



FAQs for prospective placement gardens

THE PLACEMENT GARDEN

Do you prefer to work with gardens that already have a training programme?

We are interested in gardens with *all* levels of training experience: gardens who are new to training and would like to introduce a training programme to their garden, gardens who have worked with trainees but would like a more structured approach, and gardens who already have trainees but would like to add a HBGTP trainee to their existing programme. In this case, our trainee must be an additional trainee to the garden (i.e. not a replacement for a current trainee role).

Should there be a minimum staff to trainee ratio?

The HBGTP requires a team equivalent to at least 3 full-time experienced horticultural staff members, who are committed to sharing their skills with care and patience.

What kind of organisation can apply to be a placement?

All kinds of ownership arrangements are welcome: private, public, trust or charity.

Is it important how big the garden is?

It is not so much a question of acreage, but the diversity of plants, your facilities, and what your staff and site can offer a trainee.

THE SUPERVISOR AND MENTOR

Do they have to be trained assessors?

No. However, they must be skilled horticulturists and keen to train. You will need to identify a Supervisor to oversee the work of the trainee and a Mentor to ensure they are settled and happy at work. The HBGTP offers support and mentor training to staff interested in these roles.

What is expected of a Supervisor?

To lead the induction of the trainee, complete a training plan, have quarterly meetings to discuss their progress, and review their written work before it is submitted to the HBGTP. Establish a weekly plant identification test of no less than 10 plants.

What is expected of a Mentor?

To establish a positive and supportive relationship with the trainee. To be available and encourage occasional meetings with the trainee to discuss their progression and professional development.

Is the placement expected to provide any formal training?

The main training is practical 'on-the-job' training. However, many placement gardens are able to 'add value' by inviting the trainee to join staff training programmes (i.e. PA1/PA6, tractor driving, strimmer).

THE TRAINEE

When do they start?

The first week of September each year. Trainee positions are advertised in March and interviews conducted in May. Interviews are held at your garden and include a practical element.

Does the trainee work a full week?

The trainee is expected to do most of their written work in their own time. However, the placement garden is expected to ensure the trainee takes a half day per week on site, to undertake their project work. To do this the trainee requires access to a computer on site.

Is there an employment contract?

Yes, between the garden and the trainee. There is also a contract between the garden and the HBGTP and the trainee and the HBGTP.

What does the trainee do during the placement?

Join the work team(s) and undertake all duties expected of a professional gardener. In addition they keep a technical diary, undertake 3 projects and complete a weekly plant identification test of no less than 10 plants.

COSTS

What funding will we receive from the HBGTP?

If needed, we can provide a bursary payment of £7,500 to support the trainee's salary. Half is paid at the start of the placement and half on completion.

What wage should we pay the trainee?

A salary in line with the National Living Wage.

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

Note that if you have accommodation to offer this can be used to offset your costs:

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-accommodation>

Contact the HBGTP Manager for further information:

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