



Harper Adams
University

Graduate Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management

Course Handbook
(Experienced Practitioner Route)

June 2018

CONTENTS	
WELCOME	3
1 THE GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN AGRONOMY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	
1.1 Structure of the course and the award outcomes	4
1.2 Direct Entry Route	6
1.3 Experienced Practitioner Route	6
1.4 Where to get help	7
1.5 Course Evaluation	7
1.6 External assessment of the Graduate Diploma	8
1.7 Philosophy of the Graduate Diploma	8
2 MODULE SPECIFIC INFORMATION	9
2.1 The Module Leader	9
2.2 The Module Descriptor	
3 ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS	10
3.1 Introduction	10
3.2 Assessment deadlines	10
3.3 Submission of written work	10
3.4 Academic Misconduct	11
3.5 Poor academic practice	11
3.6 Grading and feedback	12
3.7 Assessment regulations	12
3.8 Coursework marking scheme:	12

WELCOME!

Welcome to your guidelines for the Graduate Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management. This is an important document because it provides you with details of where you can find information on the programme, including the assessment regulations, and help and support should you require it.

Farmers, agronomists and company representatives are currently undertaking many training courses as part of their continuing professional development (CPD). Some of these training programs managed by BASIS Registration Ltd provide certificates that are recognised by the agricultural, horticultural, amenity and related industries as fulfilling legal requirements or meeting the needs of Quality Assurance Schemes. BASIS Registration Ltd created the award of the BASIS Diploma in Agronomy that can be achieved by candidates who have successfully completed these training programs. This proposal builds on those achievements to create a Graduate Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management that allows representatives of the industry to achieve an award that is at the equivalent level achievement to an Honours Degree. The Graduate Diploma is achieved by attaining 120 credits compared to a three years Honours degree with 360 credits. The achievement of a Graduate Diploma will provide a formal qualification that is not only a nationally recognised high level, but also relevant to the industry in which you work.

Please take some time to read through the contents of the Handbook. It has been kept as brief as possible, with links to the relevant page on the HAU website

www.harper.ac.uk/agronomy

where you will find useful information, rather than appending significant quantities of paper.

Dr Andy Brooks
Course Manager
T. 01952 815529
E. asbrooks@harper-adams.ac.uk

1. The Graduate Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management

1.1 Structure of the course and the award outcomes

Having come this far in the process you will be aware that there are two routes to gaining the Harper Adams University Graduate Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management; of which, more later. Both routes require you to have completed five core modules plus two Advanced, or optional, courses. Specific information on the course structure is detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Graduate Diploma Course Structure

Core Modules	Module No	Level	Credit Value
(1) BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection – Agriculture	C6039	6	30
Or BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection – Commercial Horticulture	C6040	6	30
Or BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection – Vegetables	C6043	6	30
Or BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection – Floriculture	C6041	6	30
Or BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection – Grassland & Forage Crops	C6042	6	30
(2) FACTS Fertiliser Award	C5027	5	15
(3) BASIS BETA Conservation Management – Core Module *	Module Code TBC	5	10
(4) BASIS BETA Conservation Management – Agriculture Specialism *	Module Code TBC	5	5
Or BASIS BETA Conservation Management – Environmental Specialism*	Module Code TBC	5	5
(5) BASIS Soil & Water Management Certificate	C6046	6	15
(6) BASIS Plant Protection Award	C6045	6	15
Optional Modules	Module No	Level	Credit Value
(7) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection – Cereals	C6024	6	15

(8) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection - Grassland & Forage Crops	C6026	6	15
(9) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection – Potatoes	C6029	6	15
(10) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection - Field Vegetables	C6025	6	15
(11) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection - Sugar Beet	C6032	6	15
(12) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection - Seed Production, Technology & Traits	C6038	6	15
(13) BASIS Nutrient Management Planning	C6044	6	15
(14) BASIS Advanced Crop Protection Award	C7040	7	15
(15) Experienced Practitioner Route Module	C6047	6	40
(16) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection – Amenity Horticulture	C6023	6	15
(17) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection – Legumes and Oilseeds	C6027	6	15
(18) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection – Nursery Stock	C6028	6	15
(19) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection – Protected Crops	C6030	6	15
(20) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection – Soft Fruit	C6031	6	15
(21) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection – Top Fruit & Hops	C6033	6	15
(22) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Crop Protection – Biocontrol	C6034	6	15
(23) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Precision Farming – Agronomy	C6036	6	15
(24) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Precision Farming – Technology	C6037	6	15
(25) BASIS Certificate in Advanced Plant Nutrition – Waste to Land	C6035	6	15

* The three new modules will replace BASIS BETA (C5024) and BASIS Conservation Management (C5025) from 1st April 2018. However, candidates for the Graduate Diploma who have successfully completed either of the modules between 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2018 will be able to use them to contribute to the award. Those who have completed either prior to 1st April 2011 may require some credits to be APLd in order to fulfil the award requirements.

In higher education, all types and levels of awards offered should provide those who complete with specific outcomes that they will have achieved. Following completion of the award you will have achieved the following outcomes:

Generic outcomes (outcomes that are achieved from the award regardless of the subject matter)

1. Communicate clearly, concisely and confidently, using an appropriate format;
2. Use information and communication technology effectively;
3. Derive principles and theories from knowledge acquired in the workplace;
4. Select and apply knowledge, experience and principles to the diagnosis, analysis and solution of complex problems derived from professional contexts;
5. Marshal evidence, by reference where appropriate to primary sources or knowledge at the forefront of the discipline, and apply it in a balanced way in an argument;
6. Define criteria and use them to plan, allocate and evaluate the work of self, individuals and teams.

Award specific outcomes (outcomes that are achieved specifically from the Grad Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management)

1. Communicate clearly and concisely to provide accurate, professional advice to clients.
2. Use experience and knowledge gained in the work place to interpret technical information and develop practical management plans related to:
 - a) plant nutrients
 - b) plant protection products
 - c) soils and their management
 - d) environmental schemes.
3. Evaluate recommendations with due consideration to legislative requirements and the impact on:
 - a) soil, air and water
 - b) wildlife and conservation
 - c) human safety

Detailed information, including the curriculum map, can be found in the award's Programme Specification document, which is available from the Course Manager upon registration on the Experienced Practitioner Route Module.

1.2 Direct Entry Route

Those who are fortunate enough to have gained the 120 necessary credits within

the last seven years will automatically qualify and need do no further work. Having completed the registration form and paid the relevant fees, your award will be ratified at the next Course Assessment Board (June or September).

1.3 Experienced Practitioner Route

Harper Adams recognises that many in the industry have accrued significant levels of experience, gained over a number of years. Some BASIS qualifications will have been taken more than seven years ago. Candidates who fall into this category are required to undertake some additional work, known as the Experienced Practitioner Route Module.

The remainder of this Handbook will provide you with information on the Experienced Practitioner Module and the important information that you should be aware of as registered students at Harper Adams University.

The default source of information is the Graduate Diploma webpage which can be found at

www.harper.ac.uk/agronomy.

1.4 Where to get help

There will possibly be times during your studies when you require help or support on an individual basis. The following describes your first point of contact depending on the nature of your problem or query. Whilst staff cannot promise to solve all your problems, they will do their best to offer supportive advice. Even if your first point of contact is unable to answer your questions or resolve your concerns immediately, they will know someone who can! You can speak to staff face to face during delivery of the modules, but also by e-mail and telephone.

Subject queries or problems

The **Module Leader** is the first person you should contact if you are experiencing difficulties with a topic. If you have difficulties, which aren't resolved by speaking to the module tutor or if you just want to find out more about a particular aspect, please speak to your **Course Manager** as soon as possible and he / she will deal with them.

Questions relating to your overall programme of study

If you have general queries about your programme of study, please speak to the **Course Manager**.

Other questions and problems

As a student learning at a distance you are entitled to make full use of the support services available to Harper Adams students. A great deal of general information on learning, writing and referencing skills is available via the Library website. Whilst we are not able to provide full online access to the Library's electronic databases, you are very welcome to use the facilities in person, on site. Please let your Course Manager know in advance so that the Library can ensure that you have access to

everything that you need when you arrive.

If necessary, seek help from the **Learner Support Tutors** who can provide additional support in the areas of dyslexia, numeracy and general study skills. They are based in the *Faccenda Building* at Harper Adams.

During term time you should normally expect to receive a response from staff within five working days. Outside of term time, this period may extend to 10 working days. Out of office replies to emails are generally used at Harper Adams and these will usually provide information as to when the staff member is expected to return, in addition to an alternative name and contact details in the case of an urgent matter.

1.5 Course evaluation

Once each year the Course Committee meets to debate the Annual Course Monitoring Report and to decide what action should be taken, either in consequence of that debate or in response to the recommendations of the Academic Standards Committee. The aim of this monitoring is to respond to changes in student needs, and to external changes. After the module, you will be asked to complete a Course Monitoring Form, which is a key part of this process. However, you can also raise any concerns at any time with the Course Manager. Since you are among the first candidates to follow this programme your input into this process will be most helpful. Even though Harper Adams has many years of experience in delivering Crop Protection courses and learning at a distance there may be lessons to learn for the future in which you will have a valuable contribution.

Details of the evaluation policy are available from the Course Manager.

1.6 External assessment of the Graduate Diploma

All modules and courses are reviewed by internal examiners. In line with the University's Quality Assurance processes, Harper Adams also appoints External Examiners in order to ensure that:

- a) the standards of attainment of Harper Adams students in the subjects is similar to standards in the same subjects in other UK Higher Education Institutions of good standing;
- b) students have been fairly assessed in accordance with the module descriptor and assessment scheme;
- c) each student has been fairly assessed in accordance with the approved programme and that assessment arrangements facilitate the development and evaluation of the award outcomes;
- d) student achievement reflects overall course outcomes to a standard comparable to that of other Higher Education institutes of a good standing in the UK.

The current External Examiner for both the validated BASIS modules and the Graduate Diploma award is Dr Phil Hollington from Bangor University.

1.7 Philosophy of the Graduate Diploma

The Graduate Diploma contained in this handbook shares some common features with many other awards at Harper Adams. The Graduate Diploma has specific **aims** (i.e. what the Award is intended to achieve) and **outcomes** (i.e. what you should be able to do, on successful completion of your Award). You can read about these in the Programme Specification which is available from the Course Manager.

2. Module specific information

The Experienced Practitioner Module (C6004) is a 40 credit module at Level 6 (an equivalent level to the final year of a degree programme).

2.1 The Module Leader

A module has a **Module Leader** and, in some cases, other staff who act as **Module Tutors**. These tutors then deliver the modules, which make up your course. In some cases, more than one person teaches on a module; the leader in these situations is normally the person with the greatest teaching input.

The Module Leader is responsible to:

- the Course Manager of the course for the organisation and administration of the module;
- his or her Head of Department for the curriculum, teaching and assessment of the module.

The Module Leader's tasks (in conjunction with other staff teaching the module) are to:

- (a) formulate aims and objectives for the module, which are appropriate to course aims and course themes;
- (b) prepare teaching schemes and timetables for the module;
- (c) formulate assessment strategies and programmes for the module;
- (d) ensure that the curriculum for the module integrates with, or is complementary to, other modules in the course;
- (e) deliver the module using appropriate teaching and learning strategies;
- (f) prepare and deliver contributions to programmes of integrative assignments.

2.2 The Module Descriptor

The Module Descriptor is an important document, as it lays out the aims and objectives of the module, as well as intended learning outcomes and assessment strategies. The Module Descriptor for the Experienced Practitioner Module can be found on the Graduate Diploma webpage (www.harper-adams.ac.uk/agronomy).

Module descriptors for all the modules listed in Table 1 can be found on the Exams and Training pages on the BASIS website (<http://www.basis-reg.co.uk/Exams-and-Courses/Our-Exams-and-Courses>) alongside the course syllabi.

3. Current Assessment Regulations For Taught Degree And Diploma Courses

The EPR module is assessed by a mixture of assignment and viva examination. Whenever possible the nature of the assignment has been designed to complement and support your commercial role. The relevant assessment regulations are available for you to download from the HAU Key Info webpage (<https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/apply/applicants/key-info.cfm>).

3.1 Introduction

Each module you study is assessed through a combination of written or oral individual assignments, group projects and examinations. The nature and weighting of individual assignments within a module vary but are outlined in the module descriptors. The assessment brief you are given for each module assessment will give you more details of the assessment criteria, the amount of time you should expect to spend on the assessment, plus when and where to hand it in.

3.2 Assessment deadlines:

Written assignment deadlines will be clearly given on the Assignment brief. If you don't meet deadlines, without documented evidence of illness or other extenuating circumstance, you will be awarded a **zero mark** for the work.

If you are having problems with deadlines, it is important to contact the Course Manager well BEFORE the deadline.

Remember that the deadline is the last possible time for handing in – you can always hand work in the week before.

3.3 Submission of written work

The Assignment Submission and Feedback Form will state to which location the

work should be handed in or posted to. Please note that work must be submitted in both paper format and electronically, by the deadline as detailed. Unless both the paper and digital submissions are completed by the deadline, the work will receive zero marks. Note that the University's IT systems are unable to accept attachments greater than 10Mb in size.

3.4 Academic misconduct: cheating, collusion and plagiarism

The University takes cheating, plagiarism and collusion extremely seriously and, as in many other universities, an electronic plagiarism detection system (called Turnitin UK®) is used to identify where students have infringed accepted practice.

When you submit pieces of coursework for assessment, there is a box on the coursework assignment form, which states:

“In submitting this assignment I acknowledge that I understand the definition of and penalties for cheating, collusion and plagiarism set out in the assessment regulations. I also confirm that this work has not been previously submitted for assessment for an academic award, unless otherwise indicated”.

Some examples (but not an exhaustive list) of these offences are described below:

- i) Presenting results in laboratory reports or projects, which have been invented or falsified (cheating).
- ii) Handing in an individual assignment which has been produced in collaboration with others (collusion).
- iii) Handing in another student's work and claiming it as your own (plagiarism).
- iv) Obtaining information from some source and not indicating its source, thus pretending or giving the impression it has been generated by you (plagiarism).
- v) Copying material from textbooks or using “copy and paste” from the Internet without citing the material specifically in the text (plagiarism).

At this stage, you need to realise that the penalties for being caught can be extremely severe – in the last academic year, a number of students failed modules or were withdrawn from their courses. If you are in doubt, please talk to your module/senior tutor. Additional guidance on what constitutes academic misconduct can be found on the Graduate Diploma webpage.

Don't do it!!

3.5 Poor academic practice

It is also important that the work you submit is based primarily on your own

thoughts and is written in your own words. Where submitted work is based on the words of others, even where it is properly referenced, it will be marked down for poor academic practice. A sample of all coursework will be taken and submitted to the electronic plagiarism detection service Turnitin,UK®.

3.6 Grading and feedback

Grading and feedback: You should normally expect to receive feedback on your in-course assessment work within 4 weeks. The feedback you receive will include a percentage mark and associated grade as well as some written feedback. You should make use of the feedback on returned coursework to allow you to improve in future.

Do feel free to discuss with your module tutor if you are unclear about your mistakes, having read the feedback, or if there are delays in returning your coursework.

Poor performance: If you receive a fail grade, or perform less well than you had expected, you should treat it as a warning, and take time to consider what went wrong. The most common reasons for these grades are poor time management and/or a simple lack of effort. These are things that students need to address for themselves. However, there are cases where you may have under-performed through genuine confusion or misunderstanding. If you cannot see the reason for your grade, always speak to the module tutor in the first instance and, if necessary, to your Course Manager. Many students have found that talking to their module tutors about their difficulties early on enables the problem to be solved or for extra support to be identified through the Learner Support Tutors.

3.7 Assessment Regulations

The full assessment regulations can be found on the HAU Key Info web page (<https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/apply/applicants/key-info.cfm>).

3.8 Coursework Marking Scheme

Coursework is marked using a set of criteria based on a 100 point marking scheme, as seen below, and the EPR Module outcome is deemed to be either PASS (at 40% or above) or FAIL.

Generic Assessment Criteria for Coursework (BSc Level 6) (Extract from ANNEX 5.11 – QA Manual)

		Presentation, style and communication skills	Content, knowledge and understanding	Analysis, evaluation and application	Referencing and use of literature
Final Class	Context	Assessment criteria to be contextualised by module leader			
	Weighting Mark range	Assigned by tutor			
1st	90-100	Outstanding presentation that conforms to guidelines and displays originality, creativity, flair and imagination in both the structure and style of expression, using a variety of tools appropriate to the media, audience and discipline. Of publishable quality with minor editing	Work based on an outstanding understanding of a wide knowledge base from within and outside the subject area, obtained from specific published literature at the forefront of the discipline through wider reading and experience	Outstanding argument at the boundaries of existing knowledge based on a highly critical and perceptive analysis and evaluation of complex knowledge, theories and concepts in the subject area. Exceptional practical, professional or problem solving skills.	Outstanding use of variety of reliable, appropriate sources, including peer reviewed articles at the forefront of the discipline, selected independently. Limitations of sources assessed. References complete and comply with the <i>Guide to Referencing</i> . No errors.
	80-89	Exceptional presentation that conforms to guidelines and displays creativity, flair and imagination in both structure and style, using a variety of tools appropriate to the media, audience and discipline. Of publishable quality with moderate editing	Work based on an exceptional understanding of a wide knowledge base from within the subject area, obtained from published literature at the forefront of the discipline through wider reading, and experience	Exceptional argument based on a highly critical and perceptive analysis and evaluation of complex knowledge, theories and concepts in the subject area. Excellent application of practical, professional and/or problem solving skills.	Exceptional use of a variety of reliable, appropriate sources, including leading peer reviewed article, mainly selected independently. Limitations of sources assessed. References complete and comply with the <i>Guide to Referencing</i> . No errors.
	70-79	Excellent presentation that conforms to guidelines and provides a persuasive argument using a logical and coherent structure that displays a mature, articulate and imaginative style, using appropriate tools for the media, audience and discipline	Work based on a full and complete understanding of selected appropriate knowledge in the subject area. Evidence of specific knowledge from published literature obtained through wider reading, and experience	Excellent argument based on a critical and perceptive analysis and evaluation of knowledge, theories and concepts in the subject area. Very good practical, professional and problem solving skills.	Excellent use of a variety of reliable, appropriate sources, including peer reviewed journals, most selected independently. Limitations of different sources assessed. References complete and comply with the <i>Guide to Referencing</i> . No errors.
2:1	60-69	Very good presentation that conforms to guidelines and provides a reasoned argument using a logical and concise structure that displays a lucid and articulate style, using appropriate tools for the medium, audience and discipline.	Work based on a comprehensive understanding of appropriate knowledge of the subject area. No omissions. Clear evidence of knowledge derived from outside the teaching programme.	Strong argument based on robust analysis and evaluation of knowledge, theories and concept in the subject area. Very good practical, professional or problem solving skills.	Very good use of reliable, appropriate sources, including peer reviewed journals, with many selected independently. References complete and largely comply the <i>Guide to Referencing</i> with minor omissions or errors.
2:2	50-59	Good presentation that conforms to guidelines and provides a clear argument using a logical structure that displays a fluent style, using appropriate tools that are correctly applied for the media, audience and discipline.	Work based on a good understanding of appropriate knowledge in the subject area. No significant omissions. Some evidence of knowledge derived from outside the teaching programme.	Sound argument based on good analysis, evaluation and application of knowledge, theories and concept in the subject area. Good evidence of practical, professional and problem solving skills	Good use of relevant sources, with some selected independently. References are complete and mainly comply with the <i>Guide to Referencing</i> , with minor omissions or errors.
3rd	40-49	Presentation conforms to guidelines with few errors. Accuracy and clarity of expression could be improved by minor changes to structure and/or style. Appropriate tools that are correctly applied for the media, audience or discipline.	Work based on a good understanding of appropriate knowledge in the subject area. No significant omissions. Limited to knowledge derived from the teaching programme.	Work partly descriptive, but logical argument based on analysis and evaluation of knowledge, basic theories and concepts in the subject area. Evidence of developing practical, professional and problem solving skills.	Some use of relevant sources, with a few selected independently. References are complete and partially comply with the <i>Guide to Referencing</i> , with minor omissions or recurring presentational errors.
Fail	30-39	Presentation largely conform to guidelines, but has moderate errors. Accuracy and clarity of expression moderately compromised by poor structure and/or style. Tools largely appropriate but may be inconsistently applied for the media, audience or discipline.	Work based on a superficial understanding of appropriate knowledge in the subject area. Limited to knowledge derived from the teaching programme.	Work mainly descriptive, but superficial argument based on limited analysis and evaluation of knowledge, basic theories and concepts in the subject area. Limited evidence of developing practical, professional and problem solving skills.	Little use of relevant sources, but indiscriminately selected or largely unreliable or irrelevant. References mostly complete and mainly comply with the <i>Guide to Referencing</i> , but significant omissions and recurring presentational errors.
	20-29	Presentation doesn't conform to guidelines. Accuracy and clarity of expression severely compromised by poor structure and/or style. Tools inappropriate and/or incorrectly applied for the media, audience or discipline.	Work based on an incomplete understanding of knowledge in the subject area.	Work descriptive, with little, irrelevant or illogical argument, based on superficial knowledge in the subject area. Limited evidence of application of developing practical, professional and problem solving skills.	Little use of relevant sources, but indiscriminately selected or largely unreliable or irrelevant. Key reference information is largely present and understandable but has significant presentation errors
	10-19	Presentation doesn't conform to guidelines. Illogical structure and/or immature and incoherent style. Tools inappropriate and incorrectly applied for the media, audience or discipline.	Work based on a limited understanding of knowledge in the subject area, with significant errors or omissions	Work descriptive, with little, irrelevant or illogical argument, based on superficial knowledge in the subject area. Limited evidence of application of developing practical, professional and problem solving skills.	Minimal evidence of reading. Sources used are largely inappropriate or irrelevant to the task. References are mainly incomplete and confused.

	0-9	Limited grasp of communication skills. No structure and immature and incoherent style. Tools inappropriate and incorrectly applied for the media, audience or discipline.	Work suggests limited awareness of knowledge in the subject area, but largely wrong, contradictory or unsupported.	Work suggests some basic understanding of knowledge in the subject area, but largely wrong, contradictory or unsupported. No evidence of application of practical, professional or problem solving skills	Very limited evidence of wider reading. No meaningful attempt at referencing.
--	------------	--	--	---	---