



**NPTC**

Registered Charity No. 1096429

STONELEIGH PARK, WARWICKSHIRE CV8 2LG

Tel: 024 7685 7300 Fax: 024 7669 6128

Email: [information@nptc.org.uk](mailto:information@nptc.org.uk)

**Level 2  
CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE  
IN THE  
SAFE USE OF HEDGE TRIMMERS**

**ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE**

© NPTC 2007

## NPTC Level 2 Certificate of Competence in the Safe Use of Hedge Trimmers

### Candidate Information

#### Introduction

The scheme will be administered by NPTC.

NPTC will:

- Publish
  - scheme regulations
  - assessment schedule
  - assessment material
- Approve centres to co-ordinate and administer the scheme
- Set standards for the training of Verifiers and Assessors
- Recruit, train and deploy Verifiers
- Manage verification
- Issue certificates to successful Candidates

#### The Certificate of Competence

Certificates of competence will be awarded to Candidates who achieve the required level of competence in the Units to which their Certificate relates.

#### Instruction

Attendance at a course of instruction is not a pre-requisite for an application for an assessment but potential Candidates are strongly advised to ensure that they are up to the standards that will be expected of them when they are assessed.

NPTC does **not** hold a register of instructors; however instruction will normally be available from recognised training providers and/or centres of further or higher education active in the areas covered by this certificate. Further information on training may be obtained from the local Assessment Centre.

#### Access to Assessment

Assessment Centres will be responsible for arranging assessment on behalf of a Candidate. Assessment may only be carried out by an Assessor approved by NPTC for that scheme. Under no circumstances can either instructors involved in the preparation of candidates, or the candidates work place supervisors, or anyone else who might have a vested interest in the outcome, carry out the assessment.

The minimum age limit for Candidates taking certificates of competence is 16 years. There is no upper age limit.

#### Assessment

Assessment is a process by which it is confirmed that the Candidate is competent in the Units within the award to which the assessment relates. It is a process of collecting evidence about his/her capabilities and judging whether that evidence is sufficient to attribute competence.

The candidate must be registered through an NPTC approved Assessment Centre for this qualification prior to assessment.

The result of the assessment will be recorded on the assessment report form.

The schedule of assessment contains the criteria relating to:

- Observation of practical performance
- Assessment of underpinning knowledge

#### Performance Evaluation

The result of each assessment activity is evaluated against the following criteria:

- 4 = Meets or exceeds the assessment criteria by displaying a level of practical performance and/or underpinning knowledge, with no 'minor' or 'critical' faults. (Competent).
- 3 = Meets the requirements of the assessment criteria for both the practical performance and the underpinning knowledge, with some 'minor' faults but no 'critical' faults. (Competent).
- 2 = Does not fully satisfy the requirements of the assessment criteria, being unable to perform the practical task satisfactorily or being deficient in underpinning knowledge leading to the recording of minor faults. (Not yet competent).
- 1 = Does not satisfy the requirements of the assessment criteria, being unable to perform the practical task satisfactorily or safely or being deficient in underpinning knowledge leading to the recording of a critical fault. (Not yet competent).

A list of registered Assessment Centres is available from NPTC. ([www.nptc.org.uk](http://www.nptc.org.uk))

#### Verification

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 that NPTC 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.

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 an NPTC approved verifier.

Compliance with the verification requirements is a pre-requisite for Assessors remaining on NPTC's list of approved assessors.

## Complaints and Appeals

NPTC and its Assessment Centres have a formal Complaints and Appeals procedure. In the event of any dissatisfaction with the arrangements and conditions of assessment, the candidate should first contact the Assessment Centre through whom the assessment was arranged and submit the complaint in writing.

For further information on NPTC's Equal Opportunities Policy and Complaints and Appeals Procedures, please refer to [www.nptc.org.uk](http://www.nptc.org.uk)

## Learning Outcomes

The candidate will be able to:

- Prepare a hand held or tractor mounted hedge trimmer for operation safely
- Identify the key controls on the machine and their function
- Identify the risks of the operation and check the work site for hazards
- Carry out routine maintenance on a hand held or tractor mounted hedge trimmer
- Operate a hand held or tractor mounted powered hedge trimmer, working competently using correct tools and equipment safely and observing all relevant health and safety legislation
- State the knowledge and understanding required, relating to PPE, legislation and safety
- State the knowledge and understanding related to the maintenance of hedgerows

## Guidance Notes for Candidates and Assessors

The assessment is divided into five units:

1. Pre use safety – Hedge Trimmers (**compulsory**)
2. Operate Hand Held Powered Hedge Trimmers (**optional**)
3. Operate Tractor Mounted Hedge Trimmers (**optional**)
4. Operate Tractor Mounted Verge Mowers (**optional**)
5. Hedgerow Maintenance Principles (**optional**)

(Please note, units 3 and 4 **do not** cover connecting the hedge trimmer to the tractor)

To be awarded a Certificate of Competence, Candidates must successfully achieve all Assessment Activities in:

- either Units 1 and 2 (certificate endorsed "Hand Held Powered Hedge Trimmer")
- or Units 1 and 3 (certificate endorsed "Tractor Mounted Hedge Trimmer")
- or Units 1 and 4 (certificate endorsed "Tractor Mounted Verge Mower")

Unit 5 is an optional unit that can be taken on its own or in addition to any of the above combinations. The certificate will be endorsed "Hedgerow Maintenance Principles". Candidates wishing to take unit 5 only should raise this at the point of registration

## Safe Practice

Prior to a Candidate being assessed in any operational unit (units 2, 3 or 4) the assessor must be satisfied that the candidate is sufficiently aware of the fundamental safety aspects covered in unit 1. If a candidate does not achieve all Assessment Activities in Unit 1, he/she may (at his/her discretion) not allow the assessment to progress to further units on grounds of safety.

Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be worn at all times.

Any equipment used must be operated in such a way that the Candidate, Assessor, other persons or equipment are not endangered.

All ancillary equipment, when detached must be safely parked.

**Failure to operate safely and comply with these requirements will result in the Candidate not meeting the required standard.**

## Validation of Equipment

A Manufacturer's instruction book or other operators' manual should be available.

All equipment being used for this assessment must comply with the relevant requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998.

If the assessment will involve driving on the public highway, the driver must hold an appropriate drivers licence for the vehicle. Vehicles must comply with Department of Transport and Road Traffic Acts where relevant (including insurance and road fund licence).

Any appropriate item of powered Hedge Trimming machinery complying with legal requirements is acceptable for the assessment, provided it is suitably equipped for **all** assessment activities to be carried out. If the qualification is to be assessed with an electrical hand held hedge trimmer, it must be a professional 110 volt unit. The scope of this qualification does not cover 240 volt "garden" or "occasional use" machines.

Candidates who undertake this assessment and are judged 'competent' are reminded of their legal obligation to receive/undertake appropriate additional training in the use of any equipment that differs from that used during the assessment, but which they are nevertheless qualified to use

## Additional Information

May be sought from the relevant manufacturers' operator manuals or any other appropriate training or safety publication.

Unit 1 Pre Use Safety – Hedge Trimmers	
Assessment activities	Assessment criteria:
<p>1. Identify any hazards specific to the site, task and machine.</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of possible risks when operating the trimmer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walk the site and remove or mark hazards</li> <li>- Confirm that the condition of the site as acceptable for the operation to take place</li> <li>- Report to the appropriate person if the site condition is unsuitable</li> <li>- Set out warning signs and barriers (if appropriate) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advising public of hazards</li> <li>• Exclude public/animals</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Implement suitable controls to protect operator and the public</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flying debris</li> <li>- Stability of machine in long reach position</li> <li>- Moving parts</li> <li>- Fire or electric shock</li> </ul> <p>Unless otherwise stated in manufacturers handbook, PPE should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safety boots</li> <li>- Ear defenders</li> <li>- Face/eye protection</li> <li>- Dust mask if appropriate</li> <li>- Suitable gloves for maintenance</li> <li>- Other protection as highlighted by the Risk Assessment</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Avoid manual handling where possible</li> <li>- Use mechanical aids</li> <li>- Use safe lifting techniques (bend knees and keep back straight)</li> </ul>
<p>2. Carry out pre-start checks to the power unit and/or hedge trimmer</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of statutory guarding requirements</p> <p><b>Either</b></p> <p>Working with electrical equipment in outdoor situations (For Electrically powered hedge trimmers only)</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Fuel storage and transportation requirements (For spark ignition powered or tractor mounted hedge trimmers only)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Correct pre-start checks carried out in accordance with manufacturer's handbook/operators manual</li> <li>- Frequency of checks undertaken</li> <li>- Report findings as appropriate</li> <li>- Act on findings where appropriate</li> <li>- Carry out visual inspection to ensure safety of mower</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All moving parts, belts, pulleys, and chains must be guarded as defined in operator's manual/manufacturers handbook.</li> <li>- Blade guard fitted to hand held trimmer when not in use.</li> <li>- Tractors may require fitting additional guards to protect windows</li> </ul> <p>Electrically powered machinery must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have a <u>current</u> "Portable Appliance Test Certificate</li> <li>- Run from a 110 volt power supply</li> <li>- Be connected via a circuit/power breaker</li> </ul> <p>Fuel containers used must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be specifically designed for fuel storage</li> <li>- Have a non-spill spout</li> <li>- Be clearly labelled</li> <li>- Have securely fitting caps</li> <li>- Be kept away from any sources of ignition</li> </ul>

Unit 1 Pre Use Safety – Hedge Trimmers	
Assessment activities	Assessment criteria:
3. Identify and explain the function of all instruments, controls and safety decals on the machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Function identified of all the instruments and controls on the hedge trimmer (and power unit if applicable).</li> <li>- Information given on instruments interpreted</li> <li>- Fitted warning decals identified and interpreted.</li> </ul>
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the use or movement of powered machinery on or near the public highway or other areas to which the public has access	<p>Appropriate precautions that can be made to protect the operator, public and animals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Authorities informed about work</li> <li>- Warning signs erected</li> <li>- High visibility clothing worn</li> <li>- “Exclusion zone” set up</li> <li>- Road/dual carriageway lane closed/coned off</li> </ul> <p>Any self propelled machinery (tractors) used on or near the public highway must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be road legal</li> <li>- Have a minimum of third party insurance cover (to conform to Road Traffic Act requirements)</li> <li>- Be driven by someone holding an appropriate licence (where applicable)</li> <li>- Be under the control of someone aged 16 yrs. or over</li> <li>- Have an orange flashing beacon when used on dual carriageways. (For other road types, subject to individual Risk Assessment).</li> </ul>

Unit 2 Operate hand held powered hedge trimmers	
Assessment activities	Assessment criteria:
1. Fuel or connect power to machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Observe correct safety procedures for working with electricity or inflammable fuels.</li> <li>- Check fuel level <b>or</b> lead/plug integrity (as appropriate)</li> <li>- Identify and obtain correct fuel/extension lead/circuit breaker for machine from store if required.</li> <li>- Mix fuel to required proportions if necessary</li> <li>- Top up fuel level <b>or</b> connect trimmer to power supply</li> <li>- Deal with spillage's safely</li> </ul>
2. Test start machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hold trimmer securely for starting</li> <li>- Start machine safely</li> <li>- Check operation of safety interlocks</li> <li>- Stop trimmer and prepare for transport to site</li> </ul>
3. Operate Hedge Trimmer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Move machine to appropriate starting point for job on selected site, locate power source appropriately</li> <li>- Use safe working practices for trailing leads (if appropriate)</li> <li>- Follow starting procedures and start machine safely</li> <li>- Implement safe and efficient working practices throughout the operation,</li> <li>- Check quality of work after initial runs and make adjustments as necessary</li> <li>- Check electrical safety, overheating of connections after initial run. Only proceed if safe to do so</li> <li>- Trim a 20m length of hedge to include at least <b>one</b> side and <b>one</b> top.</li> <li>- Stop (and disconnect if applicable) and remove machine from working site</li> </ul>
4. Leave work area tidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear and tidy working areas</li> <li>- Dispose of trimmings according to job specification</li> </ul>

Unit 2 Operate hand held powered hedge trimmers (continued)	
Assessment activities	Assessment criteria:
<p>5. Demonstrate knowledge of factors to consider when cleaning the hedge trimmer and reasons for cleaning</p> <p>And;</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of the need to inspect the hedge trimmer after use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reasons for cleaning include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent corrosion</li> <li>• Facilitate maintenance and adjustments</li> <li>• Prevent personal contamination</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Identify PPE to be used</li> <li>- Remove any unwanted residues safely using appropriate methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compressed air</li> <li>• Water - not for electrically powered machines</li> <li>• Degreasing agent</li> <li>• Brush</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Dispose of waste material according to company policy and legislation</li> <li>- Inspect machine for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear</li> <li>• Damaged or missing parts</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Use operators instruction book as appropriate</li> <li>- Report findings to appropriate person to ensure defects corrected before machine is next used</li> </ul>

<b>Unit 3 Operate Tractor Mounted Hedge Trimmers</b>	
<b>Assessment activities</b>	<b>Assessment criteria:</b>
1. Check trimmer's attachment to tractor and demonstrate knowledge of the process of attachment.	<p>For the hedge trimmer being used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that tractor and machine are compatible and appropriate for the purpose required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power requirements</li> <li>• Hydraulic capacity</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Process of attaching the trimmer to the tractor described, as recommended by the manufacturer's handbook/operators manual.</li> <li>- Check all couplings of trimmer to power unit are in place securely</li> <li>- Check stability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of ballast/wheel weights</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Ensure all guards are fitted</li> </ul>
2. Fuel tractor, observing appropriate safety procedures for working with flammable liquids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No smoking</li> <li>- No naked flames</li> <li>- Avoid contact with hot surfaces</li> <li>- Fuel level topped up safely as required</li> <li>- Any spillage dealt with due regard for operator and environmental safety</li> </ul>
3. Test start tractor and hedge trimmer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure all gears and hydraulics are in neutral</li> <li>- Start engine and test run trimmer safely</li> <li>- Check operation of safety interlocks</li> <li>- Check function and operation of hydraulic circuits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct direction of operation</li> <li>• Flow restrictors functioning</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Stop trimmer and prepare for transport to site</li> </ul>
4. Operate hedge trimmer  Negotiate an obstacle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Move the tractor to appropriate starting point for job on the selected site</li> <li>- Follow procedure to start the hedge trimmer safely</li> <li>- Check quality of work after initial runs and make adjustments as required</li> <li>- Trim top, sides and verge of a 50m length of hedge according to job specification</li> <li>- Trim up to obstacle</li> <li>- Stop cutters</li> <li>- Retract trimmer head</li> <li>- Drive past obstacle</li> <li>- Reposition trimmer head</li> <li>- Re-start trimmer and continue</li> </ul>
5. Leave work area tidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clean and tidy work areas</li> <li>- Dispose of trimmings according to job specification and current legislation</li> </ul>
6. Demonstrate knowledge of factors to consider when cleaning the hedge trimmer and reasons for cleaning  And:  Demonstrate knowledge of the need to inspect the hedge trimmer after use	<p>Reasons for cleaning include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prevent corrosion</li> <li>- Facilitate maintenance and adjustments</li> <li>- Prevent personal contamination</li> <li>- Identify PPE to be used</li> <li>- Remove any unwanted residues safely using appropriate methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compressed air</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Degreasing agent</li> <li>• Brush</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Dispose of waste material according to company policy and legislation</li> <li>- Inspect machine for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear</li> <li>• Damaged or missing parts</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Use operators instruction book as appropriate</li> <li>- Report findings to appropriate person to ensure defects corrected before machine is next used</li> </ul>

<b>Unit 4 Operate Tractor Mounted Verge Mowers</b>	
<b>Assessment activities</b>	<b>Assessment criteria:</b>
1. Check verge mower's attachment to tractor and demonstrate knowledge of the process of attachment.	<p>For the verge mower being used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that tractor and machine are compatible and appropriate for the purpose required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power requirements</li> <li>• Hydraulic capacity</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Process of attaching the verge mower to the tractor described, as recommended by the manufacturer's handbook/operators manual.</li> <li>- Check all couplings of machine to power unit are in place securely</li> <li>- Check stability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of ballast/wheel weights</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Ensure all guards are fitted</li> </ul>
2. Fuel tractor observing appropriate safety procedures for working with flammable liquids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No smoking</li> <li>- No naked flames</li> <li>- Avoid contact with hot surfaces</li> <li>- Fuel level topped up safely as required</li> <li>- Any spillage dealt with due regard for operator and environmental safety</li> </ul>
3. Test start tractor and verge mower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure all gears and hydraulics are in neutral</li> <li>- Start engine and test run verge mower safely</li> <li>- Check operation of safety interlocks</li> <li>- Check function and operation of hydraulic circuits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct direction of operation</li> <li>• Flow restrictors functioning</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Stop verge mower and prepare for transport to site</li> </ul>
4. Operate verge mower  Negotiate an obstacle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Move the tractor to appropriate starting point for job on the selected site</li> <li>- Follow procedure to start the machine safely</li> <li>- Check quality of work after initial runs and make adjustments as required</li> <li>- Mow a 50m length of verge according to job specification</li> <li>- Mow up to obstacle</li> <li>- Stop cutters</li> <li>- Retract mower head</li> <li>- Drive past obstacle</li> <li>- Reposition mower head</li> <li>- Re-start mower and continue</li> </ul>
5. Leave work area tidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clean and tidy work areas as required by job specification and work practice</li> </ul>
6. Demonstrate knowledge of factors to consider when cleaning the verge mower and reasons for cleaning  And:  Demonstrate knowledge of the need to inspect the verge trimmer after use	<p>Reasons for cleaning include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prevent corrosion</li> <li>- Facilitate maintenance and adjustments</li> <li>- Prevent personal contamination</li> <li>- Identify PPE to be used</li> <li>- Remove any unwanted residues safely using appropriate methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compressed air</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Degreasing agent</li> <li>• Brush</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Dispose of waste material according to company policy and legislation</li> <li>- Inspect machine for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear</li> <li>• Damaged or missing parts</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Use operators instruction book as appropriate</li> <li>- Report findings to appropriate person to ensure defects corrected before machine is next used</li> </ul>



<b>Unit 5 Hedgerow Maintenance Principles</b>	
<b>Assessment activities</b>	<b>Assessment criteria:</b>
1. Demonstrate knowledge of the functions of hedgerows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shelter and shade for stock</li> <li>- Windbreak for crops</li> <li>- Prevent soil erosion</li> <li>- Stock proof barrier</li> <li>- Landscape enhancement</li> <li>- Ownership, field, parish, township boundary markers</li> <li>- Privacy</li> <li>- Game management</li> <li>- Natural acoustic barrier</li> </ul>
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the environmental benefits of hedgerows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wildlife habitats</li> <li>- Wildlife corridor</li> <li>- Production of fruits and berries</li> <li>- Variety of plant species</li> </ul>
3. Demonstrate knowledge of constraints affecting hedgerows	<p>Wildlife and Countryside Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no cutting if bird nesting in evidence</li> <li>- qualifying dates under legislation (currently 1<sup>st</sup> March -31<sup>st</sup> July)</li> </ul> <p>Agri-Environment Schemes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rotational cutting of hedges. (E.g. trim on 2 or 3 year rotation).</li> <li>- Failure to comply can result in non payment of scheme entitlements</li> </ul> <p>Highways Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- maintain clear visibility on public highways</li> </ul> <p>Hedgerow Regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it is an offence to remove hedgerow without permission from Local Authority</li> </ul>
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the types and composition of hedgerows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Earth cam and drainage ditch</li> <li>- High turf bank topped with plants</li> <li>- Earth bank with stone sides</li> <li>- Mature single or double line of plants</li> <li>- Single species hedge</li> <li>- Ancient/Species rich</li> <li>- Specimen (standard trees within hedgerow)</li> </ul>
5. Demonstrate knowledge of different methods of hedgerow maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hedge laying</li> <li>- Coppicing</li> <li>- Manual cutting</li> <li>- Trimming with mechanical flail</li> <li>- Siding</li> <li>- Flail using top down sequence</li> <li>- Alternate cutting sides/top</li> <li>- Allow trees at intervals to grow into standards</li> <li>- Reshaping</li> </ul>
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the reasons for maintaining hedgerows, through trimming and/or hedge laying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain desired appearance</li> <li>- Pedestrian and vehicle safety</li> <li>- Public Highway sight lines</li> <li>- Maintain stock-proof barrier</li> <li>- Maintain hedge density</li> <li>- Siding stimulates top growth and removes side growth to allow ease of laying</li> </ul>
7. Demonstrate knowledge of different hedge shapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'A'- shape</li> <li>- Box/Rectangle</li> <li>- Topped 'A'-shape</li> <li>- Rounded</li> </ul>
8. Demonstrate knowledge of the benefits of different hedge shapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A-shapes, rounded and chamfered shed more snow</li> <li>- A-shapes rounded and chamfered can maintain dense hedge base</li> <li>- Box shape avoids contact with internal foreign bodies</li> <li>- Maintain local shape to keep in character with the local landscape</li> <li>- A-shape is optimal shape unless dictated by other factors</li> </ul>
9 Demonstrate knowledge of different hedge cutting mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rotary blades</li> <li>- Circular saw heads</li> <li>- Flails heads</li> <li>- Reciprocating blade</li> <li>- Hand held hedge trimmers</li> </ul>

<b>Unit 5 Hedgerow Maintenance Principles (continued)</b>	
<b>Assessment activities</b>	<b>Assessment criteria:</b>
10. Demonstrate knowledge of suitability of equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Age and condition of hedge</li> <li>- Species being cut</li> <li>- Sharpness of blades/flail for clean cut</li> <li>- Flails fixed in correct position on rotor</li> <li>- Adhere to manufacturer's recommendations</li> <li>- Match flails to stem diameter</li> </ul>
11. Demonstrate knowledge of the timing of hedge trimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Avoidance of bird nesting season</li> <li>- Late winter trimming to retain wildlife food source (i.e. hedge in flower or in fruit)</li> <li>- Conditions of agri-environment schemes</li> <li>- Suitability/availability of access to adjacent land</li> <li>- Times of less traffic flow</li> <li>- Weather conditions</li> </ul>
12. Demonstrate knowledge of the factors affecting frequency of hedge trimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain clear roadside, footpaths and bridleways</li> <li>- Stimulate new growth</li> <li>- Encourage flowering and fruiting</li> <li>- Enhance wildlife habitat</li> <li>- Enhance winter food source</li> <li>- Conditions of agri-environment schemes</li> </ul>
13. Demonstrate knowledge of the benefits of not cutting hedgerows back to same point each year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourages plant vigour</li> <li>- Maintains hedge density</li> <li>- Increase production of fruit and flowers</li> <li>- Increase hedge life</li> </ul>
14. Demonstrate knowledge of the establishment and maintenance of hedgerow trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Avoid damage to butt of tree</li> <li>- Avoid topping and allow to grow into standards if possible /suitable to landscape</li> <li>- Maintain min 50m spacing between young hedgerow trees where possible</li> <li>- Identify young trees with tags</li> </ul>
15. Demonstrate knowledge of the results of 'inappropriate' maintenance of hedgerows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Loss of wildlife habitat</li> <li>- Increased exposure</li> <li>- Unsightly appearance</li> <li>- Poor stock proofing</li> <li>- Topping of standard trees</li> <li>- Death of hedgerow</li> <li>- Legal implications/risk of prosecution</li> </ul>