

# Arboricultural Accreditation for Local Government Officers

## *Prospectus and Application Pack*

Congratulations on considering AALGO – a scheme that has become nationally recognised as providing a route for local government officers to demonstrate workplace competence in the field of arboriculture.

The essence of the scheme is summarised in four points:

- You choose the areas in which you want to demonstrate competence
- You gather evidence from your normal daily work
- You choose how quickly you want to progress through the scheme
- Your assessor/mentor is there to direct you to achieve industry best practice.

It's as simple as that. It doesn't undermine the more traditional qualifications but provides an alternative route to competence through NVQ-style assessments rather than 'end of year' exams and you don't have to be providing the whole local government arboriculture function. It provides an opportunity for accreditation through work you are already doing.

Join with us in promoting professional arboriculture within local government.

Nick Eden  
Director

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## 1. THE ARBORICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

The Arboricultural Association was founded in 1964. The Association is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity concerned with raising the standards of tree care in the UK and Ireland.

The activities of the Association include:

- Representation of the arboricultural industry at all levels through society and Government
- The provision of training through workshops, seminars, conferences etc
- The publishing of the quarterly *Arboricultural Journal* (the International Journal of Urban Forestry)
- The publishing of a range of documents, guidance notes, leaflets, press releases etc. concerned with the care of amenity trees
- The maintenance of directories of approved contractors and registered consultants
- The publishing of a quarterly members newsletter

Classes of membership exist for both professional arboriculturists, those in related disciplines and enthusiasts. Membership details and publication price lists can be obtained by downloading from our website at [www.trees.org.uk](http://www.trees.org.uk) or by contacting the Secretariat at:

The Arboricultural Association  
Ampfield House  
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Web: [www.trees.org.uk](http://www.trees.org.uk)

## 2. FOREWORD

By the Arboricultural Association's Director

Congratulations on considering Arboricultural Accreditation for Local Government Officers (AALGO).

AALGO is the only scheme of its kind, recognising excellence in local government tree management. Dubbed 'the scheme devised for tree officers by tree officers' it is actually much wider in its application and is for all local government officers involved wholly or partly in tree management. Tree officers, planning officers, landscape architects, contract managers and so on can submit examples of their daily work for assessment and if it meets the standard an accreditation certificate is awarded.

Local Government Officer Richard Nicholson says "The beauty of the scheme is that it is thoroughly modern in its approach, requiring little more from the local government officer except to take an extra copy of current work and submit it for assessment".

There are ten units covering all the main topics in local government tree management. Each unit is further broken down into a number of elements. AALGO is a 'credit as you go' scheme – participants build a portfolio of work suitable for submission and when it meets the standard, accreditation is awarded.

The time limit for completing elements or units is 5 years from attending the initial foundation workshop or from purchasing any additional units. Training budgets and time are precious resources and AALGO makes the most of both. Each person on the scheme is allocated an individual assessor/mentor

who will assess the portfolio of evidence and if necessary will advise on areas needing additional work before accreditation can be achieved. For those taking part in the scheme an introductory workshop will explain the whole process: the syllabus, portfolio preparation, assessment, verification and the issuing of accreditation certificates.

AALGO is pitched at NVQ level 3/4. It fills a void in the competence based arboricultural qualifications structure. Whilst the Professional Diploma in Arboriculture remains the premier professional qualification, accreditation through AALGO demonstrates competence in the work place.

For the individual local government officer there are a lot of potential benefits: it gives recognition for good work, raises the profile of the individual and the arboricultural profession in local government, provides an alternative to the traditional high risk 'study-examination' scenario and can be undertaken in the work environment. Being industry lead it is easily updated to keep pace with developments in the industry, it encourages life long learning and contributes to CPD by attendance at relevant training events.

The Assessment System

- An introductory workshop explains the process
- Candidates are assigned an assessor who also acts as a mentor
- Candidates gather work based evidence

- Submission made by candidate when ready
- Assessor examines portfolio and provides feedback
- Results are verified
- Applicant advised of result
- An annual accreditation statement is issued.

My thanks go to the members of the Association whose work enables us to run the scheme. Leicester based arboricultural trainer Dave Dowson sees AALGO being firmly established in the industry workplace. “Eventually

I would like to see the scheme provide the link to the next job, and job adverts stating ‘the following AALGO units and/or elements are applicable to the post and accreditation in these areas will be an advantage’ ”.

To register your place on the next AALGO Introductory Workshop please complete the application form and return to the Arboricultural Association. I wish you well in your pursuit of excellence in local government tree management.

Nick Eden  
Director  
October 2005

## 3. ACCREDITATION SCHEME OUTLINE

### 3.1 *Outline Structure*

The structure will be in common with modern educational awards and standards comprising of:

Units  
Elements  
Performance criteria  
Range statements  
Evidence indicators

The **units** are determined by The Arboricultural Association and will indicate what is required of an officer working for a local authority who is involved with the management of trees.

Each unit is divided into **elements of competence** against which candidates are assessed.

Within each element are **performance criteria**, these describe what the person holding the qualification can do and what is meant by a competent performance.

The **range statements** describe a range of situations in which the candidate has had to demonstrate competence.

To show competence the candidate must have demonstrated that they have satisfied the performance criteria. The candidate will have been required to have the **relevant knowledge** and **understanding**.

**Evidence indicators** will be the method that the candidate used to demonstrate competence.

### 3.2 *Collecting Evidence for Assessment*

The process of achieving accreditation is flexible according to the needs of both the candidate and the employer. The candidate gathers evidence of competence in a particular job task or area of work and presents this in a portfolio for assessment.

Evidence can be collected either from current practice (i.e. be generated by a current job role), or a bespoke learning programme, on or off the job, or a combination of the two.

### **3.3 Evidence Requirements**

To gain accreditation the candidate must demonstrate that they can perform the task or job competently. The evidence required can arise from a variety of sources and take many forms including:

- Reports
- Letters
- Memos
- Witness statements
- Publication of written works
- Video
- Audio tape
- Court evidence
- Direct observation
- Minutes

Appraisal reports, references or records of questioning by the assessor may supplement these.

Enough evidence is required to be able to satisfy the assessor. The assessor compares the evidence against the performance criteria and must be satisfied that the candidate:  
Consistently performs the task or job to the required standard  
Meets all the performance criteria  
Performs competently in a range of different situations  
Has the appropriate knowledge and understanding.

The evidence provided must be:

- Relevant to the standards
- Current
- Authentic

Accreditation is not constrained by time. However, it is important that the evidence submitted demonstrates current competence.

Accreditation requires assessment in order that the following can be measured:

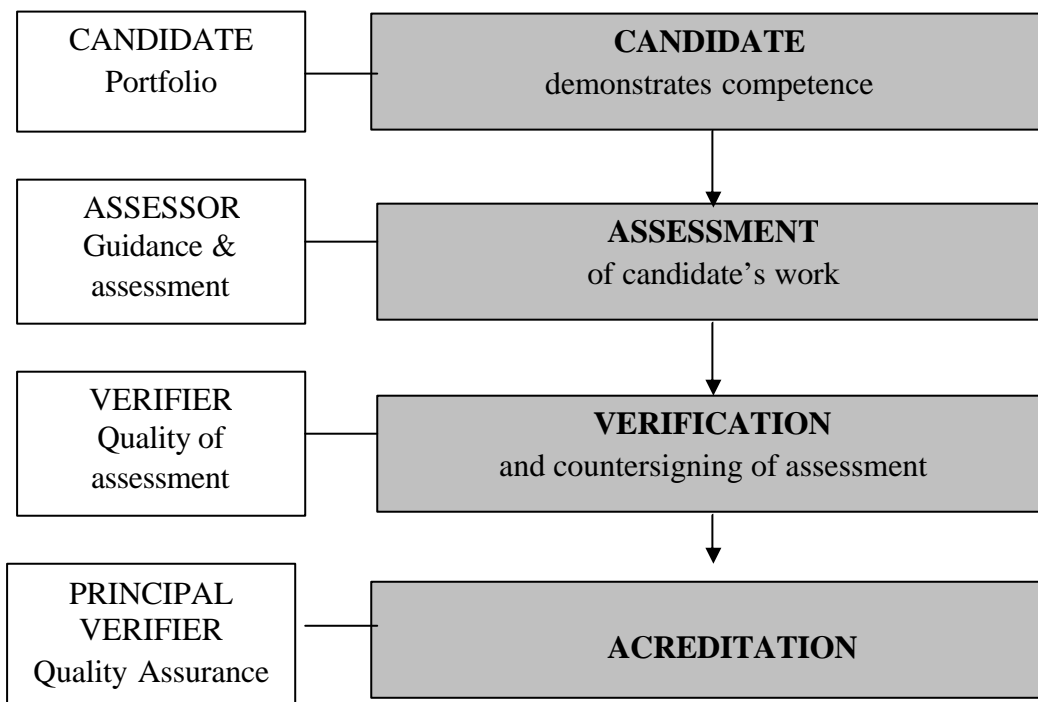
- Improvements to the present standards of good practice
- Improvements in the role of officers in the wider management issues of local government in general
- Ensuring officers continue their professional development
- Encouragement of further training and keeping in touch with current thinking
- Recognising the work carried out by officers in planning, managing contracts and supervising enforcing legislation such as Tree Preservation Orders.

### 3.4 Assessment

Assessment involves the candidate, assessor, verifier and a principal verifier. The candidate compiles evidence with the help and guidance of an assessor appointed by the AA.

The assessor compares the candidate's evidence against the standards. The assessment decision (competent or not yet competent) is fed back to the candidate and the assessment decision recorded on the Candidate Assessment Sheet. Copies are submitted to the candidate, the awarding body and the verifier.

The verifier samples assessment decisions made by the assessor across a number of candidates. This ensures conformity to the main standards and provides records of the verification process for the principal verifier. The principal verifier samples assessment and verifier decisions and monitors the quality of provision on behalf of the AA.



## 4. SYLLABUS INDEX

### Unit 1 Foundation module

- 1.1 Accreditation scheme structure
- 1.2 Sources of evidence
- 1.3 Building a portfolio

### Unit 2 Presentation

- 2.1 Present written information
- 2.2 Present written information to an inquiry
- 2.3 Court presentation
- 2.4 Present oral information
- 2.5 Give a presentation to an audience

### Unit 3 Human and resource management

- 3.1 Manage human resources
- 3.2 Plan training and development needs of teams and individuals
- 3.3 Manage effective working relationships
- 3.4 Manage interpersonal conflict, disciplinary and grievance procedures
- 3.5 Conduct meetings
- 3.6 Staff selection
- 3.7 Contribute to the planning, organisation and evaluation of work
- 3.8 Budget management
- 3.9 Purchasing
- 3.10 Information collection
- 3.11 Visitor care
- 3.12 Establish and maintain working relationships with members of the public
- 3.13 Emergency response

### Unit 4 Trees and the law

- 4.1 Tree preservation orders (Pre 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1999)
- 4.2 Tree preservation orders (Post 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1999)
- 4.3 Conservation areas
- 4.4 Common law
- 4.5 The Plant Health Act
- 4.6 The Forestry Act
- 4.7 Health and Safety at Work Act
- 4.8 Food and Environment Protection Act
- 4.9 Wildlife and Countryside Act/Countryside and Rights of Way Act/Habitat  
Regs
- 4.10 Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act
- 4.11 Hedgerow Regulations
- 4.12 Anti Social Behaviour Act

### Unit 5 Tree management

- 5.1 Urban tree strategies
- 5.2 Rural tree strategies
- 5.3 Urban tree management plans
- 5.4 Rural tree management plans
- 5.5 Implementation of tree management plans
- 5.6 Environment statement
- 5.7 Environmental assessment

5.8 Grant aid

**Unit 6 Surveys, inspections and data recording**

- 6.1 Tree surveys and inspections
- 6.2 Woodland surveys
- 6.3 Data interpretation
- 6.4 Maintain data systems
- 6.5 Decay measurement and analysis
- 6.6 Assess external reports

**Unit 7 Trees and development**

- 7.1 Site and tree survey
- 7.2 Tree selection
- 7.3 Planning application appraisal related to tree management
- 7.4 Protection of existing trees
- 7.5 Avoidance of damage to structures by trees
- 7.6 Construction of hard and soft surfaces around trees
- 7.7 New planting
- 7.8 Post construction remedial work

**Unit 8 Contract operation**

- 8.1 Standard conditions of contract
- 8.2 Specifications
- 8.3 Contract preparation
- 8.4 Tender documents
- 8.5 Selection of tenders
- 8.6 Monitoring procedure

**Unit 9 Tree maintenance**

- 9.1 Tree work
- 9.2 Controlling and monitoring tree work
- 9.3 Veteran and old pollard tree management
- 9.4 Hedgerow management
- 9.5 Trees and ecology
- 9.6 Subsidence investigation
- 9.7 Subsidence risk assessment

**Unit 10 Tree replacement**

- 10.1 Tree replacement programmes
- 10.2 Planting schemes.
- 10.3 Tree selection.
- 10.4 Tree planting
- 10.5 Tree protection.
- 10.6 After care implementation and monitoring

## 5. FEE STRUCTURE

Item	Detail	£ inc-VAT
Initial Registration Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Attend the AALGO foundation workshop</li> <li>b) Receive the Syllabus for Unit 1</li> <li>c) Receive the Syllabus for unit of choice</li> <li>d) The 1<sup>st</sup> years annual administration</li> <li>e) Access to personal assessor for mentoring by telephone, letter or in person at assessors surgery or home</li> <li>f) Assessment of portfolios for Unit 1 and unit of choice.</li> </ul>	£770 per candidate
Additional Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The Unit specific syllabus</li> <li>b) Continued maintenance of records</li> <li>c) Access to personal assessor for mentoring by telephone, letter or in person at assessors surgery or home</li> <li>d) Assessment of portfolio</li> </ul>	£452 per unit
Annual Administration Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Annually issue a questionnaire to 'live' Candidates and then assess results</li> <li>b) Annual review by Association, Principal Verifier and representatives from candidates, assessors, verifiers, industry and system managers</li> <li>c) Issue annual report to 'live' Candidates</li> <li>d) Any updates or news items on AALGO</li> <li>e) Issue annual Accreditation Statement to Candidates</li> <li>f) Maintenance of the syllabus and unit content in relation to legislative and other changes</li> <li>g) Issue updated Units/Elements to 'live' Candidates</li> <li>h) Maintenance of candidate records</li> <li>i) Operation of the complaints procedure</li> </ul>	Currently free

## 6. APPLICATION FORM and JOB SUMMARY

Please complete in full:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Local Authority \_\_\_\_\_

Address                      Work                                      Home

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the method(s) by which you would prefer us to contact you.

I wish to apply for a place on the next available AALGO foundation workshop. My

unit of choice is unit \_\_\_\_ (no.) \_\_\_\_\_ (title)

I enclose payment (cheques to The Arboricultural Association) *or* please debit my credit/debit/switch card *or* please invoice me against the local authority order number below, for the sum of £770.00 inc VAT

I have read and understood section 5 'Fee Structure'

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Card No:

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Valid From:

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Expiry Date:

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CSC

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L.A. Order No:	Authorised signature:
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Job Summary form (overleaf): Please complete, return with your application, keep a copy and bring it to the foundation workshop for use in building future portfolios.

