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COURSE INFORMATION BOOKLET FOR AMENITY COURSES

INTRODUCTION

BASIS was established in 1978, with government approval, to develop standards for pesticide storage, transport and the advice given to pesticide users including the Amenity Sector.

The BASIS Certificate was enshrined in the law when the Control of Pesticide Regulations (COPR) 1986 made it compulsory for all those involved in the sale and supply of professional pesticides to be appropriately certificated with a qualification recognised by ministers (BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection). These are all laid down clearly in the Approved Code of Practice for Suppliers of Pesticides to Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry (Yellow Code). This includes Amenity use.

In 1992 BASIS began to set standards for examination and certification for the Fertiliser Industry with the advent of FACTS and this is now recognised as the industry standard for those giving advice on the use of fertilisers and crop nutrient requirements.

More recently the emphasis has changed and users are now encouraged to consider the environment, biodiversity in the countryside and an integrated approach to pesticide use.

The Basis Foundation Award for Amenity is designed to give a sound introduction to integrated controls and alternative approaches to pesticide use.

The Environmental Pesticide Management (Amenity) certificate (formerly POWER) is designed to help those who have responsibility for the application of pesticides in amenity areas. It has been put together specifically to address water protection and environmental issues in this sector.

The protection of water and the environment, protection of biodiversity and prevention of contamination with pesticides is a key aim, not only for this qualification but for the amenity industry, in the future.

For further details please visit our website www.basis-reg.com to download course syllabuses and details of training providers. You can also contact the training department on 01335 340857 or by email on training.courses@basis-reg.co.uk.

AMENITY QUALIFICATIONS

BASIS CERTIFICATE IN AMENITY HORTICULTURE FOR FIELD, SALES AND TECHNICAL STAFF (FSTS)

The use of pesticides in amenity horticulture includes hard surface weed control, control of weeds, pests and diseases of turf and similar crop protection issues for shrubs and glasshouse plants. Course duration is up to 17 days and will depend on the knowledge and experience of the candidates. Courses are run as either day release or in blocks of a week at a time; you will need to contact the trainer of your choice for details.

The structure of the BASIS Certificate in Amenity Horticulture was revised in March 2007. The examination (and the course training associated with it) now has a number of central, core modules, all of which candidates must pass, plus a more specialised module(s) for a skill area that candidates (and their employers) will select prior to starting the course. Candidate choice(s) must be notified to BASIS at least one month prior to the exam date.

The skill area module choices are:

1. Hard surface areas
- or 2. Turf, amenity grass and sports areas
- or 3. Shrubs, borders and container plants

For a candidate to achieve a BASIS Certificate in Amenity Horticulture they must pass the core modules and at least one other (skill) module. The skill area selected will be shown on the pass certificate. By prior arrangement and prior booking candidates may sit a second or third skill area exam at a later date. This means candidates can build up their qualifications to include additional skill areas.

Please note candidates will only be tested on the core modules and one skill area on any exam day. Core module training will be the same for all candidates, followed by separate skill area training of the candidates' choice.

BASIS FOUNDATION AWARD (AMENITY)

There are many people working in Amenity Horticulture and it is recognised as a very broad area of activity. Individuals are involved in a diverse range of amenity work including: industrial and construction sites; sports turf maintenance; shrubs and borders in parks, and many other essential elements of business and social activity.

All these different areas of Amenity Horticulture, have an involvement with pesticides to assist in weed control, to control pests and to control plant diseases.

The sale, storage and use of professional pesticides is tightly controlled and those selling / advising, applying or storing professional pesticides are all required by law to hold the relevant certificates of competence. In the case of sales / advice, the relevant qualification is the BASIS Certificate for Field, Sales and Technical Staff (FSTS) in Amenity Horticulture.

A large number of people in Amenity Horticulture have a need to understand more about pesticides, how they work and why they are needed. However their main employment activity may not involve selling, advising, applying or storing pesticides.

This course is designed for such people and it may also be an introduction for those who wish to go forward to the next level of qualification, the BASIS Certificate in Amenity (FSTS).

ENVIRONMENTAL PESTICIDE MANAGEMENT (AMENITY)

Over recent years the management of pesticide use in amenity horticulture has undergone a number of changes. Society is becoming even more aware of Environmental issues with particular regard to the impact of pesticides on public spaces, water and wildlife.

To improve the quality of these 3 important components of life needs action if the targeted outcomes are to be achieved. Many of these actions have been coordinated through the Voluntary Initiative (VI) and the Amenity Forum.

The responsible and safe use of pesticides in amenity horticulture, ground care and sports turf situations is an essential part of achieving the desired quality improvements.

At the same time as the focus on water and environmental quality is increasing, there is a progressive reduction in the manpower involved in pesticide application and contract management. Managers and operators are being asked to do more which is increasing time pressure and personal responsibility.

It is, therefore, very important that those responsibilities are performed to a high standard of competence. Good progress has been made with the National Register of Sprayer Operators, (NRoSO) which is run by NPTC to improve operator efficiency and the new National Amenity Sprayer Operator Register (NASOR) will focus attention on CPD in the amenity sector for operators. Advisers / consultants / agronomists who make pesticide recommendations need the BASIS Certificate in Amenity (Horticulture) and the recently established BASIS Amenity Register which are becoming well established.

This course and certificate of competence is suitable for groundsmen, greenkeepers, contract specifiers, managers, foremen and supervisors of amenity situations where pesticides are used. It is not designed for those specifying which products are to be used, but is for those who have responsibility for pesticide application whilst not actually applying the products used themselves.

The Environmental Pesticide Management (Amenity) Certificate has been put together by BASIS (Registration) Ltd. and City & Guilds NPTC for the benefit of industry managers and supervisors.

BASIS ADVANCED CROP MODULE IN AMENITY HORTICULTURE

There are twelve Advanced Crop Modules of which Amenity Horticulture is one. This is awarded after the successful completion of a short training course.

Candidates can either use these modules for updating or as part of the BASIS Diploma in Agronomy.

There are 12 Advanced modules available of which Amenity Horticulture is just one.

AMENITY HORTICULTURE

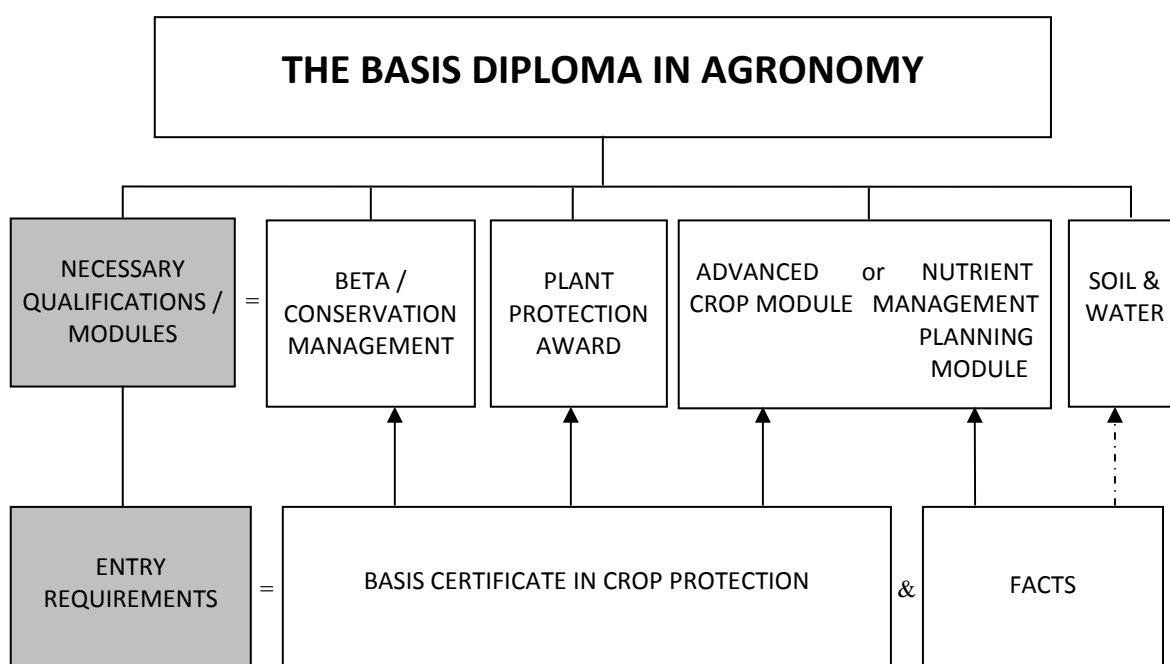
This module is aimed to give an insight into the amenity horticulture area, covering the topics of turf production, maintenance and management, maintenance of road and motorway verges, gardens and parks (but not amateur properties), forest areas, dry and aquatic areas and the maintenance of industrial sites.

The growth, establishment, plant protection, fertiliser requirements, selection of seed mixtures and maintenance and management procedures will be discussed and reviewed in depth.

The module will be of particular benefit for those advisers and representatives who wish to improve their in-depth knowledge of amenity horticulture; it will prove particularly valuable to staff who are already experienced in other areas but wish to diversify their specialist subject within the wider topic of Amenity Horticulture.

THE BASIS DIPLOMA IN AGRONOMY

The breadth and scope of knowledge needed for pesticide sales and advice grows every year. New products, new techniques and the way that these fit with other management activities all add to the skills needed by those involved in sales and advice for amenity pesticides. To cover the range of factors involved, the new BASIS Diploma in Agronomy, as set out below, gives a comprehensive training and qualification framework for those involved in advice and sales in the amenity sector.



TOPICS COVERED

ADVANCED MODULE / NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLANNING MODULE

Weed, Pest & Disease Control, Plant Protection Programmes, Marketing, Nutrient Management

BETA / CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

Environment, Biodiversity, EIS's, CPMP's, ICM, Climate Change

PLANT PROTECTION AWARD (PPA)

Systems & Society, Formulation, Mode of Action, Application, Health & Safety

SOIL & WATER MANAGEMENT

Cultivation Types and Properties, Cropping Systems, Water Quality, Drainage, Pollution/Waste, Plant Nutrition

For the PPA and the Advanced Module(s) the prior achievement (by examination, exemption or validated certificate) of the BASIS Certificate is an entry requirement. For the Nutrient Management Planning Module the prior achievement of the FACTS qualification is required.

The FACTS qualification is also a requirement for successful completion of the BASIS Diploma and strongly recommended for those wishing to train for the Soil and Water Management certificate.

Prior qualification of the BASIS Certificate (or exemption or validated certificate) or the Environmental Pesticide Management or POWER Certificates are required for the BETA examination. In some circumstances, other qualifications may be taken into account for BETA eligibility. BASIS Approved Trainers must be assured that in such cases, the prospective candidate is capable of completing the BETA course and passing the BETA examination.

It is **strongly** recommended that candidates should have had at least two years experience of on-farm practical agronomy before attempting any of the modules which contribute towards the BASIS Diploma in Agronomy, but in particular before taking the Plant Protection Award.

BASIS CPD points are available for training and certification in all modules of the BASIS Diploma.

Further details of the BASIS Diploma in Agronomy can be obtained from the BASIS office or by e-mail to training.courses@basis-reg.co.uk.

The accreditation process for our qualifications has enabled BASIS to demonstrate a high standard of training and certification for our courses. Completion of (at least) 6 modules are required in order to obtain the BASIS Diploma in Agronomy.

A further consequence of accreditation on the Higher Education qualifications framework has been the development by HAUC of a Graduate Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management.

BASIS courses have all been awarded a number of credits based on the time spent on the course (Targeted Learning Hours). This is a recognised formula including face to face tuition time, research, reading and experiential learning. The credits are awarded at a level that reflects the intensity / difficulty of the learning materials, for example A level equivalent or 1st, 2nd or final year honours degree etc.

The qualifying BASIS courses with credits and levels awarded are shown below:

FACTS	
Credit Value	15
Level	Intermediate (Level 5)

SOIL & WATER	
Credit Value	15
Level	Honours (Level 6)

BASIS CERTIFICATE	
Credit Value	30
Level	Honours (Level 6)

BASIS PLANT PROTECTION AWARD	
Credit Value	15
Level	Honours (Level 6)

BASIS ADVANCED MODULES / ADVANCED NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT MODULE	
Credit Value	15
Level	Honours (Level 6)

BETA / CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT	
Credit Value	15
Level	Intermediate (Level 5)

Intermediate = 2nd or 3rd year of university (honours) degree qualification.

Honours level = final year university (honours) degree.

Eg. FACTS 15 credits = 150 hours notional teaching time

The six modules required for the BASIS Diploma add up to 105 credits. In order to qualify for the HAUC Graduate Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management, candidates will need to accumulate 120 credits (ie one extra 15 credit module in addition to the BASIS Diploma). This can be any of the Advanced Crop Modules or the new Nutrient Management Planning qualification, available from September 2009.

Other courses may in future be added to the list of eligible modules for this award (e.g. BASIS Nominated Storekeeper Award).

FACTS Turf (Golf and Sports Turf)

The FACTS scheme, its Technical Information Service and the BASIS Professional Register, which FACTS registered advisers can join, have been devised in response to several pressures.

Most people who take an interest in sports turf, both in its management and production, appreciate that if soil fertility is to be maintained then the nutrients taken off during mowing or lost to air or water must be replaced. However, many of these people are also concerned about the actual or potential environmental damage that these losses can cause and they look to those involved to do what they can to minimise them. This is one of the pressures to which those advising greenkeepers and groundsmen on fertiliser use must respond and which was behind the establishment of the FACTS scheme. It allows those managing turfgrass to identify individuals who are competent to advise them on all aspects of nutritional management including what the law requires of them in these matters.

There is also political pressure to respond to environmental problems either by regulation or use of what are termed economic instruments such as the Nitrate Directive or a fertiliser tax. These may be unwelcome but if environmental improvement is not forthcoming, proposals for their more widespread adoption will increase. Voluntary measures such as FACTS, encourage the adoption of best nutrient practices and offer those involved in horticulture an opportunity to demonstrate that they care for the environment while helping greenkeepers and groundsmen not to waste money.

There is also a need for advisers to continue their personal development. Lifelong learning and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) are modern themes and for good reason. It is increasingly down to individuals rather than employers to manage their careers. This means advisers must keep up-to-date and be able to offer evidence to their customers that they can be relied upon. Gaining a FACTS qualification is only the start. They are automatically added on to the Professional Register following their success. In the years ahead it will become increasingly important for advisers to be able to demonstrate their membership of a recognised professional association like BASIS in order to demonstrate that they operate in accordance with the standards and protocols of the industry. Such initiatives also represent the most effective response to critics of the golf and sports turf sector and it is hoped that in time, these measures will result in a reduction of harmful nutrient losses.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

- **DO I NEED TO TAKE A TRAINING COURSE IN ORDER TO SIT A BASIS EXAMINATION?**

Not necessarily, if you feel you already have enough technical knowledge and in-field experience. However, candidates should ensure that they have been trained satisfactorily, either in-house or externally, and have had sufficient supervised field experience prior to the examination, so that they are capable of giving clear, concise advice and recommendations to pesticide users.

- **WHAT FORM DO THE TRAINING COURSES TAKE?**

BASIS courses are of various duration as detailed in individual syllabus and information booklets.

- **WHERE ARE TRAINING COURSES HELD?**

Details of trainers and locality can be found in the appropriate syllabus and information booklets.

- **HOW DO I APPLY TO TAKE A TRAINING COURSE?**

Contact the Training Provider of your choice and complete a training course application form. Send your application to your chosen training provider (**not** to BASIS).

- **IS IT POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN THE QUALIFICATION THROUGH CORRESPONDENCE OR EVENING CLASSES?**

A distance learning course is available for overseas candidates for some courses, though not at the moment for those in the UK.

- **WHEN AND WHERE ARE EXAMINATIONS HELD?**

Examinations are held when there are sufficient numbers to make them viable, usually following a training course and at a venue chosen by the training provider.

- **WHAT READING MATERIALS WILL I NEED?**

Contact the BASIS office or visit our website www.basis-reg.com for the appropriate training syllabus and information booklet. Your BASIS Approved Trainer will also be able to advise you.

- **IF I FAIL THE EXAMINATION, CAN I RE-SIT?**

Yes you can re-sit the exam; however, BASIS examinations are accredited on the Higher Education qualifications framework. One consequence of this is that we need to ensure procedures are in place to improve candidates' chances of success in subsequent examinations following a previous failure.

Where candidates have been examined unsuccessfully on two occasions, they will be required to retrain before attempting the exam for a third time. Candidates and trainers will be required to complete a form to confirm that they have retrained, particularly covering areas that were identified as 'areas of weakness' at previous exams. The form should be presented to the exam Chairman at the third exam attempt. Failure to confirm that retraining has taken place will result in a refusal to conduct the viva examination and subsequent 'no result' for the exam.

Please help us to help you by asking your training provider to evaluate your training needs and undertake the training required to ensure you can pass the exam.

Those candidates wishing to go forward for the 'BASIS Diploma and later the HAUC Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management should be aware that only three attempts at any examination will be automatically permitted if that course is included as a qualification module for the diploma(s). A fourth attempt may be allowed in exceptional circumstances.

- **WHAT IF I FAIL ONE PART OF THE EXAMINATION BUT PASS THE OTHER?**

Requirements for individual exams are contained in the syllabus and information booklet.

- **IF I APPLY FOR A JOB WITHIN THE PESTICIDES / FERTILISER INDUSTRY DO I HAVE TO HOLD THE BASIS CERTIFICATE?**

If you have not previously been employed by a distributor you have up to three years from entering the industry in which to become qualified. During that time you must work under the supervision of a certificate holder. Anyone involved in the sale or supply of pesticides must hold the BASIS Certificate of Competence.

- **WHAT IS MEANT BY "WORKING UNDER SUPERVISION"?**

All good trading companies will require their new personnel to have an initial period of training, accompanied by a qualified member of their staff. There will come a time when the company will have to allow the representative to work on his own. Until such time that he/she becomes qualified, all advice given and sales made by the new representative must be monitored by a qualified person who should countersign their sales documentation.

- **HOW DO I APPLY TO SIT THE BASIS EXAMINATION?**

You will need to contact the relevant trainer (a list can be obtained from the appropriate syllabus and information booklet) to book a place on the course / exam.

- **WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY EXAMINATION RESULTS?**

We aim to issue results and feedback within 4 weeks from the date of examination. **Please note results will not be given over the telephone.**

14 July 2010