

START
TOMORROW
TODAY

COURSE HANDBOOK



National Certificate in Rural Skills















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Welcome and Overview

We are delighted that you are coming to join the NC Rural Skills course at the Scottish School of Forestry at Inverness College UHI and we'd like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome you. We've produced this course handbook to help you make the most of your time with us and to help familiarise you with your course. There is a considerable amount of information contained in this handbook, some of which will be of greater relevance to you as you work through the course, so please do keep it safe for easy reference at a later date!

Key Contacts		
The Tutors for this course and their phone numbers and email addresses are:	 	Andrew Smith 01463 273613 Andrew.J.Smith.ic@uhi.ac.uk Laurence Campbell 01463 273612 Laurence.Campbell.ic@uhi.ac.uk Ben Davies 01463 273601 Ben.Davies.ic@uhi.ac.uk Neil Stewart 01463 273604 Neil.Stewart.ic@uhi.ac.uk Neil Cleland 01463 273616 Neil.Cleland.ic@uhi.ac.uk George Macgregor 01463 273602 george.macgregor.ic@uhi.ac.uk
Your Personal Development Adviser is:		Caroline Mitchell
Your PDA's phone number is:		01463 273586
Your PAT's email address is:		Caroline.Mitchell.ic@uhi.ac.uk
Our Student Support Team phone number is:		01463 273 208
Our Student Support Team email address is:		student.support.ic@uhi.ac.uk
Our Additional Support Needs Team phone number is:		01463 273526
Our Additional Support Needs email address is:		Additionalsupport.ic@uhi.ac.uk
Our Wellbeing team phone number is:		01463 273 224
Our Wellbeing team email address is:		counsellor.ic@uhi.ac.uk
Our Library phone number is:		<u>01463 273248</u>
Our Library team email address is:		Library.ic@uhi.ac.uk



Main Campus Reception Scottish School of Forestry Reception		01463 273 000
Our SkillZone phone number is:		01463 273888
Our SkillZone email address is:		Skillzone.ic@uhi.ac.uk

Aims of your Course

The aims of your course are:

- To provide a high quality learning experience, enjoyable as well as educational
- To support each student the best way we can during their learning
- To prepare students well for a future career and/or further study in the land based sector

Structure of your Course

The majority of what you will be studying in this course are units approved by the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) with support materials developed either by ourselves or industry bodies. This material has been carefully selected to suit the needs of the course and the sector, and it is vital that you engage with this additional work if you want to gain the best end result that you can.

Most students study 15 credits if full time. The table below contains the unit code, title and the number of credits the unit is worth.

Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit
IND90310	Tree and Shrub Planting	1.00
IND90510	Trees in the Environment	1.00
INH09210	Rural Environment: An Introduction	1.00
INH09E10	Small Powered Machinery Operations	1.00
INE9T210	Maintenance of Hand Tools Used in Forestry Work	0.50
INF3GF10	Numeracy - Int 1	1.00
INH09510	Rural Work Activities	1.00
INF3GB10	Communication	1.00
INH09910	Forestry: Woodland Skills	1.00
INH09410	Rural Estate Maintenance	1.00
INH09810	Construct Rural Features and Structures: An Introduction	1.00
IND36N10	Enterprise Activity	1.00
INH09310	Rural Species Identification and Habitats	1.00
INMAINGF	Maintenance (General Forestry)	1.00



INH1X510	Build and Repair Drystone Dykes	1.00
INF5G4 10	Developing Skills for Employment	1.00

Progression Routes to Further Study and Employment

The curriculum area map clearly shows where this programme sits within this wider curriculum area and the future progression routes which will be open to you after successful completion of this course.

You may wish to continue your studies and apply for a place on the Certificate in Forestry course, or another course within the college. Your PDA will help guide you as to the most appropriate route.

If you apply to Inverness College UHI for a Certificate in Forestry place, you will be required to pass the NC Rural Skills course plus gain satisfactory references from college tutors.

You will discuss all these options and anything else with your PDA during your personal interviews throughout the year and specifically when discussing progression.

START TOMORROW TODAY



SCIENCE, MATHS AND FORESTRY

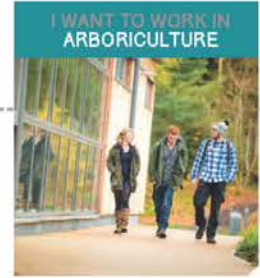
SCIENCE, MATHS AND FORESTRY

I have 1 Higher at Grade C or above with one year's experience in a woodland environment, or Certificate in Forestry or NPA in Woodland Operations." OR I have 3 or more Highers at A or B grade."

INTERVIEW

I have 3 A or B passes at Int2/National 5 or Standard Grade Credit. I am considering a career in forestry and would like a taster of Higher level study in this area."

INTERVIEW

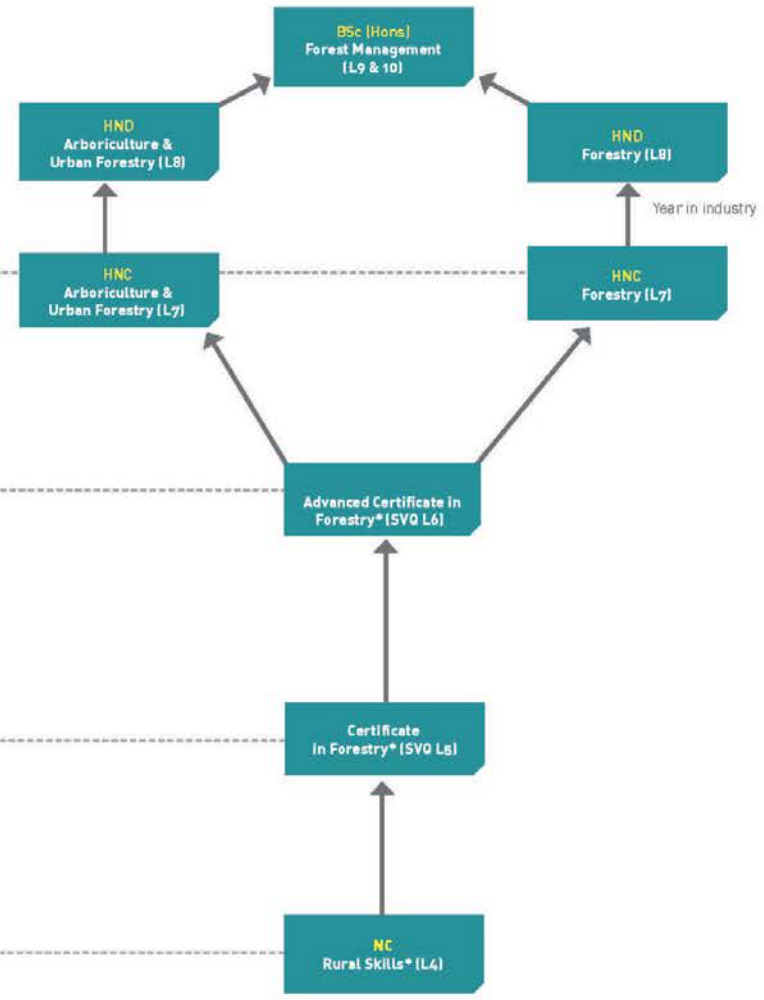


I have 3 passes at Standard Grade/National 4." I have an interest in practical forestry and woodland conservation."

INTERVIEW

I am a school leaver with no formal qualifications." I am a mature student with no formal qualifications but an interest in rural skills or equivalent land based skills."

INTERVIEW



FORESTRY

*Min. age restrictions apply



Personal Support Whilst Learning

Congratulations on taking a brave step onto a new pathway to learning! We understand that through the course of your learning journey you may experience personal difficulties or life events which make studying more challenging. Our aim is to offer the care, support and guidance required to help you achieve your goal of successfully completing your studies.

If you are studying full time at SCQF Level 6 or below (Further Education **FE** level) you will be assigned to a **Personal Development Advisor (PDA)**.

If you are studying at SCQF level 7 or above (Higher Education **HE** level) you will be assigned a **Personal Academic Tutor (PAT)**

Your **PDA** or **PAT** should be **your first point of contact** for any support needs, queries or concerns you may have.

Your PDA

Personal Development Adviser

We have a new team of Personal Development Advisers (PDA) who will be available to provide advice and guidance to support your personal development while you study with us. The PDA is not academic support but is a focal point for pastoral care and will work in partnership with your academic teams to support you whilst you study. The advice and guidance of the PDA team will cover a range of areas including Health and wellbeing, careers and employability, funding and personal support. Your PDA will meet with you for regular timetabled workshops as well as offering 1-1 support.

Your PDA is Caroline Mitchell



If you need to see your PDA during College hours you should make an appointment via email or in an emergency, ask at reception to see if your adviser is available. General student support will also be offered through the Student Support Centre which is during term time from 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.



You can contact me on:



01463 273586 or Mobile 07384 246336



Caroline.Mitchell.ic@uhi.ac.uk

PDA Time

You will be scheduled to have specific time with your PDA throughout the course of the year. It is very important that you attend these sessions as they are designed to help you manage your wellbeing and ability to study effectively.

Sessions could include:

- Induction and orientation information
- Team building activities
- Wellbeing and resilience tools
- Coping with stress strategies
- Employability and careers advice and preparation
- Finance and budgeting information, support and guidance

Your PDA can also help you with a wide range of other concerns you may have such as:

- Attendance and attainment concerns
- Course information and choices
- Finance – Funding support, applying for hardship funds
- Help filling in forms - Course and funding applications
- Accommodation - Help and advice on where to look
- Childcare information - College and local nurseries
- Progression after your course - What to do next and where to look

Your PDA can also refer you to more specialist services for wellbeing, counselling, general and additional support for learning, funding and transitions.

This list is by no means exhaustive. Your individual needs are important to us, whatever the situation, we will listen and try to help.

If your PDA is not available, you can drop into the Student Services Centre behind reception and the team will aim to provide the answers you need or find someone who can.



The Student Services Centre is open from 8.30am - 5pm Monday to Friday.

Alternatively you can contact us –



01463 273208



Student.services.ic@uhi.ac.uk

Course Work

It is important for your own development that you become a responsible learner. This includes learning to manage your own time, as well as seeking information beyond that which you are given in class. You should allocate the equivalent of at least one full day across the week for personal study and adhere to that, using your diary to plan and prioritise your learning. Poor time management can increase the pressure you experience when assessments are due. Being well organised and setting time aside for personal study will increase your chances of success.

Presentation of work

It is essential that any coursework handed in or uploaded into your e-portfolio is well presented, word-processed in Arial font 12 and spaced 1.5; It should also have a title including the unit name and number and be labelled with your name and college ID number.

You should always read over a piece of work before you submit it, in particular, check for spelling and grammatical mistakes. If you require further support for writing you should seek help from members of staff in the Skills Zone. For each assignment or project you will be given more specific guidelines. It is essential that you follow these guidelines as they are there to help you.

Assessment of your Work

Throughout your course, your work will be assessed in a number of different ways, depending on the different criteria in individual units.

The majority of courses delivered in the College are assessed partly or wholly on a continuous basis – in other words, you will be assessed on parts of your work as you go along rather than all of it at the end of the unit. This assessment is carried out by the lecturer teaching the unit.

So that assessments can be fair to all students, and whoever teaches them, internal assessments are checked by other lecturers teaching the same, or similar, units. This is a process called 'internal verification'.



Internal assessment is not just about judging whether you have passed or failed. It also provides both you and your lecturers with important information about what you're doing well and where you have shortcomings in your knowledge, understanding or skills. Assessment is closely linked to the learning process in the sense that the feedback you will receive from your lecturers will help you improve your work in the future.

Finally, a range of courses delivered in the College are assessed by means of an externally-set and externally-assessed examination or project. The examining body will inform you directly whether or not you have completed your course successfully. College lecturers are not in a position to tell you whether you have passed or failed, until they have been informed by the examining body (usually at the same time as you will know directly from the examining body). If in doubt, please ask your lecturer about the procedures used.

Re-assessment of your Work

If you are unsuccessful in an internal assessment, you will be offered the opportunity to be re-assessed (remediate your work). Depending on the arrangements for re-assessment laid down for a particular unit, this may involve retaking either the whole assessment or just part of it. You will normally only be allowed one (or, in exceptional circumstances, two) re-assessment opportunities. Your tutors will be able to give you more information about re-assessment for your course.

Submission of your Coursework

You should hand in or upload all coursework to the appropriate lecturer. All coursework for assessment will have a specified deadline for submission. It is **essential** that you meet the submission deadline to ensure fairness amongst all students and to enable staff to mark efficiently. Your subject lecturer may allow you an extension to a submission date if there are valid (mitigating) circumstances affecting your ability to meet the deadline.

If you are unwell when completing assessed coursework or sitting examinations, or have any other specific difficulties that may affect your performance in assessed coursework or examinations, you should notify your PDA as soon as possible, and make immediate arrangements for medical certificates or other letters of support to be submitted.



Mitigating Circumstances

There may be times when you cannot complete assessments to the best of their ability, are unable to attend an examination, or are unable to meet an assessment deadline due to adverse circumstances beyond your control e.g. illness or a serious accident at the time of assessment. As a result, students can request that these circumstances are taken into consideration by the university. Submitting a request does not automatically guarantee that it will be accepted.

For more information on Mitigating Circumstances please ask your PDA. This process should also be covered during the Induction process.



Malpractice

Malpractice – definition

Malpractice means any act, default or practice (whether deliberate or resulting from neglect or default) which is a breach of SQA assessment requirements including any act, default or practice which:

- Compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any SQA qualification or the validity of a result or certificate; and/ or
- Damages the authority, reputation or credibility of SQA or any officer, employee or agent of SQA.

Malpractice can arise for a variety of reasons:

- Some incidents are intentional and aim to give an unfair advantage or disadvantage in an examination or assessment (deliberate non-compliance);
- Some incidents arise due to ignorance of SQA requirements, carelessness or neglect in applying the requirements (maladministration).

Malpractice can include both maladministration in the assessment and delivery of SQA qualifications and deliberate non-compliance with SQA requirements.

Candidate Malpractice

‘Candidate or student malpractice’ means malpractice by a candidate in the course of any examination or assessment.

Candidate malpractice can occur in, but is not limited to:

- the preparation and authentication of coursework
- the presentation of practical work
- The compilation of portfolios of candidate/assessment evidence
- Conduct during an internal assessment

Allegations of candidate malpractice will be dealt with using the Student Malpractice Procedure. The Student Malpractice Procedure applies to all students. Where a student is registered on a programme validated by another awarding body, including SQA, the specific action to be taken may be influenced by the requirements of that body.

Candidates will be notified about the Student Malpractice Procedure, their right to appeal and additional guidance through the student induction process.



Non-Academic Misconduct

Where other issues arise which need to be dealt with in a formal manner and in order to protect the student involved and in line with College processes the Student Disciplinary Procedure must be followed.

Reporting Requirements

Candidates should report any suspected case of malpractice:

- By candidates to the delivering lecturer, their PDA, or other member of teaching staff
- By members of staff to the delivering lecturer, their PDA, or other member of teaching staff

Appeals

Candidates have the right to appeal any malpractice decision made against them. The appeals process is contained within each of the procedures noted above. This includes the timescales for appeal.

In the case where SQA, or other awarding body, is investigating the allegation of malpractice, ICUHI has the right to appeal a decision where a case of reported malpractice by the centre has been confirmed.

There is also the right to appeal a decision in the case of suspected malpractice by a candidate reported by ICUHI to SQA.

Candidates have the right to appeal to SQA where:

- ◆ the centre has conducted an investigation, the candidate disagrees with the outcome and has exhausted the centre's appeals process
- ◆ SQA has conducted an investigation and the candidate disagrees with the decision

For regulated qualifications only:

Candidates have the right to request a review by the appropriate regulator (SQA Accreditation, Ofqual or Qualifications Wales) of the awarding body's process in reaching a decision in an appeal of a malpractice decision for qualifications subject to regulation.



Complaints

Complaints Process – Students

The College provides two opportunities to resolve complaints internally: frontline resolution (non-complex issues) and investigation i.e. the issues raised are complex and require detailed investigation.

You can discuss your complaint with any member of our staff, by phone, in person or if you prefer in writing to quality.ic@uhi.ac.uk.

If we can, we hope to resolve all complaints in 5 working days. If your complaint is more complex, we may need to take longer in order to investigate it thoroughly. This can take up to 20 working days, if we need any longer we'll let you know.

Complaint Guidelines

A student may not complain about academic judgement; the College has an internal appeals process which can be used for this purpose.

Candidates on regulated qualifications, also have the right to complain to SQA Accreditation or other regulatory awarding bodies once they have exhausted both the College's complaints procedure and the SQA awarding body's complaints procedure. Students may escalate their complaint to SPSO if it relates to issues other than assessment related matters.

Partnership Agreement

Students who enroll on courses with Inverness College UHI are entering into a partnership. Our *Partnership Agreement* involves a commitment from you, the learner, to engage positively with your studies and a commitment from the College to provide appropriate support to you throughout your course. Working in partnership we hope to create an excellent experience for all involved.

Your Personal Development Adviser (FE) will discuss our *Partnership Agreement* and will outline the entitlements students of Inverness College UHI have along with our collective responsibilities.



Attendance and Part Time Employment

Your success as a student depends on full and regular attendance of **all** classes. You should inform your Personal Development Adviser (FE), as soon as possible if you have problems with attendance and follow the Attendance Procedure. Our records show that students who do not attend all their classes have a very high risk of failure. We recognise that you may need to undertake part-time work, but we strongly advise you not to take employment of more than 15 hours a week if you are a full time student. Should you need to take employment of more than 15 hours per week we recommend you register as a part time student. A full time student is expected to follow their timetable and negotiate work times around it.

As part of the Partnership Agreement you commit to attending classes on time. Attendance at class is imperative; if you do not attend, you are unlikely to successfully complete coursework, or be able to sit and pass assessments. We'll do everything we can to support your success but you have to be here to enable us!

Student Funding and Finance

Your attendance is also important for your funding. Students are expected to attend **all** their classes and engage appropriately in their studies. You must advise the College, each and every day (or part of a day), of an absence using the ABSENCE REPORTING PROCEDURE detailed in the link below:

<https://www.inverness.uhi.ac.uk/students/student-support/attendance-and-absence>

A member of the funding team will be on hand within the **Student Services Centre** to help you with any funding and finance related concerns you may have, including; SAAS applications and any difficulties you may encounter in applying for Disabled Students Allowance, Bursaries, and other funding options. Every students' circumstances are different so if you are unsure about what you should apply for come over and speak to one of the funding team.

The Student Services Centre is open from 8.30am - 5pm Monday to Friday.

Alternatively you can contact us –



01463 273482



funding.ic@uhi.ac.uk



Planning Ahead

It's important that you plan ahead to help you achieve success in your programme. The full academic calendar for the session will help you identify when holidays are for example and can be found at

<https://www.iconic.inverness.uhi.ac.uk/Pages/Academic%20Calendar.aspx>

Care Leavers

We have a dedicated Transitions Coordinator, to help students whilst at college who are in or have left care. Examples of care are; residential care, foster care, and cared for by friends or relatives (other than parents).

We are committed to all our students and we will do all we can to make your experience here enjoyable and rewarding. At times young people who are in or who have left care may need extra support to deal with the challenges of being a student and College life. Our Transitions Coordinator can provide a range of support:

- Financial advice
- Help with settling in to college life
- Getting the most out of your student experience
- Advice and support finding accommodation
- General advice and guidance

For more information or to make an appointment then please contact:



transition.ic@uhi.ac.uk



Or phone / text: 07876216878/ 01463 273803



Additional Support Needs

The Additional Support Needs Team is available to help you with any additional support you may need due to any difficulty you may have, such as Dyslexia or Autism, or any disability. Our team can work with you on a one to one basis, in small groups or in-class according to your need. Equipment and assistive materials can be provided for students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD). If you have a support need you may be entitled to additional assessment arrangements such as extra time, the provision of a reader/scribe or the use of a computer. We'd encourage you to get in touch with our team if you want to discuss your study needs.

Additional Support Needs email and contact number –



01463 273526



additionalsupport.ic@uhi.ac.uk

Wellbeing Support

There is a clear link between your wellbeing and academic success. To help you make the most of your time at College, we provide a wide range of support. We provide a service that is tailored to your needs, as a student.

As a Wellbeing Support we want to provide you with:

- A confidential and non-judgmental space to work through your difficulty.
- To help you to understand yourself better and find better ways of managing your life, inside and out of college.

More information can be found at:

<https://www.inverness.uhi.ac.uk/students/student-support/health-and-wellbeing-1>



01463 273224



counsellor.ic@uhi.ac.uk



Study Skills and Academic Support

Our SkillZone situated in G36 provides a quiet space for you to drop in for any support with your studies and to brush up on your study skills. We have a range of helpful resources on things such as Referencing, Note Taking, Essay Writing and Presentations. This is where to come if you need any academic support with any aspect of your programme. SkillZone is also where you can drop in to receive support for any aspect of careers and employability advice. We can help you with CV writing or help you to prepare for interviews for example. You can either drop in or for more information about Skill Zone contact.



01463 273888



Skillzone.ic@uhi.ac.uk



<https://www.facebook.com/SkillZoneIC/>

Library and Learning Resource Centre

The Library and Learning Resource Centre are situated on the Second Floor, and offer study facilities and resources to support your course. The Library offers quiet study space, and has 16 PCs and 16 study booths, as well as over 30,000 books. The Learning Resource Centre is the open plan study area and has over 100 PCs, along with group study spaces. Both areas offer printing and copying facilities, and help is at hand from the Library team if you need assistance in finding the resources for your course.

Library during term time –

Day	Open	Close
Mon	08.30	18.00
Tues & Wed	08.30	20.00
Thurs & Fri	08.30	18.00
Sat & Sun	Closed	

Library during academic holidays –

Day	Open	Close
Mon to Fri	09.00	17.00
Sat & Sun	Closed	

Recommended Texts / Reading List

You can take out 15 books at a time from the Library and there is a drop-box outside the main doors into the Library where you can leave books if the Library is shut.

The Students' Association and Class Representatives

You can find the Highlands & Islands Students' Association (HISA) to the right hand side of the front entrance in the Atrium. HISA's main role is to represent students and therefore it is so important. Students are represented largely through the role of class representatives. Class reps are chosen for each class by the class and will act on their behalf to represent their views and opinions at the Student Representation Committee (SRC). This is a crucial role and excellent experience for anyone. Full training is provided for this role which many find valuable for their CV and future employment.

There is also a fun side to student life that HISA helps to facilitate. This is done through charity fundraisers which are held throughout the year such as Pink day and MFR Cash for Kids. HISA also have term time sports clubs, these include Badminton, Fitness Kick Boxing, Basketball, Football, MMA and Volleyball. There are also societies including Anime and Manga Society, Alliance, Dramatic Society, Games Development Society and the campus Debating Society. There are always opportunities to create new clubs or societies too so we welcome any suggestions! HISA also cater to your stationary needs by selling everything from pens and pencils to pen drives and note pads, all available in the Inverness College shop.



Opening Times – Reception, Main Campus

During term time –

Day	Open	Close
Mon & Thurs	08.00	18.00
Tues & Wed	08.00	20.30
Fri	08.00	17.00
Sat & Sun	Closed	

During academic holidays amendments to opening times are notified through MyDay and displayed at main reception.

Opening Times – Scottish School of Forestry Campus

During term time –

Day	Open	Close
Mon to Friday	09.00	17.00
Sat & Sun	Closed	

Please note that the Scottish School of Forestry is closed during academic holidays to students.