

LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE IN UTILITY ARBORICULTURE

Unit UA2 Prune Trees (Ground/Aerial)

Part 2.1 - Tree Species Recognition, Growth Characteristics and Associated Hazards

ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE

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NPTC Level 3 Certificate of Competence Utility Arboriculture
Unit UA2 – Prune Trees (Ground/Aerial)
Part 2.1 - Tree Species Recognition, Growth Characteristics and Associated Hazards

Candidate Information

Introduction

The scheme will be administered by NPTC.

NPTC will:

- Publish
 - Scheme regulations
 - Assessment schedule
 - Assessment material
- Approve centres to co-ordinate and administer the scheme
- Set standards for the training of Verifiers and Assessors
- Recruit, train and deploy Verifiers
- Manage verification
- Issue certificates to successful Candidates

The Certificate of Competence

Certificates of competence will be awarded to Candidates who achieve the required level of competence in the Units to which their Certificate relates.

Instruction

Attendance at a course of instruction is not a pre-requisite for an application for an assessment but potential Candidates are strongly advised to ensure that they are up to the standards that will be expected of them when they are assessed.

NPTC does **not** hold a register of instructors; however instruction will normally be available from recognised training providers and/or centres of further or higher education active in the areas covered by this certificate. Further information on training may be obtained from the centre.

Access to Assessment

Assessment Centres will be responsible for arranging assessment on behalf of a Candidate. Assessment may only be carried out by an Assessor approved by NPTC for that scheme. Under no circumstances can either instructors involved in the preparation of candidates, or the candidates work place supervisors, or anyone else who might have a vested interest in the outcome, carry out the assessment.

The minimum age limit for Candidates taking certificates of competence is 16 years. There is no upper age limit.

Assessment

Assessment is a process by which it is confirmed that the Candidate is competent in the Units within the award to which the assessment relates. It is a process of collecting evidence about his/her capabilities and judging whether that evidence is sufficient to attribute competence.

The candidate must be registered through an NPTC approved Assessment Centre for this qualification prior to assessment.

The result of the assessment will be recorded on the assessment report form.

The schedule of assessment contains the criteria relating to:

- Observation of practical performance
- Assessment of knowledge and understanding

Performance Evaluation

The result of each assessment activity is evaluated against the following criteria:

- 4 = Meets or exceeds the assessment criteria by displaying a level of practical performance and/or underpinning knowledge, with no 'minor' or 'critical' faults. (Competent).
- 3 = Meets the requirements of the assessment criteria for both the practical performance and the underpinning knowledge, with some 'minor' faults but no 'critical' faults. (Competent).
- 2 = Does not fully satisfy the requirements of the assessment criteria, being unable to perform the practical task satisfactorily or being deficient in underpinning knowledge leading to the recording of minor faults. (Not yet competent).
- 1 = Does not satisfy the requirements of the assessment criteria, being unable to perform the practical task satisfactorily or safely or being deficient in underpinning knowledge leading to the recording of a critical fault. (Not yet competent).

A list of registered Assessment Centres is available from NPTC. (www.nptc.org.uk)

Verification

Verification is a process of monitoring assessment; it is an essential check to confirm that the assessment procedures are being carried out in the way that NPTC has laid down. The overall aim of verification is to establish a system of quality assurance that is acceptable in terms of both credibility and cost effectiveness.

Approved Assessors will be subject to a regular visit by the verifier at a time when assessments are being undertaken.

A selection of assessment reports completed by the assessor will be evaluated by an NPTC approved verifier.

Compliance with the verification requirements is a pre-requisite for Assessors remaining on NPTC's list of approved assessors.

Complaints and Appeals

NPTC and its Assessment Centres have a formal Complaints and Appeals procedure. In the event of any dissatisfaction with the arrangements and conditions of assessment, the candidate should first contact the Assessment Centre through whom the assessment was arranged and submit the complaint in writing.

For further information on NPTC's Equal Opportunities Policy and Complaints and Appeals Procedures, please refer to www.nptc.org.uk

Learning Outcomes

The candidate will be able to:

- Identify common species of tree by leaf or twig
- Identify growth characteristics
- Identify hazard trees and branches

Guidance Notes for Candidates and Assessors

The following should be available:

A site with at least eight common broadleaved species, and four coniferous species.

If not all available then acceptable to supplement with branches, cones, leaves, twigs, pictures or diagrams.

Tree(s) with potential hazards and defects, and at least two examples of dangerous overhang.

Pre-requisites:

Prior to being certificated for this unit, the candidate must have achieved **Unit UA1** from the Certificate of Competence in Utility Arboriculture

Certificate endorsements:

A **Level 3 Certificate of Competence in Utility Arboriculture – Prune and Fell Trees (Ground)** will be issued to candidates who successfully achieve Unit UA2, parts **2.1 and 2.2**

Alternatively

A **Level 3 Certificate of Competence in Utility Arboriculture Prune Trees (Aerial)** will be issued to candidates who successfully achieve Unit UA2, parts **2.1, 2.2 and 2.3**

Note: This unit is assessed by one assessor with arboricultural knowledge. The letter 'A' on the right hand side of the table, confirms it must be assessed by an NPTC approved Arboricultural Assessor.

Safe Practice

1. Assessors must hold a current 'First Aid at Work' Certificate.
2. It is strongly recommended that Candidates hold at least a recent, recognised 'Emergency First Aid' Training Certificate and may be a requirement of some Electricity Companies
3. Any overhead line(s) will be made dead (but will be treated as live).
4. Correct procedures following the relevant REC guidelines must be implemented to ensure that the line is dead.
5. The Assessor must ensure a Risk Assessment has been carried out, and sufficient control measures implemented. In particular, the location of the site and weather conditions should be assessed, details of access, etc, which may be required by emergency services must be noted, as well as the nearest Accident and Emergency Hospital Unit. The means of contacting the emergency services must be established.
6. All Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) used in the assessments must comply with Arboriculture and Forestry Advisory Group (AFAG) Safety Guide 301, 401, 801, Health and Safety Executive publications and current legal requirements in terms of specification and use.
7. A First Aid Kit complying with current Regulations, of the appropriate size for the number of persons on site, must be available on site
8. Warning signs must be erected as appropriate to Risk Assessment
9. Current Industry Best Practice Guidelines (e.g. AFAG Safety Guides 301,401,403, 804) for each task carried out need to be followed.
10. Any necessary permissions must have been granted, and notifications made as appropriate: (e.g. Regional Electrical Companies, Local Planning Authority, Forestry Authority, Forest Enterprise, Highways Authority, Private owners, Statutory undertakers, Police, etc.). Long hair to be tied back and jewellery removed
11. A current, recognised 'Emergency First Aid' Training Certificate which includes treatment for shock is strongly recommended and may be a requirement of some Electricity Companies.
12. The assessments are carried out in accordance with safety guidelines in the Electricity Act 1989 (Schedule 4 Para. 9), Electricity at Work Regulations, HSE Guidance Notes GS6 & HS (G) 47, HS (G) 85 Electricity at Work Safe Working Practices, Electricity Supply Industry (ESI) Model Distribution Safety Rules, ESI Engineering Recommendation G55/1, BS EN 50110-1, local Regional Electricity Company's Distribution Safety Rules ("REC DSR's") and other relevant Safety Guides and current legislation e.g. the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998,
13. It is the responsibility of the Assessment Centre, Assessor and the Candidate to ensure that the additional requirements and provisions are met as relevant to the units
14. Additional information may be sought from the relevant operator manuals or any other appropriate training or safety publication.

	Assessment Activity	Assessment Criteria
1.	<p>Identify: Common species of broadleaved tree species</p> <p>And Identify common species of coniferous tree species</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oak - Beech - Ash - Birch - Sycamore - Willow - Lime - Hawthorn - Cherry - Apple - Alder - Horse Chestnut - Sweet Chestnut - Hazel - Rowan - Holly - Other. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cypress - Pine - Larch - Fir - Spruce - Cedar - Hemlock - Yew - Other.
2.	<p>Demonstrate knowledge of:</p> <p>Slow -growing species and explain their significance in relation to growth in proximity to overhead lines</p> <p>And Fast -growing species and explain their significance in relation to growth in proximity to overhead lines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oak - Beech - Laburnum - Box - Yew - Holly - Other <p>Significance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growth increments are smaller per annum so will not require cutting so often or so drastically as other species <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ash - Sycamore - Sweet Chestnut - Willow - Birch - Alder - Leyland Cypress - Other. <p>Significance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High growth rates means more frequent cutting required, or remove species from the proximity of the lines altogether

	Assessment Activity	Assessment Criteria
3.	Demonstrate knowledge of species that easily produce sprout growth and explain their significance in relation to growth in proximity to overhead lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ash - Sycamore - Sweet Chestnut - Willow - Poplar - Lime - Oak <p>- Pruning, even when carried out to BS3998 can result in very rapid growth of multiple new shoots, especially when exposed to full light.</p>
4.	Demonstrate knowledge of trees with brittle stems and branches and explain their significance in relation to growth in proximity to overhead lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Horse Chestnut - Douglas Fir - Sycamore - Larch - Willow - Birch - Poplar - Cedar <p>Significance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weight of branches from growth, wind, snow etc. can cause them to snap easily. They can also break off early when cutting, especially if too large a piece is pruned.
5.	Identify and comment on potential hazards and defects, and their significance in relation to overhead conductors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fungal fruiting bodies - Cankers - Dead wood - Included bark - Very thin crown, - Peeling and dead bark - Tight or weak forks - Decay cavities - basal and crown - Old pollards/topped and lopped trees - Damaged roots and/or ground heave - Cracks in branches - Grey Squirrel damage
6.	Demonstrate knowledge of the signs of ill-health in trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaf discoloration - Crown die back - Peeling and dead bark - Very thin crown - Fungal fruiting bodies
7.	Identify and comment on trees with dangerous overhang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long or heavy lateral branches likely to give way over conductors - Any defective branch that is overhanging conductors e.g. dead, cracked, split etc. - Weakened branches from cavities, fungi, included bark, acute forks etc. - Hanging or blown-off branches - Partly uprooted wind-blown trees
8.	Demonstrate knowledge of why "topping" (or "lopping") trees is considered bad practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rapid sprout growth occurs, back into the lines - It leaves the tree unsightly - Unstable branch unions result - Rot can set into stem causing tree to become a hazard