

Arboricultural Qualifications:

overseas or local — you to choose

(Capacity Building in Urban tree Management -
Professional Training of Arborist)

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Introduction

- Arboricultural qualifications are numerous, including academic, professional and vocational.
- In 2010, the Hong Kong Government advertised for the employment of an arborist for the first time.
- It states that the applicant should possess a recognised qualification or certification offered by a professional or industry body such as-

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1. National Arborist Associations of Australia
 2. Arboricultural Association of the United Kingdom
 3. European Arboricultural Council
 4. International Society of Arboriculture

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- Do you possess one or more of these qualifications?
 - If not, would you choose and acquire one?

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Capacity Building

- “Development of the ability in a nation’s people and institutions to understand, absorb, apply, modify, and further develop the knowledge and technologies available for the implementation and achievement of its goal”

- (Source: The UN conference on Technology Transfer and Capacity Building, 23-27 June 2003, Trondheim, Norway)

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Capacity Building Gaps in Urban Tree Management

- Knowledge: scientific research

- Skilled personnel: professional training
- Professional qualifications: certification or qualifications, experience and continuous professional development

- Organizations: advisory, industry or professional bodies

- Tree ordinance/management plan
- Private sector participation
- Funding

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Gaps in Professional Training

- Need to upgrade standard to match those in the world

- Levels of training-

 - Frontline*: tree worker (groundsman and climber)

 - Supervisor*: tree technician

 - Manager*: tree manager

(Source: *Report of the Task Force, June 2009)

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Training and Qualification

- After professional training with an assessment, a trainee usually gets an qualification: academic, professional or vocational.

- Industry or professional bodies may operate some professional accreditation or certification schemes to indicate levels of professional qualifications

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Professional Membership or Certification Scheme

- Indicate a level of technical knowledge and practical skill; and
- relevant work experience.
- May make reference to some National Qualification Framework: e.g. the United Kingdom, Australia, etc; or indicate a career progression e.g. Europe or ISA

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Types of Qualifications

- **Academic** – organised by colleges or university, 12 weeks to 2 years, full or part -time, exam and assessment
- **Professional** – organised by industry bodies, college or self study, day release or part-time, exam and assessment
- **Vocational** – competence-based awards, work place, own pace and assessed, include apprenticeship (traineeship)
- Source: AA

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Who cares?

- You

You as:

- Learner or trainee
- Training provider
- Employer
- Consumer

Focus

- The talk will focus on qualifications from the above four professional bodies; which could be broadly divided into two groups-
- 1. National Arborist Association of Australia and Arboricultural Association of the United Kingdom (NAAA and AA); and
- 2. European Arboricultural Council and International Society of Arboriculture (EAC and ISA)

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Eligibility or conditions of entry

1. NAAA and AA:

---a level 2 or above qualification plus 2 to 4 years of post education experience

2. EAC and ISA:

---one year to three years of prior experience and then passing a certification examination

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NAAA (澳洲國家樹木學會)

- Registered in 1986 (24 years)
- General Member (一般會員)(\$ 297 AUD p.a.):
 - Certificate in Horticulture (Arboriculture) Level 2 or equivalent;
 - 2 years of post education experience in the trade; and
 - Certificates of currency: Public Liability insurance; Workers Compensation and/or Personal Accident insurance

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Australian Qualification Framework

1. Certificate I --- arboriculture assistant
2. Certificate II --- arboriculture worker, 0.5 -1 year, mainly routine work
3. Certificate III --- arboriculture tradesperson, 1 - 2 years, a broad range of knowledge and skill
4. Certificate IV --- arboriculture supervisor
5. Diploma of ---arboriculture manager

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Australian Qualification Framework

6. Advanced Diploma of(Associate Degree)
7. Vocational Graduate Certificate of....(Bachelor Degree)
8. Vocational Graduate Diploma of...(Bachelor Honours Degree)
9. Masters
10. Doctors

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Misc Professional Bodies in Australia

- Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists (Eligibility: Diploma of Horticulture (Arboriculture) and 5 years of experience)
- South Australian Society of Arboriculture (Eligibility: all persons working in the tree industry)
- ISA Australia Chapter

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Misc. Statistics

- Australia-

- 5000 people working in the industry
- 300 – 400 qualified arborist
- 2500 – 3000 tree clearers or arborist
- (population: 22 million)

- (Victoria – 1500 – 2000 tree clearers or arborist, population: 4.9 million in 2006)

- (Source: Primary Skill Victoria, <http://www.psv.com.au>)

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AA(英國樹木學會)

- Established in 1964 (46 years) with 2000 members

- Grades of Membership-

1. Technician: NQF Level 3 or above qualification in Arboriculture or a related subject
2. Professional: NQF Level 4 or above and two years AA membership at Associate or Technician grade
3. Fellow: NQF Level 4 or above and 5 years AA membership at Professional grade

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Fees (Pound Sterling)

- Associate: 108 GBP (open to anyone)

- Technician: 128
- Professional: 144
- Fellow: 185

- Plus postage surcharge: 30

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The National Qualifications Framework UK

- Level 1** - Routine practical skills carried out under supervision

- Level 2** - Practical skills carried out under minimal (or no) supervision, underpinning knowledge of arboricultural principles required, communication with colleagues

- Level 3** – Ability to communicate effectively with colleagues and the public, sound theory knowledge that can be applied to tree management practices. Gives some supervision.

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The National Qualifications Framework UK

- **Level 4-5** - Management skills in formulation of solutions and responses to complex problems, training and development of others. Use high levels of technical knowledge and expertise to generate ideas and resolve tree management problems

- **Level 6-8** - As for level 4-5 but in addition a strategic approach to the role. Development of new and creative approaches and involvement in research. Ability to critically review concepts and information. Highly specialised technical knowledge and skills across a range of arboricultural issues (L6-Bachelor, L7-Masters, L8- Doctors)

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NQF Level 3 qualifications

- NVQ/SVQ Tree Work (Arboriculture) Level 3 (180 guided learning hours)

- AA Technician Certificate in Arboriculture (180 hours) (prerequisite: Level 2 Certificate in Arboriculture (90 hours) plus relevant experience)

- EAC European Tree Technician
- ISA Certified Master Arborist
- Advanced National Certificate (Arboriculture)
- National Award or Diploma (Arboriculture)

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NQF Level 4 Qualifications

- ❑ RFS Professional Diploma in Arboriculture

- ❑ Chartered Arboriculturalist

- ❑ Degree or Masters (in arboriculture/ urban forestry, or related subjects in horticulture, environmental science, landscape design/ landscape management with evidence of arboricultural experience)

- ❑ Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma (as above)

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Misc. Professional Bodies in UK

- ❑ Royal Forestry Society - started in 1883 (127 years); 4000 members; Level 2 RFS Certificate in Arboriculture and Level 4 RFS Professional Diploma in Arboriculture; Level 6 ABC & RFS Professional Diploma in Arboriculture

- ❑ Institute of Chartered Foresters – founded in 1925 (85 years); 1000 members; Chartered Foresters and Chartered Arboriculturists

- ❑ International Society of Arboriculture United Kingdom and Ireland Chapter

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EAC (歐洲樹木栽培委員會)

- Established in 1993? (20 member countries, e.g. Germany, Spain, Austria, Netherland, Denmark, etc.; no individual members)
- Certification (handbooks available)-
 1. European Tree Worker: carries out operation on and in amenity trees
 2. European Tree Technician: taking a supervisory role in arboriculture and competent in technical knowledge, organizational and supervisory skills

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European Tree Worker

- Conditions of entry

---open to all who possess the technical skill; and

---have at least one year of practical experience in tree care and be skilled in climbing or using the aerial lift

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European Tree Worker

□ Examination-

- Each of the 7 parts (60 minutes or less each) of the exam need to be passed for the certificate to be issued.

1.) Theory/Written: 30 multiple choice, (60% of the points) and 8 open questions (40% of the points)

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- 2.) **Tree identification:** A minimum of 10 tree species out of 15 must be identified. (so 30 out of 45 points)
 - 3.) Oral Test: To include questions on national regulation / situation.
 - 4.) **Simulation 1:** Pruning / Bracing / Felling, Rigging / Planting / Transplanting, Tree Inspection
 - 5.) **Simulation 2:** Pruning / Bracing / Felling, Rigging / Planting / Transplanting, Tree Inspection
 - 6.) **Simulation 3:** Optional Aerial Rescue (applicable when there is no formal certification in that country). Rescue out of the tree
 - 7.) Working in the tree (climbing/platform):
Oral/Theory: Knots and equipment knowledge (Personal Protective Equipment) / Visual Tree Assessment / Securing of a worksite.

European Tree Technician

□ Conditions of entry

- a European Tree Worker certificate or holder of a certificate or diploma; and
- at least 3 years of current experience in the green industry

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European Tree Technician

□ Examination-

1. Written exam: 50% short question (60 min) and 50% essay type question (120 min)
2. Management exercise in the field of tree inspections (60 min)
3. Management exercise in economics, law and social studies (180 min)

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ISA (國際樹木學會)

- Established in 1924 (86 years) with over 20 000 members worldwide

- Grades of certification (study guide available) –
 - Tree worker (Climber/Aerial Lift Specialist)
 - Certified Arborist
 - Certified Arborist Municipal/Utility Specialist
 - Certified Board Master Arborist

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Membership

- Professional – anyone interested (\$125 USD)

- Student – college students in arboriculture

- Life – retired members (\$45 USD)

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Tree Worker

- ❑ Eligibility- 18 months prior experience in arboriculture

- ❑ A written exam on 50 multiple-choice questions on knowledge (1.5 hours), and a skill exam (practical) to be completed in 30 minutes

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Certified Arborist

- ❑ Eligibility requirements:
 - ❑ 3 years of full-time experience in arboriculture, or a two-year degree in arboriculture and two years of practical experience or a four-year degree in a related field and one year of practical experience; and
 - ❑ A written exam of 200 multiple-choice questions (3.5 hours), computer-based exam available
 - ❑ Recertify after three years with 30 continuing education units

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Certified Arborist

- Preparatory course-

- 30 days in the UK; or

- 55 hours (39 hours lecture and 16 hours practical) in Hong Kong

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Fees

- Certified Arborist (Tree worker)

- Exam: \$250 (\$165)

- Computer based exam extra: \$100 (\$100)

- Re-certification every 3 years: \$200 (\$60)

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ISA Certification Statistics

- ❑ Certified Arborists 21,373
- ❑ Certified Tree Workers 753
- ❑ Municipal Specialists 182
- ❑ Utility Specialists 1,236
- ❑ Board-Certified Master Arborists 209

❑ (Source: ISA)

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International growth

- ❑ Singapore - 188
- ❑ Hong Kong - 78
- ❑ Malaysia - 32
- ❑ UKI - 167
- ❑ Austria - 71
- ❑ Norway - 17

❑ (Source: ISA)

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Misc. Professional Bodies in USA

- ❑ American Society of Consulting Arborist, over 300 members (Eligibility: 5 years experience plus a 4-year degree in arboriculture or related field; or 240 CEU)

- ❑ Arboricultural Research and Education Academy
- ❑ Society of Commercial Arboriculture
- ❑ Society of Municipal arborist
- ❑ Utility arborist Association

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Local Qualifications (Examples)

- ❑ Professional Diploma in Arboriculture (Level 3) organised by the School of Continuing and Professional Studies of the Chinese University of Hong Kong; 180 + hours; started in 2009 (Eligibility: Have 5 passes in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (including English language) or equivalent, and with at least 2 years' working experience in the related fields; or mature students at the age of 21 or above.

- ❑ 樹藝管理文憑課程 organised by the VTC Integrated Vocational Development Centre; 196 hours (Eligibility: Form 6, or Form 5 with 2 years' working experience)

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Local Qualifications (Examples)

- Certificate in Basic Arboriculture (Level 3) organised by the Hong Kong and Kowloon Plant Worker General Union or the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions Training Centre
- Certificate in Tree Preservation and Risk Management (Level 3) organised by the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions Training Centre
- Certificate in Tree Climbing and Working Techniques (Level 3) organised by Asia Preservation Limited

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Summary

National Qualification Framework

Levels (Tree)	NAAA (Australia)	AA (United Kingdom)	Hong Kong
Assistant	L1	L1	L1
Worker	L2-L3 General member	L2	L2
Supervisor	L4	L3 Technician member	L3 Professional Diploma, cuhk
Manager	L5-L7	L4-L5 Professional member	L4
Consultant	L8-L10	L6-L8	L5-L7

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Summary

(National Qualification Framework)

Levels (Tree)	EAC (Europe)	ISA (USA)	Hong Kong
Assistant		Groundworker	L1
Worker	Tree Worker	Tree Worker	L2
Supervisor	Tree Technician	Certified Arborist	L3 Professional Diploma cuhk
Manager		Certified Arborist Municipal/Utility Specialist	L4
Consultant		Certified Board Master Arborist	L5-L7

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Summary

- ❑ How to get a professional qualification in tree work in Hong Kong?
- ❑ You should have or starting to acquire:
 1. the knowledge and skill: a qualification in arboriculture or a relevant subject; and
 2. the work experience in tree care or in the green industry

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NAAA or AA -

---Obtained an academic, professional or vocational qualification and work in the green industry

EAC or ISA -

---Work in the trade and get prepared to take a certification exam. EAC: exam centres in member countries; ISA: exam centres and computer-based exam available worldwide including Hong Kong

Discussion

What are the benefits of having an arboricultural qualification?

Benefits of Certification (ISA)

- ❑ Builds an individual's self image
- ❑ Opportunity to make an informed decision based on knowledge of those with the credential
- ❑ Process provides professional development opportunities
- ❑ Tools for employer
- ❑ (Source: ISA)

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Benefits of Certification (PLANET)

- ❑ A sense of personal achievement
- ❑ Increased respect and recognition in the industry and profession
- ❑ Increased professional credibility among customers and prospects
- ❑ Increased marketing advantages for your firm for having certified individuals on staff
- ❑ (Source: PLANET, the Professional Landscape Network)

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Discussion

- What are the benefits of establishing local arboricultural qualifications?

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Benefits of local qualifications

- More skilled personnel be involved and committed to uphold professional standard
- More in line with local situations: law, social, cultural, and economics
- More user-friendly over use of languages
- Follow practices of other professional or industry bodies locally

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Local Professional or Industry Bodies

- With the above benefits, it is up to you to initiate or support -
 - the formation of advisory organizations: professional or industry bodies, which may come from : government staff, contractors, consultants, firms, etc
 - with the aim to uphold the professional standard, increase levels of training and expand knowledge base through scientific research

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Concluding Remarks

- Which professional qualifications?
- Choose one or more that suit you most.

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References

- Websites of –
- NAAA: www.naaa.net.au;
- AA: www.tree.org.uk;
- EAC: www.eac-arboriculture.com;
and
- ISA: www.isa-arbor.com