

Developing Gardening Skills

Introduction

This course focuses on the basic information all gardeners need to know to understand how plants grow and survive. You will be taken through a number of different tasks outdoors and in a greenhouse, such as soil testing, seed sowing and preparing planting ground. You will learn how to identify different types of plants, weeds, pests and diseases.

What will you learn?

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of garden and allotment produce
- Know how to control weeds
- Understand how to grow and care for plants grown from seed
- Understand the basic methods and principles of improving plant yield

Who is this course aimed at?

This introductory course is for anyone who is thinking about working as a gardener but who lacks the experience or confidence and wants to begin to develop a range of practical skills and build their horticultural knowledge. The course is also suitable for anyone thinking about getting back into education or employment and who wants to build their confidence as a first step.

What are the entry requirements?

There are no formal entry requirements for this course. However because you will be working with soil and plants it is recommended that you have an up-to-date tetanus jab or booster.

How is it taught?

The course is taught from a very practical perspective, with a number of exercises and tasks which build up over time to increase your awareness of gardening techniques and how to carry them out. You will work on your own but also in small groups with your tutor on hand to support you.

How will you be assessed?

Most of the assessment is achieved through the demonstrations, exercises and tasks you undertake as part of the teaching and learning. As you complete each piece of work, this is included in your Plant Journal which you are given at the start of the course and you hand in at the end.

What will you achieve?

You will gain an understanding of the basic and initial principles of successful gardening. You will increase your knowledge of plants and how to look after them. You will build your confidence in a variety of horticultural skills and in your ability to be a green-fingered gardener! You will also gain three Open College Network credits for your learning

What can you do after this?

This summer we are offering three gardening courses of which this is one. You can apply to do the others or you could wait until next year when we have plans to run these courses again and to add new ones. If you want to build your confidence and skills in other areas, for

example your personal development, please look at our website or Short Course Guide for ideas.

Who is the tutor?

The course is run by Dawn Roberts. Dawn is the college gardener and a qualified teacher. She is very enthusiastic about using the college's extensive grounds as an exciting outdoor classroom to meet the needs of her students.

When does it run?

This is a three day course which includes two nights residency at the College. Courses start at 5.30pm on the first day and finish between 3pm and 4pm on the third day. Please check our website or short course guide for course dates. Alternatively you can contact our Short Course office.

Is there a cost?

This course is free if you are claiming certain types of benefits. Otherwise it is £40 for individual learners or learners from voluntary organisations. If you have already received a mandatory grant while studying at a UK institution for higher education there is a £10 surcharge – this is to partly recoup the resultant loss in funding for the College.

All accommodation, food, teaching & course materials costs are included. ***However you must bring waterproof shoes or boots, waterproof clothing and a pair of gardening gloves.***

How can you apply?

For more information please contact the short course office on 0121 472 0116 or email shortcourses@fircroft.ac.uk. You can apply online at www.fircroft.ac.uk, by post or in person.

