeping and Sportsturf

Supported by their employer, mentor and learning provider, apprentices should consider, practise and reflect on their use of meta-skills during their apprenticeship, building those skills to enhance their personal effectiveness in their present role and their future careers.



Managing yourself

Focus is required when planning and setting out sports areas; **Integrity** is essential when a job hasn't gone quite the way it should have;

Adapting is needed when dealing with unexpected situations and problems; and **Initiative** is needed for implementing sportsturf management plans



Connecting with others

Communicating is needed when implementing sportsturf surface management plans; **Feeling** is needed to understand and respond to customer requirements and feedback; **Collaborating** is required when seeking to work safely in a team; skills in **Leading** are required when co-ordinating the establishment of crops or plants



Interacting with change

Curiosity is a critical asset when you start a job and you need to understand what you are doing and why; **Creativity** is needed when estimating resource requirements and programme work; **Sense Making** comes into play when understanding the importance of environmental good practice in land use; and **Critical Thinking** is key when preparing and applying plant protection products to control weeds, pest, diseases or disorders

A number of different parties will be involved in the delivery, management and assessment of a successful apprenticeship. As well as the apprentice, key roles include employer, mentor, learning provider and assessor. Each has a specific set of responsibilities during the apprenticeship.

Apprentice Responsibilities

In their day-to-day roles, apprentices have the same responsibilities to their employer as any other employee but they have additional and specific responsibilities for their own learning and development too.

- Agreeing a learning/ development plan with all parties involved and following it through
- Committing to learning throughout the duration of apprenticeship
- Participating in progress meetings with employer and learning provider representatives
- Participating in off-the-job learning where required
- Reflecting on performance and on development of skills, knowledge and behaviours required of the role
- Agreeing new goals to progress learning with all parties involved

Employer Responsibilities

- Providing apprentices with a contract of employment, a job description and an induction Programme
- Paying apprentices in line with company policy, current legislation, fair work principles, and equality and diversity expectations
- Ensuring a working environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment

- Agreeing learning needs and a learning and development plan with the learning provider and apprentices including
 - agreeing when off-the-job learning will be required and releasing apprentices for this as required
 - making on-the-job learning arrangements
 - identifying additional support requirements and agreeing actions to implement these
- Providing a quality work-based learning environment for apprentices, including the facilities and training necessary to demonstrate competence and succeed in the apprenticeship
- Providing the support of a mentor, who has relevant industry experience and is familiar with the employer's business, to support apprentices' development
- Contributing to the ongoing assessment of occupational competence, including observing performance, verifying evidence and profiling meta-skills
- Meeting with apprentices and learning providers to review apprentices' progress and set future goals
- Providing an environment that supports apprentices to take responsibility for their own learning and development
- Supporting and encouraging apprentices during their apprenticeship
- Recognising the achievements of apprentices in career management and progression
- Providing constructive feedback to the learning provider on the quality of their service delivery to inform continuous improvement of both the Scottish Apprenticeships system and apprentices themselves



Mentor Responsibilities

- Helping new apprentices orientate into the workplace
- Providing information, advice and guidance relating to the learning and assessment aspects of the apprenticeship
- Supporting apprentices to define meta-skills in their shared work context
- Working with apprentices, employers and learning providers to ensure problems are resolved quickly
- Acting as an expert witness for apprentices
- Providing support to apprentices as they adjust to the workplace and progress in their career



Learning Provider Responsibilities

- Providing an appropriate apprenticeship programme for apprentices and employers
- Agreeing the learning needs of the apprentices with both the apprentice and the employer
- Agreeing when off-the-job learning will be required and defining roles and responsibilities for this with relevant parties
- Ensuring apprentices have access to the best quality learning opportunities available
- Ensuring apprentices and employers fully understand the principles and processes of competence-based assessment
- Registering apprentices through MA Online and with relevant awarding bodies, sector skills organisations and Skills Development Scotland as appropriate

- Compiling and agreeing learning and development plans and assessment plans with apprentices and employers
- Completing assessment records and submitting records and evidence for verification/moderation
- Reviewing apprentices' progress at regular intervals with the employer
- Supporting apprentices to develop their reflective practice
- Advising apprentices who to approach for support, advice and encouragement both within and outwith the workplace
- Seeking and providing feedback from and to employers and apprentices to inform continuous improvement of the Scottish Apprenticeships system and apprentices themselves



Assessor Responsibilities

- Meeting with apprentices, mentors and employers to plan learning and review progress
- Monitoring apprentices' progress against learning and development plans
- Observing and assessing apprentices in the workplace and judging whether their work meets the competence requirements set by the qualification awarding body
- Assessing different types of evidence from apprentices
- Providing constructive feedback on performance and offering suggestions for improvement
- Maintaining current knowledge of industry standards and seeking innovative new methods of work-based learning delivery

The recruitment of apprentices is primarily the responsibility of the employer and, before an apprenticeship starts, consideration should be given to entry requirements and also to ensuring that the workplace adheres to fair work, inclusion and diversity principles.

There are no formal entry requirements; however, the apprentice must be employed in a suitable job role to gain the experience and knowledge required for the relevant Modern apprenticeship and any associated qualifications and other training requirements. The apprentice may hold the lower level qualification in the specific or related discipline.

In addition, an apprentice should:

- Be prepared to attend off-the-job training
- Be able to acquire the broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding required in the apprenticeship
- Enjoy working with outdoors
- Have a positive attitude towards learning

However, employers can also consider existing workplace skills and experiences, where apprentices are either changing careers or upskilling. Being open to alternative assessment methods and relevant experience, instead of qualifications, can help to broaden the pool of potential applicants.



Recognition of Prior Learning

Individuals applying for an apprenticeship will undergo selection based on the employer's existing HR processes. Learning providers should take account of this and liaise with employers to provide advice and guidance on any RPL and experience that will be accepted for entry onto the programme. It is recommended that a flexible approach to RPL is adopted, on a case-by-case basis,

with all relevant experience as well as any previous qualifications considered. Learning providers should always consider how they can best recognise apprentices' prior learning to minimise repetition of content.

You can find more information on RPL [here](#).



Apprenticeship agreement and employment status

All post-school apprentices must hold a contract of employment for the period of the apprenticeship.

In addition, an apprenticeship agreement, confirming the commitment of the employer, the apprentice and the learning provider to the agreed apprenticeship must be signed by all parties. This agreement forms part of the individual employment arrangements between the apprentice and the employer; and of the learning arrangements between the learning provider, the employer and the apprentice.



Registration and certification

Registration and certification of apprenticeships is undertaken through [Modern Apprenticeship Online](#).

It is the responsibility of the learning provider to ensure that the registration of apprentices is completed within four weeks of the start of their apprenticeship.

Fair work, inclusion and diversity

The Scottish Apprenticeships system aims to embed fair work principles. Fair Work First is the Scottish Government's flagship policy for driving high quality and fair work across the labour market in Scotland by applying fair work criteria to grants, other funding and contracts being awarded by and across the public sector, where it is relevant to do so. Through this approach the Scottish Government is asking employers to adopt fair working practices, specifically:

- appropriate channels for effective voice, such as trade union recognition;
- investment in workforce development;
- no inappropriate use of zero hours contracts;
- action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace; and
- payment of at least the minimum Living Wage.

Further guidance on Fair Work First is available [here](#).

The design and development of Scottish Apprenticeships aims to embed these principles in practical ways by including opportunities for feedback from apprentices as well as the availability of clear pathways into future opportunities beyond the apprenticeship itself.

Protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 includes nine protected characteristics, which are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex and sexual orientation. It is against the law to discriminate based on these protected characteristics. Skills Development Scotland is a Corporate Parent and, to that end, includes 'care experienced' in a similar way to protected characteristics in all its funded programmes and services.

Attracting the best people into apprenticeships involves ensuring that barriers are removed. Receiving the right support at the right time unlocks the potential of people who could otherwise be denied the opportunity to go on and become valued employees. Supporting people to feel confident about disclosing their protected characteristics in a safe and respectful way allows employers and learning providers to put the right conditions in place to unlock that potential; the right time for this is often at the start of an apprenticeship or even at the recruitment stage. In practice, it might involve ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate apprentices, where that is possible and to help them make the most of their apprenticeship journey. Examples might include (but are not limited to) supporting people with sensory impairments, supporting people for whom English is not their first language and supporting people who are care experienced (for example, through fostering, adoption or residential care).

Diversity in Land use

Evidence shows that land use industries are lacking in diversity particularly around the representation of women. Whilst these industries currently remain male dominated, most land use frameworks have seen an increase in female uptake in recent years. There is an increasing acceptance of the benefits that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) can bring to the workplace. We also know that disabled people, care experienced people, people from ethnic minority groups, and/ or people with caring responsibilities are underrepresented in employment and this is reflected within land use industries. Recruitment and delivery of this framework should take into account the need to be flexible and adapt to support the different needs of learners. These guides contain practical steps to make your [recruitment more inclusive](#).

Once the apprenticeship starts, there are a number of key considerations, tasks and milestones that apprentices, employers, learning providers, mentors and assessors should undertake to optimise a successful outcome for all parties.

Work-based Learning

Work-based learning – aligned to and assessed against both the **learning outcomes** and the **knowledge, skills and behaviours** of the apprenticeship – is the central and most significant component of an apprenticeship and is based on apprentices' real-life experiences in the workplace. Work-based learning is a partnership between apprentice, employer and learning provider and all apprentices must have the support of a mentor in the workplace.

Get more information on work-based learning [here](#).

Meta-skills Development

This apprenticeship includes a learning outcome that provides opportunities to develop meta-skills. To effectively develop the meta-skills outlined earlier, apprentices must first understand what they are and how they might apply them in their role. To help with this, a simple exercise to define what meta-skills mean in their role (in language that both apprentice and employer are comfortable with) should be used. This will allow apprentices to consider their own meta-skills profile and which meta-skills they might need to develop or apply in order to perform effectively at work.

Setting development goals, action planning and regularly reflecting on progress will help apprentices to develop their meta-skills and it is vital to provide the time and space for reflections to take place. Naturally occurring opportunities to discuss and reflect on meta-skills might include inductions or performance management, career development and performance review sessions.

Delivery of Training

The majority of training undertaken in any apprenticeship is focused on skills developed in the workplace. However, in some apprenticeships there is a requirement for elements of structured formal taught learning/training to be delivered outside the normal workplace, for example, in a college or training centre which might include classroom and or development of skills in a workshop/realistic work environment. We often describe this as “off-the-job” training.

In this apprenticeship off-the job training is generally carried out in classroom settings by learning providers. Training arrangements are likely to combine elements of block-release, day-release and online learning.

The way this is delivered is an individual negotiation between the learning provider and the employer.

An initial assessment and learning plan should be developed at the outset with input from the apprentice, employer and the learning provider, to identify any additional needs and provide apprentices with the appropriate support or adaptations required to successfully complete their apprenticeship.

Quality assurance

Skills Development Scotland is responsible for making sure all funded learning is of high quality and benefits the apprentice. A quality assurance framework is in place to cover the delivery of work-based learning in an apprenticeship and is designed to demonstrate how effectively learning providers and employers support this by ensuring apprentices:

- Receive appropriate support and guidance to enable them to become successful apprentices and confident individuals;
- Receive quality learning and develop their skills to achieve their learning goals;
- Are treated with dignity and respect in a way that promotes equality and inclusion; and
- Work towards successful outcomes, leading to future employment or further appropriate career progression.

The relevant awarding and accreditation bodies will undertake the quality assurance of the assessment of competence-based and professional qualifications.

Approaches to Assessment

Apprentices are expected to provide evidence of meeting the learning outcomes and the knowledge, skills and behaviours required of this apprenticeship; also, evidence to demonstrate that they are competent in the workplace. It is important for apprentices to recognise how they have developed skills and understanding along the way, and where these still need to be developed.

Observation, questioning and examination of product evidence

This three-method approach classifies all assessments under observation, questioning and examination of product evidence. It is therefore based on the development of a portfolio of work and regular reflection on learning and skills development through professional dialogue between apprentices and mentors, employers and learning providers.

Holistic Assessment

The holistic approach allows larger pieces of work to evidence a number of learning outcomes, rather than a piecemeal process of finding separate evidence for each outcome and/or its associated knowledge, skills and behaviours. Work-based projects or problem-based activities often provide the richest opportunities for holistic assessment. Assessment of the common learning outcomes will be done in parallel with assessment of technical skills.

Assessment should be undertaken both in a controlled environment and through work related activity depending on what is being assessed, however most assessment should take place in the workplace.

Simulation

Details of the Units where simulation is permitted and any conditions that should be set are provided in the associated competence-based qualification specification and in the Overarching Assessment Strategy for competence-based qualifications, and Appendix: Land use Assessment Strategy related to the qualifications within this apprenticeship.

Assessment methods	Guidance
Case studies	For portfolio
Evidence of prior learning	Previous course/qualification assessment and certification should be made available.
Multiple choice/short answer questions - online or paper-based	Completed at a centre or remotely. If delivered remotely online invigilation must be in place.
Observations via physical or virtual tests	Practical assessment and any oral reasoning. Virtual visits can help with evidencing infrequent or unseasonal activities.
Personal statements	Evidence of an apprentice's activities and progress, could be demonstrated via online blog which is kept up to date during the apprenticeship.
Portfolio of evidence	Photographs, videos, case studies.
Presentation	A brief oral presentation on a specific and relevant topic. This could be followed by oral questioning.
Product evidence	The output of Apprentice performance.
Professional discussion	A structured conversation between the Assessor and Apprentice, where the candidate is an active participant rather than simply responding to questions.
Realistic simulation via scenarios and/or questionnaires	Where the achievement of valid and reliable assessment calls for evidence of performance under workplace conditions, but where it will be difficult and/or unsafe to assess through normal working practice.
Reflective account	An accurate description by the candidate of work they carried out (linked to performance evidence where possible) and/or their knowledge.
Witness testimony	From line managers and relevant others.

For further details: https://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/Guide_To_Assessment.pdf

Qualification Requirements

Competence-based qualification

During their apprenticeship, apprentices must complete the competence-based qualification relevant to the apprenticeship and pathway they choose to undertake.

- Diploma in Greenkeeping at SCQF Level 6 (GW18 46)
or
- Diploma in Sportsturf at SCQF Level 6 (GW16 46)

This qualification brings together the development and assessment of all the learning outcomes and knowledge, skills and behaviours required of the role in a single qualification. It includes the development and holistic assessment of meta-skills which are integrated with the development and assessment of technical skills.

Other awards, qualifications or training programmes

In addition to achieving the competence-based qualification noted above, all apprentices must achieve:

- Emergency First Aid at Work or Emergency First Aid in Workplace

Plus

- At least one more course must be taken to comply with legal requirements of the occupation (as a guide up to 40 notional hours of learning) which is relevant to the industry, role and level, and reflects current practice. The list of courses can be found [here](#)

There is flexibility to allow other additional awards training courses and qualifications to be completed by agreement between the employer, the training provider and the learner at the beginning of the apprenticeship, which must be agreed with Lantra

More details of industry endorsed training courses can be found at <https://www.lantra.co.uk/training>

Core Skills

Core Skills are broad transferable skills, which can be used in addition to Meta-skills, to help apprentices learn how to manage and adapt how they respond to a changing society.

The five Core Skills are: Communication, Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology, Problem Solving and Working with Others.

Core Skills at SCQF Level 5 are embedded within this Framework therefore no separate certification is necessary

Pathways and Progression

A successfully completed apprenticeship, including the achievement of competence-based and professional qualifications, opens the door to a number of opportunities for progression in both work and further learning.

Career advancement

Following the completion of the Modern Apprenticeship, candidates will be able to maintain positions in areas such as:

- Deputy head greenkeeper/groundsperson

Further study

Learners completing the Level 6 Greenkeeping and Sportsturf Modern Apprenticeship will be able to progress into Further Education (FE) and have the potential to also move onto Higher Education (HE). Some courses could include:

- Botany
- Plant pathology
- Conservation
- Seed Science
- Plant science

These courses range from HNCs to degrees (BSc or BA depending upon the chosen course) and further qualifications such as an MSc or PhD may also be available. Useful websites to visit regarding FE and HE include: www.ucas.co.uk www.landex.org.uk or www.myworldofwork.co.uk Information regarding courses, providers and further information on specific entry requirements can also be found via these websites.

Professional Registration

This apprenticeship may support professional recognition as it includes learning and skills outcomes common to a number of the introductory professional qualifications relevant to the Greenkeeping & Sportsturf sector.

The apprentice, employer and learning provider will determine the most appropriate professional pathway in light of the apprentice's specific work role and the learning provider will guide each successful apprentice on the professional registration process they should follow.

Version Number	Date	Description
1.0 of Apprenticeship	06/11/2025	First version of new apprenticeship