



# LANTRA Qualification FAQ

**Lantra FAQ**

**26th October 2011**

## **LANTRA Level 1 Qualification in Beekeeping.**

This note is intended to act as an FAQ to explain aspects of the course. I am sorry for the 'alphabet soup', but it is important to understand how Further Education in the UK operates.

### **Q1. Who /What is LANTRA?**

LANTRA is a contraction of "Land-based Training" and has two corporate parts:

The first part is 'LANTRA'. This is a Sector Skills Council (SSC).

The second part is 'LANTRA Awards Ltd, a commercial body that is related to LANTRA (like BBKA and BBKA Enterprises.)

LANTRA is one of about 30 SSCs in the UK. Each SSC, which covers an industry area (like catering, construction, motor vehicle mechanics etc.), is funded by government to create and maintain the content and standards of courses taught in Further Education colleges under a system known as the 'QCF' (Qualifications & Credit Framework). The QCF replaced the similar NVQ system about 3 years ago. QCF is the formal means for a student to accumulate course credits towards vocational qualifications.

In order for a course to be taught under the QCF, it has to have been sponsored and developed by an SSC in conjunction with the relevant authoritative industry body (in this case, the BBKA) and then approved by the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority). The QCA approves ALL qualifications taught in the UK if they are to be formally recognised (GCSE, A-levels, etc).

LANTRA Awards Ltd. is an Awarding Body. There are many of these in the UK; you may be familiar with others such as City & Guilds (C&G) and the National Open College Network (NOCN), for example. Awarding Bodies take courses approved by the SSC/QCA and develop the detailed content, assessment criteria and general guidance on the course. Importantly, they also provide a formal Quality Assurance process in respect of the course content and the teaching and assessment of it.

### **Q2. How does the teaching work?**

A Further Education body (what you and I would call a 'college', but in this system is called a 'centre'), pays the Awarding Body for the rights to teach a course and recovers this from student fees. These fees may be paid by the student or may be recovered from 'the state', provided that the course is approved by the QCA.





# LANTRA Qualification FAQ

Exactly how the centre teaches the course is entirely up to the centre and its staff/facilities. It has to teach the required content and comply with the assessment criteria, but otherwise it has considerable flexibility. The Awarding Body will use its QA system to assure that the teaching meets their requirements. This makes sense, as this kind of vocational training is often combined with employment or other activities by the student.

### **Q3. What is in this beekeeping course?**

The course is a Level 1 Award. This is the very bottom of the QCF progression. From a beekeeping perspective, it is a little above the BBKA Junior Assessment, but below the BBKA Basic in terms of beekeeping content. As this is a vocational course, it also includes a Health and Safety unit and a food hygiene unit.

It is intended that this course be taken by students engaged in a larger field of study, e.g. horticulture, land management or biodiversity studies. The QCF allows courses to be accumulated with credits at each level to 'assemble' a qualification.

The units are structured so that some can be taught by a competent biology/botany teacher (e.g. simple honey-bee life cycle and pollination) or food hygiene instructor or a beekeeper for the practical beekeeping elements. This will make it easier for the centre to teach the course.

### **Q4. Why can't you use the BBKA Qualifications for this purpose?**

There are two reasons:

Firstly, the BBKA Examinations system has evolved and is well suited to the needs of BBKA members and similar individuals who are interested in the craft. However, none of the qualifications it contains are SSC/QCA approved and are therefore of no formal value to anyone in Further Education. Such a student could take a BBKA qualification, but this cannot count towards their QCF credits and therefore their industry-recognised training.

Secondly, qualifications within the QCF are required to be broader in nature. They include, as the student progresses, the softer skills required of anyone in employment, such as Health & Safety, dealing with the public, record keeping, organising work and so on. The BBKA qualifications do not contain these elements as there is no need for this in their area.

*[Note: These comments apply equally to the NDB, but this is at a much higher level that would usually be taught in a FE college.]*





# LANTRA Qualification FAQ

## Q5. Could the BBKA Qualifications be adapted?

In principle, it would be possible to make a series of QCF qualifications that were aligned to the BBKA qualifications, although this would not be a one-to-one mapping. For instance, there would not be a QCF qualification for each BBKA Module. Rather, a higher-level course would be assembled which contained all the Modules, for instance.

The main difficulty is one of volume. In order for it to make financial sense a centre needs to have a certain volume of students taking the course. This is very unlikely to be achieved for the higher BBKA qualifications.

## Q6. Why has the BBKA been involved in developing this course?

There are several reasons:

a) the BBKA receives requests from colleges asking about teaching beekeeping and the BBKA Qualification system, with a view to providing courses within the QCF. As explained above, the BBKA system cannot be used for this purpose.

b) The BBKA is an educational charity supporting the teaching of beekeeping in its broadest sense. We provide education services for members and for many years have also done so for primary schools with 'Bees In The Curriculum' and so on. It makes sense for BBKA expertise to be used to develop this approach for older students.

*[Note: The Dept. for Education allows a formal route into the QCF mechanism usable by 14-16 year-olds; the QCF is not limited to 'over 16/18's']*

c) It allows access to beekeeping education for many students where beekeeping is a natural fit with their main vocational studies. Such students cannot use the BBKA system to build up their qualifications.

d) It will start to re-generate a form of 'state' provision of beekeeping education. Apart from the valuable services provided by the Fera Bee Inspectorate, such a provision lapsed with the demise of the old County Beekeeping Instructors and has not been replaced to date. This is a way to bring beekeeping back into the mainstream of 'agricultural' education.

## Q7. How will this affect BBKA Member Associations?

This qualification is not intended to replace in any way any of the BBKA qualifications, which are entirely suited to the needs of the BBKA membership.

The teaching of this Level 1 course will clearly require the services of beekeepers, both as tutors for some of the units and as assessors. (The course design specifies that assessors must hold the BBKA General Husbandry Certificate.) There is therefore an opportunity for beekeepers to be involved on a formal (and paid) basis to provide these services to centres, just as any other tutor.





# LANTRA Qualification FAQ

## **Q8. What should Member Associations do?**

The BBKA and LANTRA are working together to link centres who wish to teach this qualification with beekeepers and MAs etc. who wish to become involved. You may be approached by a college to ask if you are interested in being involved or you can be proactive and speak to a local college about this qualification.

In either case, both the BBKA and LANTRA will help you to navigate what is involved.

The general mechanism is:

- a) the college should formally register its interest in this course with LANTRA
- b) LANTRA and the BBKA will work together to find beekeepers interested in helping with teaching with the college

LANTRA and the BBKA keep the list of interested colleges under regular review.

\*\*\* END \*\*\*

