



Winterbourne Centre for Horticulture

2019 RHS Qualifications

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What courses do you offer?

A: Winterbourne will offer the following courses from Autumn 2019, dates and times can be found on our website but all classes take place during the day.

- RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Plant Growth, Propagation and Development (Wednesdays)
- RHS Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Garden Planning, Establishment and Maintenance (Thursdays)
- RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture (Fridays or Saturdays)
- RHS Level 3 Certificate in Practical Horticulture (Saturdays)

Q: What is the right level of study for me?

A: Winterbourne does not currently offer Level 1 qualifications. Level 2 qualifications, which we do offer, are generally considered to be the right starting point for most people. Level 3 is for those with existing qualifications.

Q: What are the entry requirements?

A: Our Level 2 courses don't require you to hold specific qualifications, but you should be confident communicating in English and if you are taking a practical qualification you should be aware that it can be physically demanding. For all courses you should be able to demonstrate enthusiasm for horticulture. If you wish to join our Level 3 Practical you will usually need to hold a practical horticulture qualification at Level 2, or be able to demonstrate equivalent experience.

Q: How do I apply?

A: An Application Form can be found on the 2019 RHS Qualifications page of the Winterbourne website. This form should be completed in full and emailed to winterbourne.applications@contacts.bham.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity. Alternatively, you can submit your application in person at the Winterbourne shop, or send it in the post to Learning Officer, Winterbourne House and Garden, University of Birmingham, 58 Edgbaston Park Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2RT.

Q: What information do I need to include on my application form?

A: There are several elements to the application form:

- We need you to tell us which course or courses you want to apply for;

- Some details about yourself;
- Whether you have any disabilities or additional needs (decisions about your application are not based on this information, but it helps us to be aware of issues we may need to prepare for);
- Your existing qualifications (you do not need to list everything, but please include your highest qualifications and anything relevant to horticulture);
- Your work experience (we do not need an extensive work history, but your current or most recent employment as well as anything relevant to horticulture are especially useful);
- Write a personal statement that explains why you want to study horticulture and demonstrates your experience of and interest in the subject.

Q: How long will I wait for a decision?

A: If you apply in April 2019 you will not receive a decision until May 2019. Thereafter you can generally expect to hear from the Learning Officer within a week of your application.

Q: How do I secure my place?

A: If you are offered a place on a course you will be asked to pay a non-refundable deposit to confirm your participation. Deposits are £200 per theory course and £300 per practical course. In your offer email you will be given a deadline for paying your deposit – deadlines will vary in length depending on the course you apply for and when the offer is made. After this deadline you may still be able to join the course if spaces are still available.

Q: How much does it cost?

A: Tuition (T) and examination (E) fees are listed below. Examination fees are compulsory on our Practical courses.

- RHS Level 2 Certificate in Plant Growth, Propagation and Development (T £525, E £64)
- RHS Level 2 Certificate in Garden Planning, Establishment and Maintenance (T £525, E £64)
- RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture (T £770, E £112)
- RHS Level 3 Certificate in Practical Horticulture (T £1095, E £105)

Winterbourne provides tools and printed course materials but learners provide their own protective footwear and gloves, and suitable clothing. You may also choose to purchase reference books, though these are not compulsory.

Q: When do I pay my fees?

A: You will have paid part of your tuition fee by paying your deposit. The remainder of your tuition fee will be due in full at enrolment in early October. Unfortunately, we are not able to accommodate payment by instalments. Examination Fees for Practical courses must also be paid in full at the time of enrolment. Theory course examination fees are usually paid in two instalments in late autumn and early spring, but can also be paid at enrolment.

Q: How can I pay?

A: Payment is usually made online using a credit or debit card. If you cannot pay online, payment by cash or card can be arranged with the Learning Officer. Winterbourne cannot take payment by cheque. If your fees are being paid by your employer or other sponsor, payment by bank transfer can be arranged.

Q: If I change my mind can my deposit/tuition fee/examination fee be refunded?

A: Unfortunately not. We advise you to consider your ability to commit to and pay for your course carefully before making payment.

Q: I have a holiday booked during term, does this matter?

A: We understand that you might have a holiday booked or become ill, and that consequently you might occasionally miss a class, but you should attempt to attend every class. In the case of Practical qualifications, assessments take place during classes and missed Practical assessments will be re-scheduled wherever possible, but the taught element of any missed class will be lost.

Q: What are the term dates?

A: Dates vary by course, but all courses will start in the first week of October 2019. In general we avoid holding classes during Birmingham school holidays and over Bank Holiday weekends. Planned dates are available in the information sheet for each course, but please note that advertised dates are subject to change should a class need to be cancelled or postponed.

Q: I've started a course elsewhere; can I transfer to Winterbourne?

A: If you have started a course elsewhere you may be able to join our course, but you would be expected to pay for and attend all classes. If you wish to discuss your situation in more detail, contact the Learning Officer by email (g.f.fray@bham.ac.uk), but please note that you will not receive a response in April.

Q: I'm taking a theory course elsewhere, can I just take exams at Winterbourne?

A: Due to space limitations, Winterbourne does not usually make exams available for external candidates.

Q: Can I speak to the tutor about the course?

A: Please direct specific enquires to the Learning Officer (g.f.fray@bham.ac.uk) in the first instance, and if necessary they can put you in touch with a tutor.