



# JOB of the Week



## Job name: Horticultural Consultant

**Job description:** Horticultural consultants give specialist advice to commercial businesses and public sector organisations on horticultural issues. As a consultant, your horticultural clients may include farmers, commercial growers, nurseries, botanical gardens and leisure organisations. You'll advise on the development and maintenance of their crops, parklands and other public spaces such as gardens. As well as offering technical advice, you may consult your clients on the development of products and resources and on finding effective solutions to problems.

**Tasks you will undertake in the job:** As a horticultural consultant, you'll need to:

- visit horticultural clients on site, identify their business or technical problems and investigate causes
- analyse yields and the financial returns of existing commercial horticultural operations
- prepare new or modified operational strategies and business plans
- analyse horticultural and operational costs and the benefits resulting from existing or proposed public amenities and leisure locations
- conduct environmental assessments, taking into consideration the environmental impact of any developments
- visit historical sites, research old plans and documents, and plan restoration programmes
- design layouts and plan planting programmes for ornamental gardens or tree planting programmes with local authority officers
- design supply chain systems and support the infrastructure for processing, storage and transport
- formulate solutions, plan and organise trials to assess their effectiveness and organise presentations, technical visits and demonstrations
- help clients meet the requirements of legislative regulations concerning quality, hygiene and employment

**Qualifications you will need for this job:** A degree or HND is normally required and the following subjects are particularly relevant: agriculture / agriculture with crop management / agriculture with technology / earth sciences / environmental science / horticulture / plant and soil science / plant biology. Entry into consultancy without significant practical experience of the horticultural industry is difficult, so opportunities for new graduates are less common. In many cases, at least ten years' practical experience is needed. It's common to enter this career after developing your own business as a grower, or after acquiring technical expertise in industry or research. Occasionally, however, agricultural or horticultural consultancies may advertise posts open to graduates without direct relevant experience; these are usually at technical assistant or assistant consultant level. In addition, colleges and university schools of agriculture and horticulture also offer advisory services

## Skills required for this job (core competencies):

Communication	Resilience	Organisation	Teamwork
Problem Solving	Initiative	Creativity	Digital literacy

**Sectors in which Horticultural Consultants would normally work:** Typical employers include: commercial companies supplying products, equipment and services to the industry; environmental and conservation bodies; farming and horticultural co-operatives; food companies processing packaging and distributing fresh and processed fruit and vegetables; horticultural consultancies and local authorities (county, metropolitan borough and district councils)

**Type of work:** Horticulturalists specializing in ecological landscapes and urban forestry may create landscapes that provide ecosystem services, such as stabilizing slopes, reducing erosion, improving air and water quality, or even reducing the energy usage of buildings. They may also design parks and botanical gardens, or own a landscaping business. Those specializing in ecological and sustainable production may advise growers on best practices for sustainability, or own or manage a nursery, greenhouse, orchard, vineyard, or Christmas tree farm. Some horticulturalists specialise in turf management, overseeing the management of turf for golf courses and sports fields. Horticulturalists specializing in viticulture may own or manage a vineyard or winery, or provide consultation services to growers.



**Salary:** Average salary for a Horticultural Consultant is £21 000, average salary in the UK is £28 758



**Working hours:** Working hours vary with client demand and may be long and unsocial. Part-time work and career breaks are possible once a strong client base has been established

**Workforce in the UK:** 37% male / 63% female workforce

**Career prospects:** On first joining a consultancy, you'll usually work in a general role, only specialising later in a particular area, once you've gained some experience. In commercial consultancies, progression is from junior consultant to senior consultant to team leader, with a possible invitation to become a partner or director. In manufacturing consultancies and the public sector, promotion from team leader will be to the role of manager, either within the consultancy itself or in other areas of activity within the business or local authority.

## Professional development:

The training offered by agricultural and horticultural consultancies involves a mixture of short courses and project work, supervised by a senior and more experienced colleague. The structure and duration of any training programme will depend upon the size of the consultancy and the pressures of business.

If you're aiming to become a technical horticulture consultant, you should look for employers who will provide the training necessary to obtain Basis (Registration) Ltd qualifications or equivalent.

If you're an independent consultant it will be your own responsibility to keep up to date both in your specialist area and in the horticultural sector in general. You can do this by networking with personal contacts, completing short courses and attending conferences.

Professional bodies offer a range of training and networking opportunities: Chartered Institute of Horticulture and International Plant Propagators' Society (IPPS)

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[www.icould.com](http://www.icould.com)

[www.successatschool.org](http://www.successatschool.org)

[www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk)

[www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors)

[www.ucas.com/careers-advice](http://www.ucas.com/careers-advice)

[www.kudos/cascaid.co.uk/#/](http://www.kudos/cascaid.co.uk/#/) (you all have a log on for this service)

[www.careersbox.co.uk](http://www.careersbox.co.uk) (careers videos)



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GAT careers links

<http://airhead.io/public/launchpads/XqbuOMJgb0OfqvMPCykZA>

