



RHS

Learning

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RHS Master of Horticulture (MHort) factsheet



About the RHS Master of Horticulture (MHort)

This Award will appeal to you if you are motivated to undertake self-directed research within a structured assessment environment, take ownership of your research, and allow your career to grow in a flexible way. Interaction for the programme is completely online through the MHort Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) allowing you to work within your own working and home life to meet the deadlines required by a varied assessment programme from anywhere in the world.



Benefits of completing the RHS MHort Award:

- Develop awareness of all areas of the horticultural industry, within a global context.
- Improve skillsets in problem-solving, successful communication and adapting to change.
- Widen knowledge of different business models and acquire project management competences.
- Gain effective research skills to relay key information into professional reports.
- Understand and enhance your personal management style, for productive relationships.
- Discover a global professional network for in-industry problem solving, career advice, and development.
- Earn the right to use the designation MHort (RHS) after your name, and increase your credibility and status. Improve confidence and widen career advancement opportunities.
- Affordable and flexible payment options, including monthly, to help spread the cost.
- Flexible part-time study, entirely online, over three years.

Programme content

The Award comprises eight Units, within which you will cover a broad range of knowledge and skills.

In the first year, you will broaden your understanding of the horticultural environment and develop appropriate skills to underpin your future study. In the second year, you will have the opportunity to select scenarios within the assessment to deepen your knowledge in areas that are of interest to you and are relevant to your own careers. The final year provides the opportunity for you to demonstrate how you would apply your knowledge in real-life situations, and to carry out research on a topic of your choice, producing an in-depth dissertation.



Year 1

Unit 1: Horticulture Now

Horticulture is a wide-ranging profession that encompasses anything from food production to therapeutic gardens. In this Unit, you will explore the value of the horticultural industry to society within the context of social, political, financial, and environmental factors. You will become aware of the diverse range of organisations, businesses, and bodies that influence and support the development of the horticultural sector.

Unit 2: Locating and Using Research

An extensive range of information is available in both digital and print media. This Unit enables you to develop skills in finding technical information from appropriate sources and to consider its application. You will develop an understanding of how technical research is disseminated with the consequent impact this can have. Unit 2 also considers potential criteria and sources of funding for research across diverse industry sectors.

Unit 3: Your Management Style

Unit 3 provides you with an overview of practices involved in running a horticultural business within today's changing environment. This Unit considers operational management in terms of organisational ethos, responsibilities, and external factors. You will be able to reflect on the necessary characteristics and responsibilities for horticultural managers whilst understanding the underlying theoretical methods.

Year 2

Unit 4: Sustainable Horticulture

Sustainability is a global watchword and horticulture is close to its heart. This Unit considers the current concerns in horticultural sustainable practices, and explores how you may value, defend, and manage designed landscapes or productive areas in the future. Social and ethical responsibilities along with global implications are a vital part of horticultural management.

Unit 5: Horticulture and Society

How can the diverse sectors of horticulture effectively engage with a range of audiences, to enable them to understand the relevance of the industry to society? This Unit will help you explore the opportunities and challenges involved in working with different garden and business audiences, in addition to communities, and identify appropriate techniques for doing so. An understanding of the consideration of ethics, health and safety, welfare and accessibility will be developed.

Unit 6: Strategy in Action

This Unit builds on skills and knowledge developed in Unit 3, to broaden your understanding of strategic management. It develops your ability to interpret and evaluate data to make informed decisions whilst understanding how internal and external drivers bring about effective change. You will be required to apply strategic thinking, and to monitor and evaluate an existing business.

Year 3

Unit 7: Professional Practice

The Professional Practice Unit brings together all the learning and skills acquired in the two preceding years of the MHort, allowing you to show the application of your theoretical understanding to real-life horticultural scenarios. In addition, there is an emphasis on being able to communicate effectively in the professional environment. The exams for this Unit will take place across two consecutive days.

Unit 8: Dissertation

Unit 8 provides an opportunity for you to identify an area in which you can carry out research. The Dissertation is an opportunity to show a high level of engagement with a topic of your choice, demonstrating an awareness of latest research and gaps in knowledge, and devising relevant research methodology. The final work shows how you have analysed and evaluated the information you have discovered and made this into a robust academic document.

Delivery and assessment

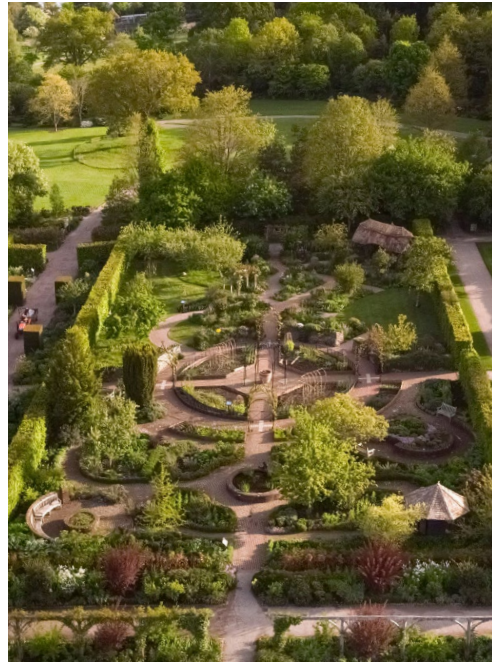
Delivery takes place online through the RHS MHort Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), allowing you to research at a time and place to suit you.

Additionally, all three years have an optional launch event, at which you are able to find out more about the upcoming Units, be guided in academic, communicative and assessment skills, and meet the MHort team.

Unit introductions and guidance, resource assistance, and assessments are available on the VLE, along with discussion forums and academic guides to support you through the process and allow you to communicate with fellow candidates and Unit Leaders and Assessors. As the programme is self-directed research led and not taught, as candidates you are required to take ownership of your assessments, including researching the appropriate delivery method for each assessment format.

Each Unit has a Unit Leader who oversees the programme, in addition to Unit Assessors to provide specialist sector knowledge and expertise. Unit Leaders and Assessors will support you through each Unit by providing detailed feedback on your assessments.

Most assessments are completed on the VLE where work is submitted to the markers and feedback is provided. There are also vivas and discussions that are completed electronically. Most assessments are approximately seven weeks in duration, allowing you to fit your research around your life and work.



Assessments allow you to build solid communication structures, including the production of academic written work in the form of essays, formal reports, presentations and more informal methods commonly used in the workplace. You will be guided in all of these methods on the VLE, helping you to hone your communication styles to different audiences.

The programme is completed over three years.

The amount of time you need to spend researching will depend on your own experience and research methods. You should expect to spend time on assessments most weeks and to plan time carefully. On average, our candidates tend to spend around 15 hours per week on each Unit.

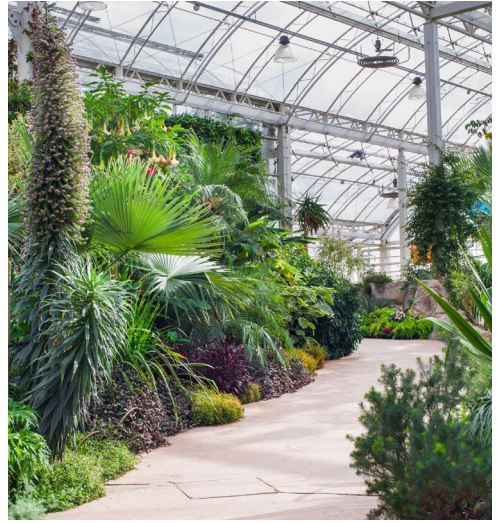
Next steps

Entry requirements

For entry into the MHort programme, you must hold the following:

- Equivalent of at least four years of full-time work experience in horticulture, at least one of which should be in a supervisory role or position of relevant responsibility.
- A full Level 3 qualification in horticulture.
- A sound level of academic writing.
- Basic IT skills, especially in Word and PowerPoint (or suitable alternatives).

Fulfilling these requirements allows you to get the most out of the programme, by drawing on your own knowledge, skills and experiences.



Testimonials

“The MHort has transformed how I am approaching the development of the garden. Over the three years I have shared my research and growing knowledge with my team. I feel that the MHort is, albeit indirectly, developing the horticulture skills of the whole team”

Emma Page, 2022 graduate

“I would 100% recommend studying for the MHort to anyone looking to further their career or move to a different sector as the programme can fit around your own working life and family commitments”

Fran Suckling, 2021 graduate

“The MHort has renewed my appreciation for the breadth and scope of the horticulture industry, from commercial crop production to therapeutic horticulture, profit and non-profit sectors”

Colin Skelly, 2021 graduate

“The wide variety of topics covered within the MHort gave me a good overview of areas of the Horticultural Industry that I may not have previously considered”

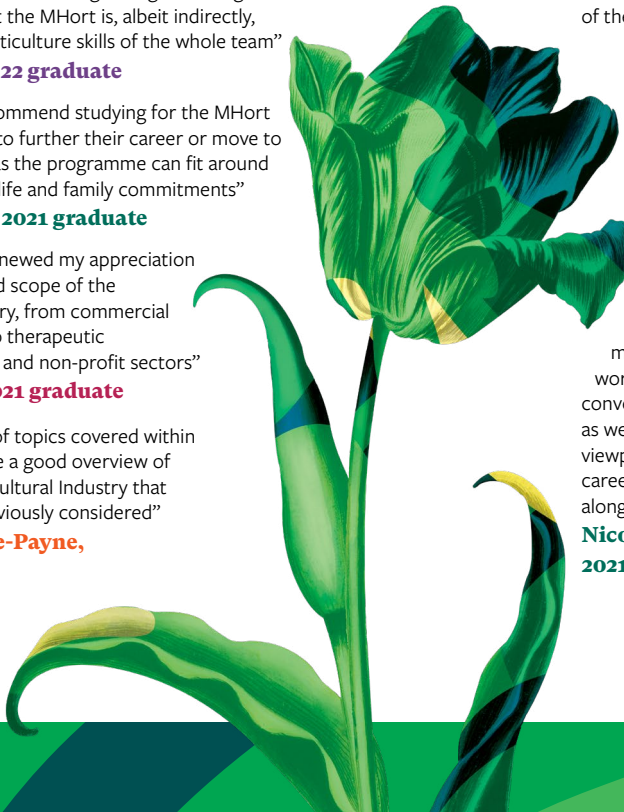
Rebecca Keeble-Payne, 2019 graduate

“The assistance of the tutors on the MHort has proved invaluable not only because of their horticultural expertise but also their support, approachability and the fact that they were always available when needed”

Elizabeth Reddin, 2022 graduate

“The emphasis on rigorous research and evidencing has helped me hone my skills in the workplace, and be able to convey information clinically, as well as assessing other viewpoints... I feel like my career options have flourished alongside my confidence”

Nicola Hope, 2021 graduate



FAQs

Q. I am well established in one sector of the horticultural industry. Will the MHort cater for my specialist needs?

A. Absolutely. The MHort is designed to give you a broad understanding of industry context in Year 1, before allowing you to apply the Unit concepts to your own sector in Year 2. You will learn more about linked sectors, whilst having the time to develop your own specialisms and research useful to your employment. In Year 3, you have the opportunity to complete your Dissertation on a topic that is particularly relevant to your career.

Q. Who are the MHort Unit Leaders and Assessors?

A. The MHort team is made up of industry experts and educators from across the sector. The breadth of experience in the team gives you access to a wide range of knowledge and expertise and allows feedback to be given from someone who understands your sector in depth.

Q. What if I have learning support requirements?

A. Learning support requirements are no barrier to achieving the MHort. We can provide you with a reasonable adjustment arrangement upon receipt of the relevant paperwork. As the MHort is not publicly funded, candidates are not eligible for grants or equipment from the DSA.

Q. What if I am ill or busy, or need to defer?

A. If you are ill you may apply for an extension on an assessment. If life becomes busy for any reason and there is not enough time to complete the MHort work, you may defer and pick up the programme again the following year. Candidates are required to complete the Award within five years of acceptance onto the programme.

Q. Is there any financial support available?

A. As the RHS subsidises the cost of the MHort, it is not currently eligible for any grants or funding through the RHS, although candidates are able to apply for funding offered by other organisations. Please note that the MHort is not eligible for government Student Funding. Many candidates' employers offer to pay their programme fees. We also offer a monthly payment scheme to help you spread the cost. We are also occasionally awarded scholarships to help fund a candidate's journey through the MHort. Further information on any scholarships will be included in the application pack when you apply.

Q. Is this a Master's Degree?

A. The MHort is recognised as a Level 6 Award under the Education Reform act 1988, which sits at the same level as an Undergraduate Degree, but it is not a degree or qualification, or taught course.

Q. Do you accept international applicants?

A. Absolutely! Having candidates from around the world is part of what makes the MHort a dynamic learning programme.

Q. Do I need to attend any days in person?

A. No, there are no days when you need to attend in person, as all assessments are completed electronically. Wherever possible, time-zone differences will be taken into consideration for international candidates.

Q. Do you accept part-time or voluntary work towards the work pre-requisite?

A. Yes we do. The MHort is designed for professional horticulturists, so we would expect the majority of your work to consist of paid employment, but we will accept the occasional bit of voluntary work with an organisation towards the four years' requirement. We also recognise part-time work experience, but this is calculated on a pro-rata basis. For example, working 20 hours a week for two years will equate to one year's full-time work experience.

Queries

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact our friendly team at **MHort@rhs.org.uk** who will be happy to help.

Keep up to date on all things MHort by following us on our social channels **@RHSLearning**

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) is committed to being an inclusive organisation and welcomes applicants from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

For further information, or if you would like a copy of this document in a different format (e.g. font size, page colour), please contact **MHort@rhs.org.uk**