

<b>Institution:</b>	De Montfort University, Bedford
<b>Programme:</b>	BA/BSc Environmental Studies
<b>Module:</b>	'Habitat Creation'
<b>Activity:</b>	Applying knowledge of habitat creation in a vocational context
<b>Level/Year:</b>	3
<b>Learning Hours:</b>	150

### **Work-related learning outcome(s)**

The module 'Habitat Creation' builds on knowledge and skills that students have developed on their course to that point. The student group will have already completed the Level 2 module 'Introduction to Wildlife Conservation' which develops field skills and deals with the development of the UK landscape, the need for active wildlife conservation and the regulatory framework in the UK.

'Habitat Creation' develops this knowledge in the context of real life conservation issues. Learning based in the work environment allows students to appreciate the management of the whole habitat creation process.

Students will explore the ecological processes and management required to create habitats that enhance an area's conservation status. Specifically, they will learn the importance and role of:

- careful planning;
- detailed habitat specific ecological knowledge;
- research;
- community involvement and interaction in the implementing body;
- monitoring;
- management of the created habitat;
- habitat creation as part of a wider conservation strategy.

Students gain experience of all these areas within a vocational context, and will develop skills of rapid assimilation and evaluation of new information, report writing, and group working.

### **Description of the teaching activity which achieves the learning outcome(s)**

Learning activities are problem-based and underpinned by thematic lectures coupled with targeted fieldwork. The problem-based learning is undertaken in conjunction with local employers, such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), and focuses on satisfying the specific needs of both employers and students.

### **Rationale for the selection of the teaching activity**

Problem-based learning is a teaching and learning strategy that develops the application of problem solving in a specific context. It requires an ability to evaluate and critique information. It is challenging and demands a high level of understanding and knowledge and encourages both thematic and non-thematic deep learning.

### **Assessment – approach and detail**

The criteria for assessment in this module will be developed by the employer and the academic staff team, and students will interact with the process for setting specific criteria. This method accommodates variability in the operational outcomes required by differing employers, and enables the work-related learning element to be the focus of the assessment.

We envisage the use of a reflective diary of processes, group-based assessments, and the publication of final reports on a website. The reflective diary will allow an assessment of how well the students are putting their theoretical knowledge to use in a work-based setting. The group work and team assessments will follow a format that is consistent with the work-based setting. It will enable us to assess how the group has achieved the desired outcomes of the employer and how their understanding, as outlined above, has developed.

### **Future developments**

To enhance this module, three forms of learning resources could be produced:

1. A student manual - as a source of information on habitat creation, learning opportunities in the field and potential employers.
2. A web-based guide of prospective employers - for universities who are likely to engage with similar learning activities. This will include the scope and range of potential projects and the requirements of employers.
3. A web-based guide for prospective employers - on the learning activities they could engage with, the level and type of involvement and the likely benefits of this co-operation.

### **Contact details**

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