



City & Guilds Level 3 Certificate of Competence in Aerial Tree Pruning (0039-31)

September 2022 Version 1.2

Qualification Handbook

Qualification at a glance

Industry area	Forestry and Arboriculture
City & Guilds number	0039-31
Age group	16-19, 19+
Entry requirements	<p>Candidates must have achieved 0039-20 Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross-Cutting, 0039-21 Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Felling Small Trees up to 380mm, 0039-22 Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Tree Climbing and Aerial Rescue and 0039-23 Level 2 Certificate of Competence in Using a Chainsaw from a Rope and Harness (or equivalent versions).</p> <p>Centres must ensure that any pre-requisites stated in the <i>What is this qualification about?</i> section are met.</p>
Assessment	<p>To gain this qualification, candidates must successfully achieve the following assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One to one practical assessment with oral questioning by an NPTC City & Guilds approved assessor
Grading	Pass only
Approvals	<p>Full centre approval</p> <p>Qualification approval</p>
Support materials	Assessment Pack – Centre Version
Registration and certification	Registration and certification of this qualification is through the Walled Garden and is subject to end dates.

Title and level	Size (GLH)	TQT	City & Guilds qualification number	Ofqual number
City & Guilds Level 3 Certificate of Competence in Aerial Tree Pruning	16	20	0039-31	603/7358/1

Version and date	Change detail	Section
1.0	First version	
1.1 October 2021	AO name added to qualification title	Throughout
1.2 September 2022	<p>Formatting changes</p> <p>Updated logo</p> <p>Updated 'Sources of general information'</p>	<p>Throughout</p> <p>Front cover</p> <p>Appendix 1</p>

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1 Introduction

Purpose of Qualification

The following purpose is for the **City & Guilds Level 3 Certificate of Competence in Aerial Tree Pruning (603/7355/6)**

Area	Description
OVERVIEW	
Who is this qualification for?	Individuals who use chainsaws as part of their work in arboriculture, forestry or other industries. It will provide the individual with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to carry out aerial tree pruning safely and to industry standards in line with current legislation.
What does this qualification cover?	It covers risk assessment, emergency planning, legislation, industry best practice, tree condition and working at height assessment, pruning techniques, tools and aerial pruning.
WHAT COULD THIS QUALIFICATION LEAD TO?	
Will the qualification lead to employment, and if so, in which job role and at what level?	This qualification will support progression into employment where using aerial pruning 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.
Why choose this qualification over similar qualifications?	This is a specialist qualification demonstrating the individual is able to use aerial pruning to a recognised level of competency.
Will the qualification lead to further learning?	Individuals who successfully complete this qualification could go on to increase their level of proficiency through consolidation practice within a working environment, or develop skills in safely operating chainsaws, e.g., Level 3 Certificate of Competence in Aerial Tree Rigging.
WHO SUPPORTS THIS QUALIFICATION?	
Employer/Higher Education Institutions	The Arboricultural Association
Further information	Please refer to the City & Guilds NPTC website for more information on the assessment.

Qualification structure

For the **City & Guilds Level 3 Certificate of Competence in Aerial Tree Pruning** learners must be trained and assessed in a minimum of one of the units listed below. The qualification will be endorsed to the context of the unit assessed:

Unit number	Unit title	GLH
Learners must achieve		
302	Aerial tree pruning	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 is comprised of the following two elements:

- 1) The number of hours which an awarding organisation has assigned to a qualification for Guided Learning, and
- 2) 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 3 Certificate of Competence in Aerial Tree Pruning	16	20

2 Centre requirements

Approval

New centres will need to gain centre approval. Existing City & Guilds centres who do not currently offer this qualification must go through the Qualification Approval (QAP) process. For centres currently offering City & Guilds Level 3 Award in Aerial Tree Pruning (0021-07) or Level 3 Award in Aerial Tree Pruning (0021-13) there is a Fast Track method of approval. 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.

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.

Age restrictions

This qualification is approved for learners aged 16 – 19, 19+.

3 Administration

Approved centres must have effective quality assurance systems to ensure valid and reliable delivery and assessment of qualifications. Quality assurance includes initial centre registration by City & Guilds and the centre's own internal procedures for monitoring quality assurance procedures.

Consistent quality assurance requires City & Guilds and its associated centres to work together closely; our Quality Assurance Model encompasses both internal quality assurance (activities and processes undertaken within centres) and external quality assurance (activities and processes undertaken by City & Guilds).

External quality assurance

City & Guilds will undertake external moderation activities to ensure that the quality assurance criteria for this qualification are being met. Centres must ensure that they co-operate with City & Guilds staff and representatives when undertaking these activities.

City & Guilds requires the Head of Centre to

- facilitate any inspection of the centre which is undertaken on behalf of City & Guilds
- make secure arrangements to receive, check and keep assessment material secure at all times, maintain the security of City & Guilds confidential material from receipt to the time when it is no longer confidential and keep completed assignment work and examination scripts secure from the time they are collected from the candidates to their dispatch to City & Guilds.

Malpractice

Please refer to the City & Guilds guidance notes *Managing cases of suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*. This document sets out the procedures to be followed in identifying and reporting malpractice by candidates and/or centre staff and the actions which City & Guilds may subsequently take. The document includes examples of candidate and centre malpractice and explains the responsibilities of centre staff to report actual or suspected malpractice. Centres can access this document on the City & Guilds website.

Examples of candidate malpractice are detailed below (please note that this is not an exhaustive list):

- falsification of assessment evidence or results documentation
- plagiarism of any nature
- collusion with others
- copying from another candidate (including the use of ICT to aid copying), or allowing work to be copied
- deliberate destruction of another's work
- false declaration of authenticity in relation to assessments
- impersonation.

These actions constitute malpractice, for which a penalty (eg disqualification from the assessment) will be applied.

Where suspected malpractice is identified by a centre after the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, the Head of Centre must submit full details of the case to City &

Guilds at the earliest opportunity. Please refer to the form in the document *Managing cases of suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*. Alternatively please complete the form, JCQ/M1. Copies of this form can be found on the JCQ website: <http://www.jcq.org.uk>

Access arrangements and special consideration

We have taken note of the provisions of equalities legislation in developing and administering this specification.

We can make arrangements so that candidates with disabilities, special educational needs and temporary injuries can access the assessment. These arrangements must be made before assessment takes place.

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:

<http://www.cityandguilds.com/delivering-our-qualifications/centre-development/centre-document-library/policies-and-procedures/access-arrangements-reasonable-adjustments>

Special consideration

We can give special consideration to candidates who have had a temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of the examination. Where we do this, it is given after the examination.

Applications for either access arrangements or special consideration should be submitted to City & Guilds by the Examinations Officer at the centre. For more information, please consult the current version of the JCQ document, *A guide to the special consideration process*.

Language of examinations

City & Guilds has a responsibility to ensure that candidates can be assessed in the following languages only:

- English
- English in Northern Ireland
- English in Wales.

Unit 302

Aerial tree pruning

Level:	3
GLH	16

What is this unit about?

The aim of this unit is to provide the learner with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to carry out aerial tree pruning.

Learning outcomes

In this unit, learners will be able to

1. Carry out aerial tree pruning

Scope of content

This section gives details of the scope of content to be covered in the teaching of the unit to ensure that all the learning outcomes can be achieved.

Learning outcome:

1. Carry out aerial tree pruning

Topics:

- 1.1 Hazards, risks, controls, emergency procedures and industry requirements
- 1.2 Tree condition and working at height assessment
- 1.3 Pruning techniques and tools
- 1.4 Aerial pruning

Topic 1.1

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

Emergency procedures relevant to the work site.

Industry guides relevant to aerial tree pruning:

- AA Technical Guide 1 Tree climbing and aerial rescue
- AA Technical Guide 2 Use of tools in a tree
- AA Technical Guide 5 Use of Mobile elevating work platforms in tree work
- Tree work recommendations BS3998

Potential environmental damage may include:

- Damage to retained trees
- Contamination of watercourses
- Wildlife disturbance

Appropriate responses may include:

- Containment and clearance of spills
- Good housekeeping, use of spill mats
- Work sequence chosen to minimise subsequent damage to retained trees
- Wildlife assessments completed prior to work
- Other

Work site layout factors to consider may include:

- 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
- Other

Topic 1.2

Potential hazards that may be encountered may include:

- Evidence of cavities, decay or decay fungi
- Deadwood and broken branches
- Dead or flaking bark
- V shaped unions
- Cracks
- Nesting insects
- The presence of power lines or telephone wires
- Targets and obstacles underneath the tree

Working at height assessment may include:

- Can the work be carried out from ground level
- The use of a Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP) to prevent a fall
- The use of suitable equipment minimises the distance and consequence of a fall

Species, condition of tree and time of year may affect the work owing to:

Species:

- Brittle timber – loss of control
- Responses to pruning
- Other

Condition:

- Dead – loss of control, safety compromised
- Diseased – biosecurity measures
- Other

Time of year:

- Some species bleed heavily if pruned at certain times of year
- Promotion of subsequent disease or infection
- Other

Topic 1.3

Basic principles of target pruning are to:

- Simulate the trees natural ability to shed branches
- Leaves the branch bark ridge and collar intact
- Allow complete doughnut of callus wood to form
- Allow protection boundary to develop inside collar
- Cuts carried out in accordance with industry standard and job Specification
- Other

Additional safeguards during re-pollarding of trees could include:

- Use of supplementary anchor points owing to the possibility of weak branch unions
- The use of alternative cutting techniques owing to potentially excessive tension and compression in timber i.e. V cut, holding cut
- Use of false anchor to facilitate movement
- Other

Importance of accurate and appropriate cuts when removing branch material may include:

- Control
- Preventing splitting
- Preventing tearing
- Job specification BS3998 are met
- Other

Pole set:

- Advantage - light work can be carried out from the ground
- Disadvantage - may be hard to maintain correct angle for correct target pruning

Hand saw:

- Advantage - accurate and neater cuts achieved
- Disadvantage - can be hard work in large branches

Secateurs:

- Advantage - make a cleaner neater cut
- Disadvantage - can get stuck into larger branches

Hand loppers:

- Advantage - can be designed with mechanical advantage for operator ease
- Disadvantage – two-handed operation

Chainsaw:

- Advantage - can be used on much larger diameter timber
- Disadvantage - inherent risk to operator

Topic 1.4

Inspect all equipment to be used and comment on the condition/checks made.

All anchor points selected taking into consideration:

- Size, strength and structure
- Position in relation to the parts of the tree to be accessed
- Use of equipment to minimise damage to the tree if appropriate

Establish initial anchor points taking into account:

- Suitability of the techniques used
- Accurate installation of equipment
- Organisation of ropes
- Safety and position of the anchor points
- Testing of the anchor points by thorough loading prior to ascent

Technique used takes into account:

- Efficient use of technique chosen
- Operator is attached to the tree at all times in accordance with industry good practice
- Appropriate selection of anchor points
- Appropriate route taken up the tree
- Correct use of systems when changing anchor points
- Thorough load testing of new anchor points
- Risk of a fall is managed at all times
- Correct use of equipment

If applicable access and climb tree to anchor points of suitable height and strength in accordance with AA guide TG1.

An appropriate MEWP if applicable is set up and used in accordance with AA Technical Guide TG 5.

Crown reduction pruning:

The tree is reduced to the agreed specification, taking into account:

- Sequence of operations
- Route within the tree crown
- Communication and control of ground staff
- Selection of branches for removal
- Selection of appropriate pruning tool for branch removal
- Removal of dead, dying and diseased material as appropriate
- Branches reduced to suitable growth points
- Height and/ or spread of the tree is reduced to leave a balanced crown
- Appropriate structure for future crown development
- The extent of the work is not to exceed the tolerance of the tree species
- Accuracy of cuts
- Position of final pruning cuts
- Avoidance of damage to the retained parts of the tree
- Avoidance of damage to surrounding features
- No cut branches left hanging in the tree
- Overall quality of reduction to pruning/job specification
- Crown density reduced within the tolerance of the tree species

Crown thinning:

The tree is thinned to the agreed specification, taking into account:

- Sequence of operations
- Route within the tree crown
- Communication and control of ground staff
- Selection of branches for removal
- Selection of appropriate pruning tool for branch removal
- Removal of dead, dying, diseased, crossing and rubbing material as appropriate
- Uniform removal of branches
- Crown density reduced within the tolerance of the tree species
- General overall size and shape of the tree retained
- Accuracy of cuts
- Position of final pruning cuts
- Avoidance of damage to the retained parts of the tree
- Avoidance of damage to surrounding features
- No cut branches left hanging in the tree

Drop zone used ensuring:

- No hanging branches left within tree
- Access equipment is not compromised/damaged
- Infrastructure is not damaged

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

Communication between climber and ground staff maintained when appropriate.

Pruning specifications executed as per industry good practice and job specification

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

It is ensured that any possible environmental damage is minimised at all times during chainsaw maintenance activities.

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

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*

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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.

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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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