

Professional Gardener's Trust

Report

I Michelle Carter work as a self-employed gardener in West Yorkshire. Over the last 12 months I have changed my career from solely being a support worker and doing some teaching in gardening to special need adults. To expanding my business and becoming a 100% gardener. Supporting and teaching others in this field of work and having my own landscaping and garden maintenance work.

The award amount I received was for £500 pound for the RHS Practical Horticulture Level 2 certificate at Shipley College, Saltaire Bradford, West Yorkshire. The total price of the courses was £650. Therefore this award from the Manchester Royal Botanic and the Northern Counties Trust greatly helped to fund my training.

The Course training and structure was very hands on and practical. We covered health & safety, risk assessments, tool management, site assessments, safe waste disposal and recycling of organic matter, hard core and non-organic materials. Practical skills in ground preparation for seeds and planting. Establishing seeds in the soil, vegetative propagation techniques. Taking cuttings, pruning, potting on plants and division.

The knowledge reinforced things I had learned on the RHS Theory Course which I had studied the previous year.

I found learning 220 botanical names for plants, trees, weeds and shrubs particularly challenging and demanding. However with the use of a student portal we took pictures of the plants around the college grounds and uploaded them for all to learn.

Establishing, repairing and maintaining a lawn was very practical, interesting and helpful; I was able to apply this knowledge and the techniques in my own landscaping project I was currently undertaking at the time.

The Ph testing of soil and establishing the structure of soil; learning about plant disorders was new to me. I found it very interesting because it helped me to understand the connection between the soil Ph and types of soil structure. Therefore how to select the right plants for certain types of soil and Ph. Thus expanding my knowledge of how to succeed when establishing plants not only in the right soil but in the right environment to thrive.

The style of delivery of this course was just up my street because I have dyspraxia. I have appreciated the way the teacher modelled the skills first and then talked through the learning process, then we had a go and was given guidance. Therefore this greatly helped to reinforce the learning in a most beneficial way for me. We were also encouraged to practise in our own time. The course content was progressive and linked up to previous skills and knowledge. It was structured in a very practical way for most learning styles, especially kinaesthetic learners. The teacher was very enthusiastic and supportive which inspired me to keep focused and apply what I was learning in my gardening business. Thus my confidence has grown and I find the way I conduct my business now, has improved practically and professionally.

I feel the way forward for my business is to increase my knowledge of alternative methods to keep plants free from pests and diseases. Also alternative ways to eradicate weeds. I would definitely encourage anyone who has an appreciation and interest in gardening to apply for a college course and then prepare to apply that knowledge in a practical setting. The Professional Gardener's Trust is a stepping stone that helps you financially to achieve that objective. I have thoroughly enjoyed my learning journey and I look forward to the next adventure in gardening, there is always more to learn and enjoy!



This I me doing my landscaping job. Cutting up dead shrubs.

The other pictures is me at college designing out team garden.
It is inspired by 'Dib,Dib,Dob'. The Scouts and Brownies camping out garden.