



City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Arboricultural Ground Worker (0039-24)

Version 1.4 (March 2025)

Qualification Handbook

Qualification at a glance

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Subject area | Chainsaw and Related Operations |
| City & Guilds number | 0039-24 |
| Age group | 16+ |
| Entry requirements | Candidates must meet minimum age requirements Centres must ensure that any pre-requisites stated in the Who is this qualification for? section are met. |
| Assessment | To gain this qualification, candidates must successfully achieve the following assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one to one practical assessment with oral questioning by an NPTC City & Guilds approved assessor. |
| Grading | Met/not met |
| Approvals | Full centre approval Qualification approval |
| Support materials | Qualification Handbook (candidates) Assessment materials (approved assessment centres only). |
| Registration and certification | Consult the Walled Garden/Online Catalogue for last registration and certification dates. |

| Title and level | City & Guilds qualification number | Regulatory reference number | GLH | TQT |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----|-----|
| City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Arboricultural Ground Worker | 0039-24 | 603/7643/0 | 16 | 18 |

| Version and date | Change detail | Section |
|------------------|--|---|
| 1.0 | First version | |
| 1.1 August 2022 | Formatting changes Updated logo Updated 'Sources of general information' | Throughout Front cover Appendix 1 |
| 1.2 August 2024 | Update of Quality Assurance Statement Formatting changes | Centre Requirements |
| 1.3 October 2024 | Formatting changes | Throughout |
| 1.4 March 2025 | Updated Quality Assurance Updated Inclusion and Diversity Updated Sustainability | Throughout |

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1 Introduction

This document tells you what you need to do to deliver the **City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Arboricultural Ground Worker (0039-24)**.

| Area | Description |
|--|--|
| Who is the qualification for? | Individuals who climb trees as part of their work in arboriculture, forestry or other industries. It will provide the individual with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to climb trees and perform aerial rescue safely and to industry standards in line with current legislation. |
| What does the qualification cover? | It covers risk assessment, emergency planning, legislation, industry best practice, environmental considerations, tree condition and working at height assessments, equipment and systems, tree climbing, aerial rescue by climbing suitability, rescue plan and implementation. |
| What opportunities for progression are there? | This qualification will support progression into employment where tree climbing and rescue is part of the role. Safe operational skills are key to efficient use, good working practice and preventing accidents, leading to business benefits in terms of less machinery damage and down time. |
| Who did we develop the qualification with? | Developed with City & Guilds NPTC Stakeholders, associates and industry representatives. |
| Is it part of an apprenticeship framework or initiative? | No |

2 Qualification structure

To achieve the **City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Arboricultural Ground Worker (0039-24)** learners must achieve:

| City & Guilds unit number | Unit title | GLH |
|---------------------------|------------|-----|
|---------------------------|------------|-----|

Mandatory units:

Learners must achieve or must have achieved this mandatory unit.

| | | |
|-----|------------------------------|----|
| 205 | Arboricultural ground worker | 16 |
|-----|------------------------------|----|

Total Qualification Time

Total Qualification Time (TQT) is the number of notional hours which represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of a qualification.

TQT consists of the following two elements:

- the number of hours which an awarding organisation has assigned to a qualification for Guided Learning, and
- an estimate of the number of hours a Learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by - but, unlike Guided Learning, not under the Immediate Guidance or Supervision of - a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other, appropriate provider of education or training.

| Title and level | GLH | TQT |
|---|-----|-----|
| City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Arboricultural Ground Worker | 16 | 18 |

3 Centre requirements

Approval

Full approval

To offer this qualification, new centres will need to gain both centre and qualification approval. Please refer to the document **Centre Approval process: Quality Standards** for further information. Please email qasupport@cityandguilds.com for further information on the approval process.

Centre staffing

Staff delivering these qualifications must be able to demonstrate that they meet the following requirements:

- be technically competent in the areas in which they are delivering
- be able to deliver across the breadth and depth of the content of the qualification being taught
- have recent relevant teaching and assessment experience in the specific area they will be teaching, or be working towards this
- demonstrate continuing CPD.

Centre staff should familiarise themselves with the structure, content and assessment requirements of the qualification before delivering a course programme.

Physical resources

Centres must be able to demonstrate that they have access to the equipment and technical resources required to deliver this qualification and its assessments.

Assessment Guidance for the Assessor

Staff assessing these qualifications must be approved Certificate of Competence City & Guilds NPTC Assessors and must be independent and cannot have been involved with the training of the Candidate. This qualification can only be assessed by an Assessor who is suitably qualified and meets the requirements of the awarding body.

Certificate of Competence City & Guilds NPTC Assessors must meet the following requirements:

- show competence and provide evidence of industry expertise in the qualification/s they wish to assess
- hold the qualification as a candidate and have been technically evaluated as an Assessor
- be up to date with their verification and relevant first aid

- demonstrate continuing technically relevant CPD Compliance with these requirements is a pre-requisite for Assessors remaining on the list of approved Assessors.

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 City & Guilds 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 and 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 a City & Guilds approved Quality Consultant.

Safe Practice

Appropriate PPE must be worn at all times All equipment must be operated in such a way that the Candidate, Assessor, other persons, animals or other equipment are not endangered.

If these conditions are not observed this will result in the Candidate not meeting the required standard.

Validation of Equipment

Any item(s) equipment used for the assessment must comply with current legal requirements.

Additional information may be sought from the relevant manufacturer's instruction book, operators' manual, product label/database or any other Government/Government Agency publication.

Appeals and Equal opportunities

Centres must have their own auditable, appeals procedures. If a Candidate is not satisfied with the examination conditions or a Candidate feels the opportunity for examination is being denied, the Centre Manager should, in the first instance, address the problem. If, however the problem cannot be resolved, City & Guilds will arbitrate and a Principal Verifier may be approached to offer independent advice.

All appeals must be clearly documented by the Centre Manager and made available to the Principal Verifier or City & Guilds if advice is required.

Should occasions arise when Centres are not satisfied with any aspect of the verification process, they should contact the Quality Assurance Manager at City & Guilds NPTC, 5-6 Giltspur Street, London, EC1A 9DE, UK Access to the qualification is open to all, irrespective of gender, race, creed or special needs. Subject to Health and Safety restrictions the Centre Manager should ensure that no learner is subjected to unfair discrimination on any grounds in relation to access to assessment and to the fairness of the assessment. QCA requires City & Guilds to monitor centres to check whether equal opportunities policies are being adhered to.

Quality assurance

Approved centres must have effective quality assurance systems to ensure optimum delivery and assessment of qualifications. Quality assurance includes initial centre approval, qualification approval and the centre's own internal procedures for monitoring quality. Centres

are responsible for internal quality assurance and City & Guilds is responsible for external quality assurance. All external quality assurance processes reflect the minimum requirements for verified and moderated assessments, as detailed in the Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS), section H2 of Ofqual's General Conditions. For more information on both CASS and City & Guilds Quality Assurance processes visit: the **What is CASS?** and **Quality Assurance Standards** documents on the City & Guilds website.

Standards and rigorous quality assurance are maintained by the use of:

- Internal quality assurance
- City & Guilds external quality assurance.

In order to carry out the quality assurance role, Internal Quality Assurers must

- have appropriate teaching and vocational knowledge and expertise
- have experience in quality management/internal quality assurance
- hold or be working towards an appropriate teaching/training/assessing qualification
- be familiar with the occupation and technical content covered within the qualification.

External quality assurance for the qualification will be provided by City & Guilds EQA process. EQAs are appointed by City & Guilds to approve centres, and to monitor the assessment and internal quality assurance carried out by centres. External quality assurance is carried out to ensure that assessment is valid and reliable, and that there is good assessment practice in centres.

The role of the EQA is to:

- provide advice and support to centre staff
- ensure the quality and consistency of assessments and marking/grading within and between centres by the use of systematic sampling
- provide feedback to centres and to City & Guilds.

Learner entry requirements

Candidate must meet minimum age requirements

Age restrictions

This qualification is approved for learners aged 16 or above.

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

Access arrangements are adjustments that allow candidates with disabilities, special educational needs, and temporary injuries to access the assessment and demonstrate their skills and knowledge without changing the demands of the assessment. These arrangements must be made before assessment takes place.

The Equality Act 2010 requires City & Guilds to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure at the start of a programme of learning that candidates will be able to access the requirements of the qualification.

Please refer to the JCQ access arrangements and reasonable adjustments and Access arrangements - when and how applications need to be made to City & Guilds for more information. Both are available on the City & Guilds website: **Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments**.

4 Delivering the qualification

Initial assessment and induction

An initial assessment of each learner should be made before the start of their programme to identify:

- if the learner has any specific training needs
- support and guidance they may need when working towards their qualification.
- any units they have already completed or credit they have accumulated which is relevant to the qualification
- the appropriate type and level of qualification.

We recommend that centres provide an induction programme so the learner fully understands the requirements of the qualification, their responsibilities as a learner and the responsibilities of the centre. This information can be recorded on a learning contract.

Inclusion and diversity

City & Guilds is committed to improving inclusion and diversity within the way we work and how we deliver our purpose which is to help people and organisations develop the skills they need for growth.

More information and guidance to support centres in supporting inclusion and diversity through the delivery of City & Guilds qualifications can be found here:

Inclusion and diversity | City & Guilds ([cityandguilds.com](https://www.cityandguilds.com))

Sustainability

City & Guilds are committed to net zero. Our ambition is to reduce our carbon emissions by at least 50% before 2030 and develop environmentally responsible operations to achieve net zero by 2040 or sooner if we can. City & Guilds is committed to supporting qualifications that support our customers to consider sustainability and their environmental footprint.

More information and guidance to support centres in developing sustainable practices through the delivery of City & Guilds qualifications can be found here:

Our Pathway to Net Zero | City & Guilds ([cityandguilds.com](https://www.cityandguilds.com))

Centres should consider their own carbon footprint when delivering this qualification and consider reasonable and practical ways of delivering this qualification with sustainability in mind. This could include:

- reviewing purchasing and procurement processes (such as buying in bulk to reduce the amount of travel time and energy, considering and investing in the use of components that can be reused, instead of the use of disposable or single use consumables)
- reusing components wherever possible
- waste procedures (ensuring that waste is minimised, recycling of components is in place wherever possible)
- minimising water use and considering options for reuse/salvage as part of plumbing activities wherever possible.

Support materials

The following resources are available for this qualification:

| Description | How to access |
|---|--|
| Candidate Handbook | www.nptc.org.uk |
| Assessment Pack (available only to assessors) | www.nptc.org.uk |

5 Assessment

Assessment of the qualification

| Assessment types | | | |
|------------------|------------------------------|--|--|
| Unit | Title | Assessment method | Where to obtain assessment materials |
| 205 | Arboricultural Ground Worker | Oral Examination and Practical observation Centres may use the materials provided by City & Guilds. | www.nptc.org.uk |

Assessment strategy

City & Guilds has written the practical observations with oral questioning to use with this qualification, live assessment materials can be downloaded by the assessor via the Assessment Pack from the NPTC website.

Time constraints

The following must be applied to the assessment of this qualification:

- Candidates must finish their assessment within 24 months of date of initial registration
- Assessments should take no longer than 1.5 – 3 hours
- Qualification registration is valid for two years.

6 Units

Structure of the units

These units each have the following:

- City & Guilds reference number
- title
- level
- guided learning hours (GLH)
- unit aim
- assessment type
- learning outcomes, which consist of several assessment criteria

Guidance for delivery of the units

This qualification consists of one **unit**. A unit describes what is expected of a competent person in particular aspects of their job.

Each **unit** is divided into **learning outcomes** which describe in further detail the skills and knowledge that a candidate should possess.

Each **learning outcome** has a set of **assessment criteria** (performance and knowledge and understanding) which specify the desired criteria that must be satisfied before an individual can be said to have performed to the agreed standard.

Unit 205

Arboricultural ground worker

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Level: | 2 |
| GLH: | 16 |
| Assessment type: | Practical activities with oral assessment. |
| Aim: | The aim of this unit is to provide the learner with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to carry out arboricultural ground worker tasks, eg preparing equipment, setting equipment and supporting aerial workers on site. |

Learning outcome

The learner will be able to:

LO1 Carry out arboricultural ground worker tasks **(Criteria 1.1-1.5)**

Assessment criteria

AC1.1 Hazards, risks, controls, emergency planning

AC1.2 Legislation, industry good practice, roles and responsibilities

AC1.3 Site zoning

AC1.4 Supporting colleagues

AC1.5 Ground worker tasks

Topic 1.1

The risk assessment process may contain the following five steps:

- identify the hazards
- decide who might be harmed and how
- evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- record the findings and implement them
- review and update the assessment as necessary

Hazards, risks and controls relevant to the site task and machine.

Emergency planning relevant to a work site:

- site location
- grid reference
- what three words
- designated meeting place
- nearest access point
- street name/district
- type of access (public road/light vehicles, four-wheel drive)
- suitable helicopter landing area
- phone number of nearest doctors

- location of nearest accident and emergency hospital and phone number
- works manager's contact details
- your own contact number/mobile number.

Topic 1.2

Key points from the legislation and industry good practice.

Health and Safety at Work Act (HASWA):

- follow training received
- take reasonable care of their own and other people's safety.

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER):

- equipment is maintained
- equipment is fit for purpose.

Providers of industry good practice:

- Forest Industry Safety Accord (FISA)
- regional forestry bodies
- Arboricultural Forestry Advisory Group (AFAG)
- Arboricultural Association (AA).

On site arboricultural groundworkers roles and responsibilities:

- site set-up
- dealing with third parties
- fuelling equipment
- maintaining site safety
- providing support to aerial operators
- managing climbing/rigging lines
- clearing arisings
- site breakdown.

Topic 1.3

Work site layout factors:

- work zone: an area where hazards may be encountered
- drop zone: an area where it is anticipated materials may fall
- exclusion zone: the overall operational area.

Topic 1.4

How to enter the drop zone safely:

- hazard evaluation of drop zone
- wearing correct personal protective equipment (ppe)
- clear communication established with the climber
- only enter the drop zone when provided with an all clear
- communication maintained throughout.

Reasons why aerial support may be required:

- maintain a safe work environment

- provide necessary tools and equipment as required
- allow for effective use of time and resources
- conform to good practice.

The importance of informing the aerial operator promptly of changes:

- to help prevent injury
- to help prevent damage to persons or property
- may affect the sequence of work.

Topic 1.5

Preparation of equipment for use:

- fuelling
- pre-use inspection
- inspection of lanyard attachment

Considerations for correct set-up of ladders:

- must be rated for industrial or heavy-duty use
- inspected before use
- safe appropriate angle
- safe footing
- correct overlap
- use of stabilisation devices if applicable
- removed safely to prevent damage

Safely passing equipment to the aerial operator:

- only enter the drop zone when given all clear by the aerial operator
- appropriate knot/hitch tied into aerial operator's line
- separate hauling line.

Safely retrieving equipment from the aerial operator:

- aerial operator sends a loop of rope from the climbing hitch system down to the ground
- lowered on tail end of climbing line/hauling line.

Equipment is passed to the aerial operator:

- ensure drop zone is safe to enter
- equipment is appropriately attached to the climbing/ hauling line
- the ground person communicates to the aerial operator that the equipment is ready to ascend the tree
- ground person leaves the drop zone

Retrieving equipment:

- ensure drop zone is safe to enter
- equipment is unattached from the climbing/ hauling line
- the ground person communicates to the aerial operator that the equipment has been removed
- ground person leaves the drop zone

Set-up of ground based lowering device:

- appropriate use of ppe

- clear ground around tree
- clear stem of tree
- inspection of stem for rot/decay
- correct placement of slings/strops
- correct attachment of lowering device
- correct configuration of rigging line
- safe position of ground person to facilitate lowering.

Use of equipment for lowering:

- appropriate lowering device set up
- operated under the direction of the climber
- branch material is cut and lowered to the ground using friction to control the speed of descent
- awareness of any obstacles or obstructions
- confirm with climber the drop zone is safe to enter
- enter drop zone
- remove rigging line
- haul line back up to climber
- re-set rigging line at lowering device
- clear arisings.

The importance of removing arisings from the drop zone:

- prevent entanglement of ropes
- prevent entanglement of arisings
- reduce slip and trip hazards
- allows for clear workspace to be maintained
- provides efficiency to the task.

Entering the drop zone:

- hazard evaluation of drop zone
- correct PPE worn
- clear communication established with the climber
- only enters the drop zone when provided with an all clear
- communication maintained throughout.

Disposal of waste from workplace activities:

- use of designated waste/recycle bins
- empty containers removed from site
- litter taken home with operators.

A clean and tidy working area as per site specification.

All waste produced from maintenance activities is disposed of in line with legislation, good practice and/or site requirements.

All tools, equipment and personal protective equipment is used in line with industry good practice.

It is ensured that any possible environmental damage is always minimised.

All activities must be completed in a way which protects the operator and those around them.

Supporting information

Evidence requirements

One to one practical assessment with oral questioning by an NPTC City & Guilds approved assessor.

Unit guidance

Candidates must successfully achieve all assessment activities in their chosen unit(s).

Safe Practice

Assessors must hold a current 'First Aid at Work' Certificate.

It is strongly recommended that Candidates hold at least a recent, recognised 'Emergency First Aid' Training Certificate.

Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be worn at all times.

A First Aid kit meeting current regulations, of the appropriate size for the number of persons on site, must be available.

The Assessor must ensure a Risk Assessment is carried out, and sufficient control measures implemented.

All equipment being used for this assessment must comply with relevant requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998 and Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998.

Information may be sought from the relevant operator manuals or any other appropriate training or safety publication.

Provision must be made to avoid the risk of environmental pollution and adequate control measures must be implemented (a suitable response kit to be available on the machine).

It is the responsibility of the Assessor and the Candidate to ensure that any additional requirements and provisions are met as relevant to this qualification.

Candidates must comply with current regulations when working at heights regulations 2005 amended

A breach of Health and Safety that puts any person at risk during the assessment process will result in the assessment being terminated and the Candidate not meeting the required standard.

Candidates who undertake this assessment and have met the requirements are reminded of their legal obligation to receive/undertake appropriate additional training in the use of any equipment that differs from that used during the assessment, but which they are nevertheless qualified to use.

Suggested learning resources

Manufacturers' handbooks, manuals.
Safety bulletins.

Appendix 1 Sources of general information

The following documents contain essential information for centres delivering City & Guilds qualifications. They should be referred to in conjunction with this handbook. To download the documents and to find other useful documents, go to the **Centre Document Library** on www.cityandguilds.com or click on the links below:

Quality Assurance Standards: Centre Handbook

This document is for all approved centres and provides guidance to support their delivery of our qualifications. It includes information on

- Centre quality assurance criteria and monitoring activities
- Administration and assessment systems
- Centre-facing support teams at City & Guilds / ILM
- Centre quality assurance roles and responsibilities.

The Centre Handbook should be used to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the Centre Contract.

Quality Assurance Standards: Centre Assessment

This document sets out the minimum common quality assurance requirements for our regulated and non-regulated qualifications that feature centre assessed components. Specific guidance will also be included in relevant qualification handbooks and/or assessment documentation.

It incorporates our expectations for centre internal quality assurance and the external quality assurance methods we use to ensure that assessment standards are met and upheld. It also details the range of sanctions that may be put in place when centres do not comply with our requirements, or actions that will be taken to align centre marking/assessment to required standards. Additionally, it provides detailed guidance on the secure and valid administration of centre-assessments.

Access arrangements - When and how applications need to be made to City & Guilds

provides full details of the arrangements that may be made to facilitate access to assessments and qualifications for candidates who are eligible for adjustments in assessment.

The **Centre Document Library** also contains useful information on such things as:

- Conducting examinations
- Registering learners
- Appeals and malpractice

Useful contacts

Please visit the Contact Us section of the City & Guilds website, **Contact us**.

About City & Guilds

As the UK's leading vocational education organisation, City & Guilds is leading the talent revolution by inspiring people to unlock their potential and develop their skills. We offer over 500 qualifications across 28 industries through 8500 centres worldwide and award around two million certificates every year. City & Guilds is recognised and respected by employers across the world as a sign of quality and exceptional training.

City & Guilds Group

The City & Guilds Group is a leader in global skills development. Our purpose is to help people, organisations and economies develop their skills for growth. We work with education providers, employers and governments in over 100 countries across the world to help people, businesses and economies grow by shaping skills systems and supporting skills development.

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cityandguilds.com