

**LEVEL 2**  
**CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE**  
**IN THE**  
**SAFE USE OF MOWERS**

**ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE**

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## NPTC Level 2 Certificate of Competence in the Safe Use of Mowers

### 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

At the Assessment the Assessor will evaluate each activity 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 a 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:

1. Meet the required standard in the safe preparation, operation and handling of a pedestrian controlled or tractor mounted or self-propelled ride on mower.
2. Select and wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
3. Select and safely use appropriate hand tools to undertake maintenance tasks.
4. Operate within and comply with the legislative requirements.
5. State the identified knowledge that underpins understanding of handling and operating the mower.

The assessment is divided into two compulsory units:

- Unit 1 Pre use safety - mowers  
Unit 2 Operate a Mower

Candidates must successfully achieve all assessment activities in both units.

### Endorsement 1

The Certificate will be endorsed according to the type of mower with which the assessment was undertaken.

- Either: Pedestrian Controlled  
Or Tractor Mounted  
Or Self Propelled (Ride-On)

### Endorsement 2

The assessment may be taken on a mower with any type of cutting mechanism for example:

- Cylinder
- Rotary
- Flail
- Reciprocating Knife

The certificate will be endorsed accordingly

Candidates are encouraged take their assessment with multiple cutting mechanisms to broaden their certification.

### **Safe Practice:**

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.

Vehicles must comply with Department of Transport and Road Traffic Acts where relevant.

Any appropriate item of mowing machinery complying with legal requirements is acceptable for the assessment, provided it is suitably equipped for **all** assessment activities to be carried out.

### **Additional Information:**

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

<b>Unit 1 Pre Use Safety – Mowers</b>	
<b>ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA</b>
<p>1. Identify any hazards specific to the site, task and machine.</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</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>- Suitable hand protection 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 attachments</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of statutory guarding requirements</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> </ul>
<p>3. Demonstrate knowledge of safe re-fuelling and appropriate safety procedures for working with flammable liquids</p> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of fuel storage and transportation requirements</p>	<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 safely</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>
<p>4. Identify and explain the function of instruments, controls and safety decals on the machine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Function identified of all the instruments and controls on the mower (and power unit if applicable).</li> <li>- Information given on any instruments interpreted</li> <li>- Fitted warning decals identified and interpreted.</li> </ul>

Unit 2 Operate a Mower	
Assessed in the context of either: "Pedestrian Controlled" or "Tractor Mounted" or "Self Propelled (Ride-on)" Mower	
ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
<p>1. Demonstrate knowledge of the condition of cutting mechanisms and maintenance procedures</p> <p>Either:</p> <p><b>a) Cylinder Mowers:</b>            Comment on condition of cutting mechanism and demonstrate knowledge of maintenance procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bed knife to cylinder clearance adjustment</li> <li>• Back lapping</li> </ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p><b>b) Rotary Mowers:</b>            Comment on condition of cutting mechanism and demonstrate knowledge of maintenance procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blade removal/refitting</li> <li>• Sharpening of blade</li> </ul> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of reasons for balancing the blade.</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p><b>c) Flail Mowers:</b>            Comment on condition of cutting mechanism and demonstrate knowledge of maintenance procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blade removal/refitting</li> <li>• Sharpening of blades</li> </ul> <p>Demonstrate knowledge of the importance of correct "balance" of the blades/shaft</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p><b>d) Reciprocating Knife Mower:</b>            Comment on condition of cutting mechanism and demonstrate knowledge of maintenance procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blade removal/refitting</li> <li>• Sharpening of blades</li> </ul>	<p>Process for maintaining cutting cylinder described as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Check the bed knife and cylinder for wear and damage</li> <li>- Check the bed knife to cylinder clearance</li> <li>- Carry out adjustments in accordance with manufacturers handbook</li> <li>- Procedure described for back lapping on the mower being used.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of grinding paste</li> <li>• Reverse direction of cylinder rotation</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Process for maintaining rotary blade described as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safely remove blade(s) from the mower using appropriate tools</li> <li>- Inspect the blade for damage and report on its condition</li> <li>- Carry out adjustments in accordance with manufacturers handbook</li> <li>- Balance the blade (any method using basic equipment for checking balance)</li> <li>- Refit the blade to the mower,</li> <li>- Check correct fitting and tightness/torque setting</li> </ul> <p>Blade balanced to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce vibration</li> <li>- Reduce noise</li> <li>- Reduce bearing wear</li> <li>- Protect the operator</li> </ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Process for maintaining flails described as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safely remove blades from the mower using appropriate tools</li> <li>- Inspect the blade for damage and report on its condition</li> <li>- Carry out adjustments in accordance with manufacturers handbook</li> <li>- Refit the blade to the mower, check correct fitting and tightness</li> </ul> <p>Blade balanced to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce vibration</li> <li>- Reduce noise</li> <li>- Reduce bearing wear</li> <li>- Protect the operator</li> </ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Process for maintaining reciprocating knife described as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safely remove the knife from the mower using appropriate tools</li> <li>- Inspect the blade for damage and report on its condition</li> <li>- Carry out adjustments in accordance with manufacturers handbook</li> <li>- Refit the knife to the mower</li> <li>- Check correct fitting including adjustment of knife clips, ledger plates, and wear plates</li> </ul>

<b>Unit 2 Operate a Mower (continued)</b>	
<b>ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA</b>
2. Test start mower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure all gears are in neutral</li> <li>- Start mower safely</li> <li>- Check operation of safety interlocks (operator presence controls)</li> <li>- Stop mower and prepare for transport to site</li> </ul>
3. Demonstrate knowledge of legal and safety requirements relating to the use or movement on or near the public highway or other areas to which the public has access	<p>Any self propelled machinery 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> <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 or dual carriageway lane closed/coned off</li> </ul>
4. Safely move mower to the working area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mower moved to the working area using safe lifting and handling methods where appropriate and with due regard to the safety of the operator, public and the environment</li> </ul>
5. Operate mower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Move the mower to appropriate starting point for job on the selected site</li> <li>- Adjust mower for specified operation (if appropriate)</li> <li>- Start the mower safely</li> <li>- Check quality of work after initial runs and make adjustments as required</li> <li>- All area mown to comply with job specification avoiding excessive overlap</li> </ul>
6. Leave work area tidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clean and tidy work areas</li> <li>- Dispose of waste according to job specification and current legislation</li> </ul>
7. Demonstrate knowledge of factors to consider when cleaning the mower and reasons for cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>• Brush</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Dispose of waste material according to company policy and legislation</li> </ul> <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> </ul>
8. Demonstrate knowledge of the need to inspect the mower after use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mower inspected to establish any wear, damaged and/or missing components through use</li> <li>- Ensures any defects are rectified before it is next used</li> </ul>