

## Horticulture

- National Diploma in Horticulture
- National Award/Certificate in Horticulture
- NVQ Level 3 Award in Amenity Horticulture (Landscaping)
- Advanced National Certificate in Horticulture (Sportsturf Management)
- First Diploma in Amenity Horticulture
- First Certificate in Horticulture
- NVQ Level 2 Award in Amenity Horticulture (Landscaping)
- NVQ Level 2 Award in Amenity Horticulture (Sportsturf)

## Horticulture

**“this course lets me take things I’ve learned one day and put them straight into practice at work the very next day.”**

Career profile: Philip McKeown

Philip is currently on his first year at Greenmount studying for the NVQ Level 2 Award in Amenity Horticulture specialising in sportsturf.

He has already completed the First Diploma course, during which he spent a period of placement with Ballyclare Golf Club. This gave him a desire for working in green keeping. Philip is now employed by Hilton Templepatrick Golf and Country Club and through his work applied to study for the Level 2 in sportsturf.

“I’m enjoying this course as it lets me take things I’ve learned one day and put them straight into practice at work the very next day.”



## Horticulture

Horticulture is a growing business and gardening is the UK’s second most popular hobby. It impacts on many aspects of our lives and provides a variety of job opportunities in a wide range of work activities worldwide.

### Facilities

Greenmount is an established name in horticulture education and has provided full-time courses in horticulture since 1924.

The Campus is set in 18 hectares of landscaped grounds originally laid out in the 19th century. Features include the ‘Richardson’s Walled Garden’ which was redeveloped to celebrate the millennium. It is of a formal design and includes a grand conservatory, pleached limes, a maze, water feature, knot gardens and a range of mixed and herbaceous planting.

The Amenity Horticulture Unit features sportsturf areas for student learning, including full specification golf greens and playing fields for sports such as soccer, rugby and Gaelic football.

Within the Machinery and Building Centre there are modern training facilities for landscape construction and machinery maintenance and operation.

The Horticulture Development Centre has production facilities for nursery stock and protected ornamental crops. The unit demonstrates advanced technological systems for growing, such as ebb and flood floors, the use of ‘smart’ films and nutrient techniques.

# Horticulture

## National Diploma in Horticulture

This is a two-year full time course incorporating a three-month industry placement. This course offers students both the practical experience and the theory required for a wide variety of careers in horticulture.

### Fact File

**Course duration:**  
Two years.

**Entry requirements:**  
Normally four GCSE passes at Grade C or higher or First Diploma in Horticulture with a Merit or equivalent qualifications.

**Progression opportunities:**  
Students who achieve Merit grades on the National Diploma will be eligible for entry to the Foundation Degree in Horticulture and other higher education programmes.

**Course location:**  
Greenmount Campus.

**Course Manager:**  
Andrew Murdock  
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028 9442 6663  
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andrew.murdock@dardni.gov.uk

### Course content

**Year 1**  
All students follow a common programme, learning horticultural principles and practices, ornamental plant production, turf production and maintenance, soft landscaping and the safe use of machinery. Students are provided with career planning guidance in preparation for industry placement.

**Industry Placement (10 weeks)** which takes place from June to September aims to develop technical and general employment skills. Types of placements previous students have undertaken include, working for parks departments in local councils, landscapers, nurseries, garden centres, and private gardens/estates. Students are responsible for finding their own placement, which must be approved by the course manager.

**Year 2 (at College)**  
Students complete a range of technical units such as hard landscaping, garden design and rock and water features as well as taking units in business management and planning.

The course is comprised of 18 units.

- Advanced nursery stock production
- Arboriculture
- Business management
- Business planning
- Decorative horticulture

- Design principles
- Garden centre organisation
- Horticulture skills and plant knowledge
- Industry experience
- Investigative project
- Landscape construction
- Machinery operations
- Plant establishment and maintenance
- Plant propagation
- Plant use and protection
- Principles of plant and soil science
- Rock and water
- Turf production and maintenance

### Career destinations

There are many sectors within the horticulture industry and students get jobs in a wide range of areas in Northern Ireland and further afield. Currently about 11,000 people are employed in horticulture in Northern Ireland with over 5,000 of these being full-time in the amenity sector.

Students can follow careers in garden centres, nurseries, golf courses, landscape companies and local authorities in a wide range of jobs. Other options include horticulture therapy, education and training or self-employment.

# Horticulture

### Student profile: Jonathan Swift



" It's my intention to work in my father's landscape business when I finish my studies. The course will provide me with the skills and knowledge to make a valuable contribution to the family business. I am particularly interested in focusing on garden design which I will study in the second year. I am enjoying living on Campus and meeting lots of other students."



# Horticulture

## National Award/Certificate in Horticulture

The National Award is a two-year part-time course offering students both the practical experience and theory required to undertake a career in horticulture and achieve the National Award in Horticulture. Students who wish to continue their studies have the opportunity to top up their National Award to a National Certificate in Horticulture. Both courses will lead to a career in horticulture or assist in career progression.

### Fact File

#### Course duration:

National Award: Two years part-time (one day per week), or one year part-time (two days per week).  
National Certificate: Four years part-time (one day per week), or two years part-time (two days per week).

#### Entry requirements:

Normally four GCSE passes at Grade C or higher. A minimum of 40 hours relevant industrial experience is also required. Applicants who do not hold formal qualifications but can demonstrate relevant life experience and enthusiasm and commitment to horticulture are welcome to apply.

#### Progression opportunities:

Students may progress to the National Diploma or the Foundation Degree in Horticulture.

#### Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

#### Course Manager:

Andrew Murdock  
Telephone:  
028 9442 6663  
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andrew.murdock@dardni.gov.uk

### Course content

The National Award is comprised of six units:

- Decorative horticulture
- Design principles
- Landscape construction
- Plant use and protection
- Plant establishment and maintenance
- Specialist project study

The National Certificate is comprised of 12 units. The first six units are completed through achieving the National Award in Horticulture, which will take two years. A further six units are required to attain the National Certificate.

#### Core units:

- Business management
- Machinery operations

#### Four additional units from:

- Advanced nursery stock production
- Garden centre organisation
- Horticulture skills and plant knowledge
- Industry experience
- Principles of plant and soil science
- Plant propagation
- Production techniques - protected crops
- Rock and water
- Turf production and maintenance

Students can choose the unit options that best suit their current or future careers and have the opportunity to specialise in an area of their choice.

### Career destinations

There are many sectors within the horticulture industry and students get jobs in a wide range of areas in Northern Ireland and further afield. Currently about 11,000 people are employed in horticulture in Northern Ireland, with over 5,000 of these full-time in the amenity sector.

Students can follow careers in garden centres, nurseries, golf courses, landscape companies and local authorities in a wide range of jobs. Other options include horticulture therapy, education and training or self-employment.

# Horticulture



### Student profile:

Paul McIntyre



Paul has worked on his family farm milking cows and part-time with a landscaper.

“ It seemed like a natural progression, using the skills from the farm for landscaping. I am getting the chance to complete my spraying certificates as well as undertaking the National Award one day per week. Its suits very well during the winter when the business is not so busy to attend college. The course offers a great mix of lectures and practical skills training.”

# Horticulture

## NVQ Level 3 Award in Amenity Horticulture (Landscaping)\*

The NVQ Level 3 award is designed for people employed in amenity horticulture, particularly those in supervisory roles such as charge hands.

### Fact File

#### Course duration:

Two years.

#### Entry requirements:

NVQ Level 2 qualification and appropriate work experience at supervisory level in the amenity sector.

#### Progression opportunities:

Students may progress onto a Certificate of Higher Education or Foundation Degree programme.

#### Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

#### Course Manager:

Ciaran Mulholland  
Telephone:  
028 9442 6659  
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ciaran.mulholland@dardni.gov.uk

### Course content

Students attend college one day per week from September to May where they are taught the theory associated with the skills. The summer period is then spent in the workplace gathering evidence, being assessed on practical skills and completing a portfolio.

Students complete nine units:

- Create grassed and planted areas
- Estimate resource requirements and programme work
- Lead the work of teams and individuals to achieve objectives
- Maintain and develop decorative horticulture displays
- Manage information for action
- Manage planted areas for their amenity value
- Manage yourself
- Prepare and apply pesticides
- Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security

### Student profile:

Ian Ferguson



Ian started with the National Trust as a volunteer in 2004, having completed his NVQ Level 2 in Environment and Conservation Management. After completing the Level 2 Amenity Horticulture course he gained full-time employment with the National Trust at Mountstewart. He sees the Level 3 as being a 'definite step up'.

"One of the things I like about the course is the link between what I learn in the classroom and what I do in the workplace. There is great support from the tutors and from my work-based assessor. The Level 3 course is developing my knowledge and skills in supervision and customer care as well."

# Horticulture

## Advanced National Certificate in Horticulture (Sportsturf Management)\*

The Advanced National Certificate in Horticulture course is designed for those working in the sportsturf sector who have already completed a Level 2 qualification and wish to further develop their knowledge of sportsturf management.

### Fact File

#### Course duration:

Two years.

#### Entry requirements:

Level 2 qualification in Sportsturf or related area.

#### Progression opportunities:

Students may progress onto a Certificate of Higher Education or Foundation Degree programme.

#### Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

#### Course Manager:

Ciaran Mulholland  
Telephone:  
028 9442 6659  
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### Course content

The course is comprised of eight units:

- Ancillary planted areas
- Business development and management
- Construction of sportsturf areas
- Horticulture soil and plant science
- Manage sportsturf areas
- Management of soil water
- Non-turf areas and artificial surfaces
- Sportsturf machinery

Students attend college one day per week over two years from September to May. If students are in a suitable work pattern they can build up their portfolio of evidence to gain a NVQ Level 3 award alongside or after completing their Advanced National Certificate in Horticulture. Students can also progress onto the Foundation Degree in Sportsturf Management.

### Career destinations

Students can expect to progress into a position of responsibility within the sportsturf sector.

### Student profile:

Paul Catherwood



Paul completed his Level 2 award in Amenity Horticulture and won the 'Evergreen Lawn's turf care student of the year' award.

"I really enjoyed the Level 2 course with the combination of theory and practical learning on the job so I decided to continue studying and enrolled on the Advanced National Certificate course."

# Horticulture

## First Diploma in Amenity Horticulture

This course provides students with a wide range of skills. It prepares them for entry into the National Diploma course or for employment as landscape operatives, nursery workers or groundspersons. This is a practically based course where the emphasis is on gaining skills that will improve employment opportunities.

### Fact File

#### Course duration:

One year.

#### Entry requirements:

Normally two Grade Cs or three Grade Ds at GCSE including English and Maths. A minimum of 40 hours industrial experience is also required.

#### How to apply:

Direct application to the College.

#### Main areas of study:

Horticultural machinery, turf establishment and maintenance, decorative horticulture, estate skills and industry experience.

#### Progression opportunities:

National Award in Horticulture (part-time) or students who achieve a merit overall may progress onto the National Diploma in Horticulture (full-time).

#### Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

#### Course Manager:

Andrew Murdock  
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andrew.murdock@dardni.gov.uk

#### Course content

Students are introduced to the horticulture industry and undertake a wide range of skills. They are taught mainly through learning by doing practicals based in the ornamental gardens, woodlands, glasshouses and sportsturf areas of the College. They undertake a period of work experience during the second semester with approved industry experience providers.

The course is comprised of six core units:

- Amenity and decorative horticulture
- Horticulture industry and organisation
- Horticulture machinery
- Practical land-based skills
- Turf establishment and maintenance
- Work related experience in horticulture

#### Career destinations

Students can follow careers in garden centres, nurseries, golf courses, landscape companies and local authorities in a wide range of jobs. Other options include horticulture therapy, education and training or becoming self-employed.

#### Student profile:

Lee Pennington



"I have always wanted to work outside, and before starting this course I worked for a local nursery potting plants. At the moment while I am on the course I work at the weekends and holidays with a landscape contractor. One of my tutors was able to put me in touch with the contractor and it's been great experience. Life at Greenmount with my friends, is very different from living at home and going to school; I spend half of my time outside working with my hands and learning new skills."

# Horticulture

## First Certificate in Horticulture

This course is practically based and is an ideal entry point for newcomers to horticulture who want to study part-time. It prepares students to enter employment in the horticultural sector or to progress to further education vocational qualifications. Students are able to develop a knowledge and understanding of opportunities which exist within the horticultural industry.

### Fact File

#### Course duration:

One year part-time, one day per week.

#### Entry requirements:

Normally one Grade C or two Grade Ds at GCSE. A minimum of 40 hours industrial experience is also required.

#### Progression opportunities:

For those who achieve a merit overall, progression onto the First Diploma is possible.

#### Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

#### Course Manager:

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#### Course content

Students are introduced to the basic knowledge and skills required by those entering employment within the horticultural sector. This industry is wide ranging, covering employment in garden landscaping, amenity and decorative horticulture, commercial crop production or in the service sector of the industry.

Units include:

- Amenity and decorative horticulture
- Turf establishment and maintenance
- Work related experience in horticulture

#### Career destinations

Many students use this course as a route back to education and learning and as a stepping stone to progress onto another programme at a higher level.

Past students have secured employment as landscapers, garden centre assistants or running their own business.

#### Student profile:

Adam Morgan



"I've had a few different jobs and want to develop a landscaping business of my own. I wanted a part-time course that covers the basics for someone like me who is starting out in business. This course is great; with all the practicals that we have, it's not all in the classroom. I attend one day a week and practise what I've learnt here on jobs that I do during the rest of the week."

# Horticulture

NVQ Level 2 Award in Amenity Horticulture (Landscaping)\*

The NVQ Level 2 course in Amenity Horticulture provides valuable in-service training for those already employed in the amenity horticulture sector. It is also relevant to those entering the industry through Training for Success.

## Fact File

### Course duration:

18 months.

### Entry requirements:

Normally two Grade Cs or three Grade Ds at GCSE preferably including English and Maths.

### Progression opportunities:

Students can progress onto the NVQ Level 3 part-time or the Advanced National Certificate or the National Diploma.

### Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

### Course Manager:

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### Course content

The course is comprised of five main units:

- Communication skills
- Establishing and maintaining ornamental plantings and turf
- Health and safety
- Machinery maintenance
- Working with people

Year 1:

Students attend college one day per week from September to May where they are taught the underpinning knowledge and skills. The summer period is then spent in the workplace gathering evidence, being assessed on practical skills and completing a portfolio.

Year 2:

Students attend one day per week until Christmas, where they are taught aspects of the related job skills such as communication. They also have the opportunity of taking additional qualifications.

### Career destinations

Candidates with the NVQ Level 2 can use the qualification to become supervisors and chargehands within the grounds care and amenity horticulture industries.

### Student profile:

Andrew Brown



Andrew joined this course having worked for two years with his local City Council as a gardener/greenkeeper.

"I applied for the NVQ Level 2 course as I felt I'd be able to apply the new skills and information I will learn to my daily duties and therefore expand my knowledge of horticulture. I enjoy the mix of 'how' and 'why' within the course."

# Horticulture

NVQ Level 2 Award in Amenity Horticulture (Sportsturf)\*

This course aims to provide the skills, knowledge and competence, which is required for responsible positions within the sportsturf sector of the amenity horticulture industry. The course is designed for those who are already working as trainee and assistant greenkeepers or groundspersons.

## Fact File

### Course duration:

18 months.

### Entry requirements:

Normally two Grade Cs or three Grade Ds at GCSE preferably including English and Maths.

### Progression opportunities:

Students can progress onto the Advanced National Certificate.

### Course location:

Greenmount Campus.

### Course Manager:

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Telephone:  
028 9442 6659  
Email:  
ciaran.mulholland@dardni.gov.uk

### Course content

This course is comprised of five main units:

- Health and safety
- Machinery maintenance
- Maintaining the health of sportsturf
- Sportsturf and landscape preparation and maintenance
- Working with others

Students who successfully complete the NVQ Level 2 Award will also receive the Greenkeepers Training Committee Certificate.

Students attend college on a day-release basis from September to May. Teaching includes formal classwork, practical skills training, demonstrations and visits.

Assessments are completed in the workplace.

### Career destinations

Greenkeepers with a NVQ Level 2 can use this qualification to assist them to become assistant and head greenkeepers.

### Student profile:

Andrew Knox Millar



Andrew started his NVQ course in October having recently been appointed to one of the premier golf courses on the North Coast.

"I like the NVQ course because it is more than just learning how to do the job at work; it's also about how and why we do it. I get help from my work-based assessors as well as the college instructors and lecturers."