



# City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Using a Chainsaw from a Rope and Harness (0039-23)

September 2025 Version 1.5

**Assessment Pack – Centre and Candidate Version**

<b>Version and date</b>	<b>Change detail</b>	<b>Section</b>
1.0	First version	
1.1 August 2021	Assessor instructions updated	Introduction
1.2 October 2021	AO name added to qualification title	Throughout
1.3 August 2022	Formatting changes Updated logo Updated 'Sources of general information'	Throughout Front cover Appendix 2
1.4 March 2025	Formatting changes	Throughout
1.5 September 2025	ROA paragraph updated, reference to ARAS form removed.	Introduction

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# Introduction

This assessment relates to the unit in the Qualification handbook. The assessment can be achieved at pass only. If any task is not yet met the candidate is unsuccessful.

This assessment is for unit 204 Using a chainsaw from a rope and harness covering the following learning outcomes:

1. Use a chainsaw from a rope and harness

General guidance on the requirements for assessment can be found in the Assessor Guidance document available on the City & Guilds web site [www.nptc.org.uk](http://www.nptc.org.uk)

The assessor must complete the Practical Table mark sheet for each candidate which should be kept by the assessor for a minimum period of twelve months.

## **Record of assessment (ROA)**

A prepopulated record of assessment must be completed by the assessor following an assessment and returned to the centre within two working days.

## **Assessment Time**

The expected assessment time for this qualification is 1 – 2 hours.

## **Site/workshop requirements:**

Trees with branches of 100mm diameter

## **Equipment/Machinery:**

LOLER compliant climbing equipment with documented evidence, for the Candidate and the Assessor

Top handled or rear handled Chainsaw (maximum guide bar 15 inch) with maintenance tools

Pulling line and or tape sling

First aid kit

## **Consumables:**

Fuel and chainsaw oil

This is not an open book assessment, however additional technical information may be sought from the relevant manufacturer's operator manuals or any other appropriate training or safety publication.

## Practical observation descriptor table

### 204 Using a chainsaw from a rope and harness

Activity number and description from check list		Assessment criteria
1.	Identify the hazards, risks and controls associated with the site, task and machine	Identify hazards, risks and controls relevant to the site task and machine
2.	Explain the emergency procedures relevant to the site	Emergency procedures relevant to the work site
3.	State industry guides relevant to using a chainsaw from a rope and harness	Industry guides relevant to using a chainsaw from a rope and harness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AA Technical guide 1 Tree climbing and aerial rescue</li> <li>• AA Technical guide 2 Use of tools in a tree</li> <li>• Recommendations for tree work BS3998</li> </ul>
4.	Describe site zoning in relation to on site preparation	Worksite layout factors to consider may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work zone: an area where hazards may be encountered</li> <li>• drop zone: an area where it is anticipated materials may fall</li> <li>• exclusion zone: the overall operational area</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>
5.	Explain how to evaluate the tree for hazards and the implications of the hazards when identified	Tree evaluation may be carried out via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visual observation</li> <li>• hazard evaluation report</li> <li>• other</li> </ul> Implications of the hazards when identified may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical injury</li> <li>• damage to equipment</li> <li>• damage to retained part of the tree</li> <li>• disruption to wildlife</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>
6.	Perform a tree condition assessment of the tree and work at height assessment prior to commencing the work	Potential hazards that may be encountered may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence of cavities, decay or decay fungi</li> <li>• deadwood and broken branches</li> <li>• dead or flaking bark</li> <li>• v shaped unions</li> <li>• cracks</li> <li>• nesting insects</li> <li>• the presence of power lines or telephone wires</li> <li>• targets and obstacles underneath the tree</li> <li>• can the work be carried out from ground level</li> <li>• the use of a Mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) to prevent a fall</li> <li>• The use of suitable equipment minimises the distance and consequence of a fall</li> </ul>

7.	Explain how the species, condition of trees and time of year affect the work	<p>Species, condition of tree and time of year may affect the work owing to:</p> <p>Species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brittle timber – loss of control</li> <li>• responses to pruning</li> <li>• other</li> </ul> <p>Condition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dead – loss of control, safety compromised</li> <li>• diseased – biosecurity measures</li> <li>• other</li> </ul> <p>Time of year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some species bleed heavily if pruned at certain times of year</li> <li>• promotion of subsequent disease or infection</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>
8.	Use and maintain tools, equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE)	<p>Candidate to select compliant PPE and safety clothing for tree climbing and chainsaw use to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tree climbing helmet</li> <li>• personal first aid kit</li> <li>• knife with retractable blade or handsaw</li> <li>• chainsaw safety footwear with good grip and ankle support</li> <li>• non- snag clothing</li> <li>• eye protection</li> <li>• hearing protection</li> <li>• chainsaw protective clothing</li> <li>• appropriate chainsaw with lanyard.</li> </ul> <p>Hand tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate size</li> <li>• suitable for the task</li> <li>• guarded as appropriate</li> <li>• maintained</li> </ul> <p>Candidate to select appropriate compliant climbing equipment for tree climbing</p>
9.	Inspect all access/tree climbing equipment to ensure it is safe and fit for use under manufacturer's instructions and relevant legislation	Candidate to inspect all equipment to be used and comment on the condition/checks made.
10.	Explain the basic principles of target pruning	<p>Basic principles of target pruning are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simulate the trees natural ability to shed branches</li> <li>• leaves the branch bark ridge and collar intact</li> <li>• allow complete doughnut of callus wood to be able to form</li> <li>• allow protection boundary to develop inside collar</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>

11.	Explain different cuts and when they may be used	<p>Cuts that maybe used and their application:</p> <p>Sink cut:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>directional sink with back cut retaining hinge which aides direction used on free fall and hand held sections</li> </ul> <p>Step cut:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>two over lapping cuts used on free fall and hand held sections</li> </ul> <p>Inboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>finishing cut towards main stem, reducing risk of saw being taken</li> </ul> <p>Out board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>finishing cut away from main stem, timber falls flat and reduces the risk of tearing</li> </ul> <p>V cut:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>two joining directional sinks with back cut, used on smaller diameter stems under tension</li> </ul> <p>Holding cut:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sink cut with retained hinge and hold at the rear, used on larger diameter stems under tension</li> </ul>
12.	Describe the use of associated equipment to aid removal of sections	<p>The use of equipment to aid with the removal of tree sections may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tape sling used on end of limb to act as lever/hand hold for step cut hand held sections</li> <li>pull line used to help the removal of cut sections</li> <li>handsaw light weight cutting aid</li> <li>other</li> </ul>
13.	State the potential effects of tree section removal on the retained parts of the tree	<p>Tree section removal may have the effect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>allowing cavities to form</li> <li>allowing pathogen infection into wounds</li> <li>removing of trees protection boundaries</li> <li>allowing potential development of rot</li> <li>reduction of potential energy reserves</li> <li>increased potential for insect infestation, development of cracks and dead spots</li> <li>development of excessive sprouting</li> <li>promotion of re-growth</li> <li>promotion of habitat</li> <li>stability of retained structure</li> </ul>

14.	Explain the importance of accurate and appropriate cuts	<p>Importance of accurate cuts may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• direction</li> <li>• control</li> <li>• efficiency</li> <li>• damage the cutting systems</li> <li>• splitting</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>
15.	Explain the procedure for removing a trapped saw	<p>The procedure for releasing a trapped saw when working in the crown should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• switch of the engine or apply chain brake</li> <li>• release the saw from the climbing harness where the risk exists of the saw being taken with the cut section</li> <li>• attach the saw to the tree inboard of the cut or to a separate branch or tool line</li> <li>• pull the saw from the kerf, lifting the branch as necessary</li> <li>• if necessary, use a second saw to release the trapped saw, cutting a minimum of 300mm (12") away from the trapped saw</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>
16.	Describe when it is acceptable to use a chainsaw one handed	<p>It may be necessary to use a top handled chainsaw in the tree one-handed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when working at the extremity of limbs and cutting is required while the other hand is needed to maintain the work position</li> <li>• when two-handed operation cannot be carried out safely</li> <li>• when a chainsaw is used with one hand it must be out of alignment with the operator and all climbing equipment</li> </ul>
17.	Explain how to select appropriate anchor points/position of access equipment so the anchor point will not be compromised by the work being carried out	<p>Selection of appropriate anchor points may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• size</li> <li>• strength</li> <li>• position</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>

<p>18.</p>	<p>Use access and positioning methods appropriate to the tree</p>	<p>All anchor points selected taking into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• size, strength and structure</li> <li>• position in relation to the parts of the tree to be accessed</li> <li>• use of equipment to minimise damage to the tree if appropriate</li> </ul> <p>Candidate establishes their initial anchor points taking into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• suitability of the techniques used</li> <li>• accurate installation of equipment</li> <li>• organisation of ropes</li> <li>• safety and position of the anchor points</li> <li>• testing of the anchor points by thorough loading prior to ascent</li> </ul> <p>Technique used takes into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• efficient use of technique chosen</li> <li>• candidate is attached to the tree at all times in accordance with industry good practice</li> <li>• appropriate selection of anchor points</li> <li>• appropriate route taken up the tree</li> <li>• correct use of systems when changing anchor points</li> <li>• thorough load testing of new anchor points</li> <li>• risk of a fall is managed at all times</li> <li>• correct use of equipment</li> </ul>
<p>19.</p>	<p>Identify desired drop zone</p>	<p>Candidate to identify a clear drop zone to be used during the removal of timber using free-fall techniques</p>

20.	Demonstrate appropriate cuts	<p>Climber achieves position to receive the chainsaw. Work position for cutting attained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• chain brake applied or saw switched off whilst position attained</li> <li>• appropriate working position attained with the climber in a balanced and stable position to use the saw</li> <li>• the use of load bearing supplementary anchor points as appropriate</li> </ul> <p>Step cut and sink cut sections should be removed, both free fall and hand held, taking The following points into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• characteristics and properties of the wood allowed for</li> <li>• manageable sections selected</li> <li>• saw released from strop if applicable and attached to a supplementary anchor point</li> <li>• climber holding the saw using both the front and top/rear handles of the saw</li> <li>• side or reducing cuts used where appropriate</li> <li>• appropriate hinge left on sink cut sections</li> <li>• position of cuts on step cut sections and a complete overlap of cuts achieved</li> <li>• chain brake applied or saw switched off whilst breaking and casting sections</li> <li>• climber maintains awareness of activity below</li> <li>• hand held sections are cast into a predetermined area</li> <li>• the branch collar and/or branch bark ridge is identified when pruning</li> <li>• the pruning cut is left as smooth as possible</li> </ul>
21.	Use associated equipment to aid removal of sections into desired drop zone to protect infrastructure and targets	<p>Candidate to use associated equipment such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tape sling</li> <li>• pull/tag line</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>
22.	Dispose of waste in line with work specification	All waste produced from activities is disposed of in line with legislation, good practice and/or site requirements
23.	Communicate appropriately with ground staff	Communication between climber and ground staff maintained when appropriate
24.	Used appropriate tools, equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE)	All tools, equipment and personal protective equipment is used in line with industry good practice
25.	Carried out work to minimise environmental damage	It is ensured that any possible environmental damage is minimised at all times.
26.	Worked in a way which maintains health and safety and is consistent with relevant legislation and industry good practice	All activities must be completed in a way which protects the operator and those around them

## Appendix 1 Practical table

### 204 Using a chainsaw from a rope and harness

All criteria must be achieved.

Activity number and description	Achieved
1. Identify the hazards, risks and controls associated with the site, task and machine	
2. Explain the emergency procedures relevant to the site	
3. State industry guides relevant to using a chainsaw from a rope and harness	
4. Describe site zoning in relation to on site preparation	
5. Explain how to evaluate the tree for hazards and the implications of the hazards when identified	
6. Perform a tree condition assessment of the tree and work at height assessment prior to commencing the work	
7. Explain how the species, condition of trees and time of year affect the work	
8. Use and maintain tools, equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE)	
9. Inspect all access/tree climbing equipment to ensure it is safe and fit for use under manufacturer's instructions and relevant legislation	
10. Explain the basic principles of target pruning	
11. Explain different cuts and when they may be used	
12. Describe the use of associated equipment to aid removal of sections	
13. State the potential effects of tree section removal on the retained parts of the tree	
14. Explain the importance of accurate and appropriate cuts	
15. Explain the procedure for removing a trapped saw	
16. Describe when it is acceptable to use a chainsaw one handed	
17. Explain how to select appropriate anchor points/position of access equipment so the anchor point will not be compromised by the work being carried out	
18. Use access and positioning methods appropriate to the tree	
19. Identify desired drop zone	
20. Demonstrate appropriate cuts	
21. Use associated equipment to aid removal of sections into desired drop zone to protect infrastructure and targets	
22. Dispose of waste in line with work specification	
23. Communicate appropriately with ground staff	
24. Used appropriate tools, equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE)	
25. Carried out work to minimise environmental damage	
26. Worked in a way which maintains health and safety and is consistent with relevant legislation and industry good practice	

## Appendix 2 Sources of general information

The following documents contain essential information for centres delivering City & Guilds qualifications. To download the documents and to find other useful documents, go to the *Centre Document Library* on [www.cityandguilds.com](http://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*

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City & Guilds  
Giltspur House  
5-6 Giltspur Street  
London  
EC1A 9DE

**cityandguilds.com**