

Crop Technician

Level 3



Overview of the role

A qualified Crop technicians will have the skills required for the safe husbandry of arable crops from sowing through to harvest and storage. They will also understand how to do this sustainably for both the environment and the farm business.

As a Crop Technician you will be responsible for optimising crop yields through establishment, management, harvest and post-harvest operations, while maintaining and improving the surrounding environment.

Many machines and crop operations use automation to control both machine and applications or harvesting, you will require technical skills to operate these but also have an understanding of how the information is derived to be put into these controls, such as fertiliser and agrochemicals. You will need to keep up to date with technological advances and new innovations.

Being a Crop Technician requires self-motivation and the ability to work both independently and as a team player to complete tasks safely and efficiently. This standard provides the opportunity for individuals to acquire the 'knowledge', 'skills' and 'behaviours' required to become a crop technician.

Entry Requirements

Employers set the selection criteria for their apprentices in line with the apprenticeship standards and their business needs. Typically this includes 4 GCSE's at Grade C or equivalent to include English, Maths and a Science subject. In addition it is desirable that the candidate has an understanding of Information and Communication Technology.

We would normally expect applicants to have level 2 English and Maths qualifications (GCSE grade 4/C or above or L2 Functional Skills) prior to enrolment.

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship is based on a skills analysis and development opportunities within the business. The typical duration for this apprenticeship is 24 months, however this would be reduced where an apprentice holds previous experience or a level 2 apprenticeship.

L3 Apprenticeship Crop Technician Information



Apprenticeship Content

Knowledge

- Health and safety legislation and codes of practice in relation to the job role/workplace including contingency/emergency plans
- Practical health and safety information to ensure everyone is safe in the workplace
- Environmental issues/legislation, codes of practice and company policies
- Importance of maintaining systems for record keeping and storage used within the organisation
- Maintenance/efficient use of machinery and equipment
- Preparation methods, timing of activities and aftercare requirements for the crops grown on-site
- Crop identification and establishment process including principles and methods
- Principles of plant growth and development and plant health
- Input costs, cost of production, margins and impact on business profitability
- Identification of key pests weeds and diseases and awareness of control mechanisms including potential impact on environment
- Relationship between environmental conditions (including weather), plant protection methods and crop growth
- Impact of machinery on soil structure and potential damage
- Importance of maintaining good standards of hygiene and environmental control relating to crop/food storage (where relevant)
- Quality standards and specifications relevant to their business and their importance.

Skills

Overarching:

- Promote and maintain health, safety and security whilst managing accurate records.
- Maintain and operate machinery and other equipment to allow safe and efficient operation

Vehicle Operation:

- Competently operate (to certified level) a relevant vehicle used in the business

Soil Management:

- Correctly set machinery and monitoring machine performance for good seed establishment and crop growth
- Correctly set machinery to match crop and soil condition and quality requirements during harvest
- Maintenance of non-productive areas

Crop Establishment:

- Prepare seed bed/growing medium for maximum growth potential
- Carry out relevant establishment of crops for efficient growth

Crop Management:

- Control of pests, weeds and diseases including safe use, application and storage of chemicals
- Carry out plant nutrient application and/or irrigation tasks if applicable to aid growth of crop

Harvest:



- Carry out harvesting operations including assessment of timing and quality
- Appropriate harvesting techniques to match crop condition and quality requirements
- Operate to high levels of hygiene

Storage:

- Store crops in suitable conditions to maintain quality

Maintenance and Preparation:

- Soil maintenance tasks to ensure efficient and healthy growth of the crop/plant
- Soil sampling and acting upon results as appropriate to ensure nutrition is correct

Behaviours

- Strong Work Ethic
- Adaptability
- Effective Communicator
- Team Working
- Safety Awareness

Qualifications

- Level 2 Awards in: Emergency First Aid at Work and the Safe Use of Pesticides.
- Level 2 Certificate in Competency of a relevant vehicle used in the business
- *On completion of the pesticides foundation unit above, also choose one of the following units:**
- Boom sprayer, mounted, trailed or self-propelled equipment
- Granular applicator equipment
- Handheld applicator equipment

Employer Involvement

Your employer must enable you to spend a minimum of 20% of your usual work hours undertaking off-job learning. This is defined as learning which is undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working environment and leads towards the achievement of the apprenticeship. This can include training that is delivered at your normal place of work but must not be delivered as part of your normal working duties, and must be directly relevant to the apprenticeship standard.

Off-job learning could include the following:

- Teaching of theory such as lectures, role playing, simulation exercises, online learning or manufacturer training
- Practical training such as shadowing experienced staff or mentoring, industry visits and attendance at competitions
- Study support and time spent writing assessments/assignments

Your employer must commit to supporting you in the workplace, participating in progress review meetings, providing use of ICT facilities so you can access your e-portfolio and agreeing/ensuring your readiness for the End Point Assessment. They may be required to provide further supporting evidence/endorsements about your performance, which form part of the End Point Assessment.

Further details of the End Point Assessment will be made available to you during your induction.



Funding

The way Apprenticeships are funded has changed – employers now pay for apprenticeship training, where fees are applicable. We will discuss this with your employer when we complete a set-up with them.

The fees charged for the apprenticeship include any awarding body registration costs, all on-programme teaching, assessment and support delivered by the college, support materials, access to college facilities such as the Learning Resource Centre, Student Moodle, and access to wider college student support services where required.

Employers must pay apprentices at least the minimum rate set out by current National Minimum Wage Legislation. This includes payment for all off-job learning and any associated costs such as travel and accommodation.

Information about the National Minimum Wage can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

College Input

We will support you through regular Apprenticeship Progress Review meetings with you and your manager, provide well planned vocational training and theory delivery by block release model and support your theory learning in the workplace with a range of learning materials.

This programme is offered at the following campuses: York, Penrith, Thirsk, Hexam and Kendal.

How to Apply

Applications should be made using the college application form or via the college website. This form can be found at: <https://www.askham-bryan.ac.uk/application/register>. Upon receipt of your application you will have an interview with the Course Manager.

Further information is available at:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/crop-technician/>

Or, for more information, contact the College Course Manager on:

York

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