

# LANTRA

Land-based and environmental skills

## Game and Wildlife Management Skills: Scotland

**A report by Lantra on behalf of  
Scottish Natural Heritage**

November 2011



**Scottish Natural Heritage**  
**Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba**

All of nature for all of Scotland  
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

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# Acknowledgements

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The research team would like to thank Mike Cottam (Scottish Natural Heritage) and all of our colleagues at Lantra who have been supportive; however we would like to specifically mention Richard Sutcliffe, Kate McCarthy, Mary Mitchell and Avril James.

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# Executive summary

This study was commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) in order to provide an authoritative account of skills, qualifications and training of Wildlife Management in Scotland together with the capacity to deliver any required skills uplift in deer management. In producing this report we have been able to explore various aspects about these professional and we now have a better understanding of their contribution and importance within the industry as a whole.

## Nature of sector

There is an apparent concentration of game and wildlife involvement in the central belt region of Scotland.

The game and wildlife sector workforce remains male dominated (97.6%) and three quarters (75.8%) are aged 45 or over. The self-employed (39.4%) are slightly more prevalent than full-time employees (31.4%) and part-time employees (29.2%).

A substantial volunteer workforce (20%) supplements the paid workforce within the game and wildlife sector. Another 60% is made up of involvement in game and wildlife estates (24.9%), tenant farmers (12.7%), commercial forestry (11.8%), and private woodlands (10.6%).

Whilst there were 164 job titles listed by respondents, the sector is dominated by four key roles. Those job titles with the word 'keeper/deer manager/stalker' made up nearly half of the respondents (48.3%).

## Qualification

Survey respondents were highly qualified, with 95.5% stating that they possessed a relevant qualification citing both accredited and non-accredited courses.

The majority of respondents (86.1%) recognised the importance of qualifications, and this was more prominent amongst the workforce who are full-time and in more senior roles.

## Skills and current proficiency

The game and wildlife sector requires a very broad range of skills and knowledge from its workforce. These were identified using the 23 National Occupational Standards (NOS) criteria for Gamekeeping, Game and Wildlife Management.

Respondents actively engaged with their own professional development. They identified areas of additional training needed to be fully proficient at their job/activity and for their continuing professional development (CPD).

Skills gaps were identified in the areas, of IT, raising public awareness of the game and wildlife sector, and the higher-level skills related in conservation and ecological issues e.g. habitat management.

## **Learning and training**

Assessment of current Further Education provision in the game and wildlife sector indicates that across the variety of courses available there has been a year-on-year increase in the number of enrolments.

Short specialist courses are widely available and seem to be favoured by respondents (32.8%).

Training received was rated favourably. The experience of on-the-job training was rated the highest, followed by support from employers (78.4%), support from providers (73.2%) and experience of off-the-job training (72.5%).

Geographical mapping of volume of provision to the respondent's home postcode shows a good match between localised supply and demand.

Throughout the report we have identified information that can be used to make changes to benefit those involved in Wildlife Management. The findings and recommendations can be used as evidence to support the development of qualifications and training in this area.

# 1 Background to the project

Lantra was commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) in March 2011 to undertake research designed to provide insight into the work, skills, qualifications and training in wildlife sector management, together with the capacity to deliver any required skills uplift in deer management in Scotland.

This research was commissioned in light of the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act (2011)<sup>1</sup>, which has now been granted royal assent. The Wildlife and Natural Environment Act brings much-needed modernisation to wildlife legislation, and should also streamline regulatory procedures and make them more effective. Following the recent merger in July 2010 with the Deer Commission for Scotland (DCS), SNH has expanded its remit to cover a wider wildlife management role. The Act will give SNH new powers and duties in a number of areas concerned with wildlife management.

## 1.1 Project objectives

The specific aim of the research was to:

- Gather data and intelligence on the socio-demographic make-up of people currently involved in the area of wildlife management
- Undertake a 'skills check' to see what proportion are achieving appropriate standards (National Occupational Standards) in the work place
- Identify any skills gaps
- Understand the training undertaken and qualifications held within the sector
- Identify training providers, assessment centres, trainers and assessors
- Look at the match between training supply and demand in terms of geographical location and numbers of people requiring training

## 1.2 Definition of the land-based and environmental sector

Lantra is the Sector Skills Council for the land-based and environmental sector. It is an employer-led organisation, licensed by Governments across the UK, to determine, promote and ensure that there are appropriate levels of skills and development support for businesses and individuals within the sector. Lantra is responsible for the skills interests of employers and businesses in the land-based and environmental sector, and defines the sector in terms of a range of subsectors or industries, which are defined by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk)

The land-based and environmental sector is complex and diverse, covering a range of subsectors<sup>2</sup> including game and wildlife. Businesses in the land-based and environmental sector enhance our national quality of life. They improve well-being, supply quality-assured food, ensure the health and welfare of animals, provide leisure activities, enrich the rural and urban environment, and protect our natural heritage.

Lantra has a strong presence in Scotland including a National Council, which ensures that Lantra fairly represents Scotland's businesses and cultural needs. The Scotland Council currently has a total of 13 members representing a range of industries (through both employers, membership bodies and trade associations), unions and training providers, as well as the Scottish Government. In addition, as an employer-led organisation, Lantra maintains UK-wide industry advisory groups for each industry within Lantra's footprint.

Scotland has a rich and varied natural heritage with a mosaic of landscapes and scenery, and is renowned for its stunning landscape and fascinating wildlife. Maintaining the high quality of the natural environment is vital to the economy of Scotland; it helps to attract tourists and makes a key contribution to the success of many rural businesses. The Scottish Government has an important role in ensuring that the legislative framework that underpins wildlife and natural environment management is fit for purpose.

### **1.3 Game and wildlife management**

The game and wildlife management industry as defined by Lantra's footprint involves the management of upland, lowland, woodland and wetland game and wildlife species, including partridge, grouse, pheasant and deer. The primary purpose of the game and wildlife management industry is to protect habitats and promote biodiversity. The industry also supports tourism and recreation and provides a source of high-quality meat. Lantra with the help of industry experts has developed key drivers for change in the industry (see Appendix A)

Game and wildlife makes a significant contribution to the Scottish economy, as well as contributing to the maintenance of Scottish moorland, which is a huge tourist attraction. Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) estimates that wildlife tourism has a value of £67 million to the economy. The British Association for Shooting Conservation (BASC) Scotland estimate shooting, stalking and angling to have a value of £136 million. Frameworks in forestry will need to take into account specific issues from Scotland, such as the forestry and timber industries contribution to the economy.

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<sup>2</sup> For the full list of all 17 industries and their description please refer to the Scotland Skills Assessment 2010/2011

[www.lantra.co.uk/Research/Skills-Assessment.aspx](http://www.lantra.co.uk/Research/Skills-Assessment.aspx)

## 1.4 Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011

The Scottish Government has introduced an act ensuring that wildlife and natural environment legislation is efficient, effective and proportionate, supporting sustainable economic activity, particularly in the countryside.

The consultation on a draft Wildlife and Natural Environment Bill ended on Friday, 4 September 2009, after which Ministers made final decisions on the content. The Act was introduced to Parliament in spring 2010 and received royal assent in April 2011.

The Act is a wide-ranging piece of legislation modernising outdated statute and addressing anomalies and weaknesses in current laws. It reduces regulatory burdens while helping to protect and enhance the natural environment for future generations.

The Scottish Government wants to ensure that legislation relating to natural heritage is fit for purpose, supports sustainable economic development, delivers public benefit, and is able to react to changing circumstances. Proposals include:

- A package of measures for improved deer management
- Modernisation and deregulation of the game laws relating to game birds and ground game, dating back to the 19th century, to make them more relevant and effective
- Creating a more robust framework in relation to the keeping, release and control of invasive non-native species
- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of species licensing administration
- Enabling greater flexibility in how muirburn (controlled burning of heather, grass and other moorland) is carried out
- Addressing anomalies in badger protection legislation
- Implementing ministerial commitments on snaring, including a tough new accreditation scheme for those who set snares
- Changes to the technical operation of the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) legislation

The passage of the Wildlife and Natural Environmental (Scotland) Act 2011 by the Scottish Parliament was welcomed by many, as it provides legislative protection of Scotland's natural biodiversity<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Scottish Parliament: [www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/52-WildNatEnv/index.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/52-WildNatEnv/index.htm)

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## 2 Methodology

Accurately measuring the size and structure of the game and wildlife sector in Scotland from secondary sources is difficult, due to the both the scarcity of data and also the way in which some of the available data is published. In order to capture data regarding skills and training issues within the sector, Lantra, on behalf of SNH, designed and conducted a survey of individuals involved in the game and wildlife industry within Scotland, supplemented with input from three focus groups. In total, 250 individuals completed the survey and 13 people participated in the focus groups<sup>4</sup>.

### 2.1 Quantitative data

A total of 2,500 self-completion questionnaires<sup>5</sup> were distributed via a series of contacts with the relevant listed organisations as follows:

Organisations
Association of Deer Management Groups
British Deer Society (BDS) members: Highland, Central, North-east Scotland, South-east Scotland, South-west Scotland
BASC Scotland
Three public forums <sup>6</sup>
North Highland College
Barony College
Borders College
Elmwood College
University of Cumbria (Newton Rigg Campus) <sup>7</sup>
Cairngorm National Park Authority
Scottish Crofters Federation
Cairngorm Speyside Deer Management Group
National Farmers Union Scotland
Scottish Rural Property Business Association
Wild Deer Best Practice Subscribers

Self-completion questionnaires as a means of data collection were deemed the most appropriate in light of project time scales, costs and the need to achieve a suitable response rate across the various membership organisations. Completed questionnaires could be returned either electronically or via the stamped addressed envelopes provided.

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<sup>4</sup> A high number of people involved are registered as employed in different sectors e.g. agriculture, forestry, estate management/ownership

<sup>5</sup> A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B

<sup>6</sup> 'Stalking Directory', 'Yes, we hunt' and 'Hunting Forum'

<sup>7</sup> A university in England that offers various game keeping courses and has students from Scotland

The questionnaire underwent an initial pilot stage in order to assess a number of criteria such as the length and overall ease of respondent completion and the coherence/understanding of questions to avoid respondent fatigue. The questionnaire took respondents an average of around seven minutes to complete, although this varied largely between individual respondents. Only minor issues arose during the testing phase, which were resolved accordingly. The questionnaire collected quantitative data in the main, supplemented by some open-ended questions that were coded post interview. The questionnaire responses were recorded using SPSS software (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), which enabled data analysis.

Individuals were not contacted before interview; however, they retained the right to opt out of completing the survey when contacted by Lantra. All individuals were provided a detailed introduction to the survey and its purpose, as well as necessary contact details to seek additional information if required.

The data collection stage began in April 2011 and was completed in six weeks. A break in questionnaire distribution took place over the Easter holiday period and the May bank holidays and resumed in June 2011. The closing date for the receipt of questionnaires was set as the end of July 2011.

## **2.2 Qualitative data**

Focus groups were used to provide important additional information regarding skills and training delivery across the game and wildlife sector in Scotland from relevant employers, stakeholders and employees. Some of the advantages of focus groups include:

- Insights that would be less accessible without interaction found in a group setting; listening to others can stimulate memories, ideas and experiences in participants
- Participants sometimes share a common language to describe similar experiences: this enables the research to capture 'discourses', that is, ways that interventions are experienced and talked about
- Participants can agree or disagree with each other, allowing the researcher to identify and explore shared views and opposing views
- Bring participants together, encouraging a sense of community and an understanding that consultation is important
- Putting participants at ease because, unlike an interview, there is not as much pressure on an individual to respond to every single question

As part of the development of the game and wildlife research three focus groups were held with small groups of individuals from the northern, central and southern regions of Scotland during May 2011 to provide views of skills issues and training needs. In total 13 people took part with five people attending the northern focus group and four people each attending the central and southern focus groups. A copy of the questions is available in Appendix C. Participants represented the views of a wide range of individuals and included businesses/organisations, trade associations, commercial businesses, public, and third sector, thus representing the views of a wide range of individuals.

## **2.3 Limitations**

Although the methodology applied in the Lantra survey was considered the most appropriate at the outset, as with all survey-based research the limitations need to be acknowledged. Generally speaking, survey methods rely heavily upon the knowledge of the respondent for which there can be no prior accounting or assumptions made. A number of factors dependent on the survey respondent can contribute to data inaccuracies, such as: intentional deception, lack of knowledge, poor record keeping, poor literacy, poor memory, misunderstanding of questions and 'compliance burden' (i.e. the pressure placed on the individuals to complete the survey in relation to being a member of an organisation). The two latter examples can be largely counteracted by sound question design and independent contact details for the return of completed questionnaires; however, the others are open to chance.

A specific limitation of the Lantra/SNH study was that members were contacted with the assistance of SNH; due to confidentiality rules, member contact details could not be obtained by Lantra's research team. One problem with this is that members may not have valued the independent nature of the research organisation and may have opted not to respond, contributing to a lower response rate.

A second problem of the survey was the time of the year, meaning that the holiday period prevented many individuals from responding promptly to the questionnaire, consequently reducing the response rate. Autumn might be a better time of year for this research for future surveys.

In terms of the focus groups the attendance was low despite arranging meetings in the evenings and in different locations throughout Scotland. One suggestion to overcome this was to conduct the focus group via a teleconference to reduce travel time and inconvenience to respondents.

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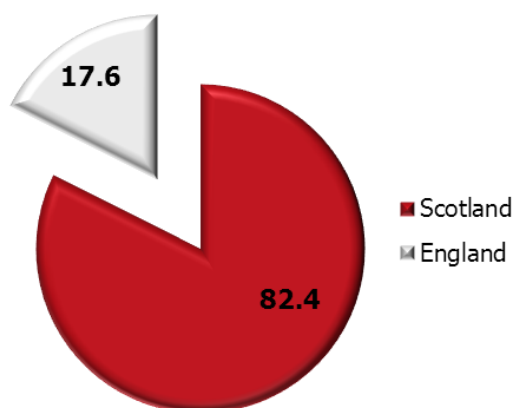
### 3 Key findings

It is intended that the findings of the research will increase SNH’s understanding of the nature of involvement (who, where, how) within the game and wildlife sector. Determining the number of parties and the contribution that they make to the industry, and comparing their potential future roles, is essential to forward planning concerning their skills and training in light of the new Wildlife and Natural Environment Act. It is essential to understand the issues governing skills shortages in the sector and how that will influence the future potential demand. In this section the data from the questionnaire survey is presented and supplemented with information gathered during the focus group interviews.

#### 3.1 Location and area covered

A proportion of respondents resided in England, but their game and wildlife involvement was based in Scotland. Figure 1 provides information on the home locations of those individuals involved in the game and wildlife sector operating in Scotland; the majority (82.4%) were based in Scotland and the remainder were domiciled in England.

**Figure 1: Location of respondents (% of total)**



Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; base = 244; missing data = 6

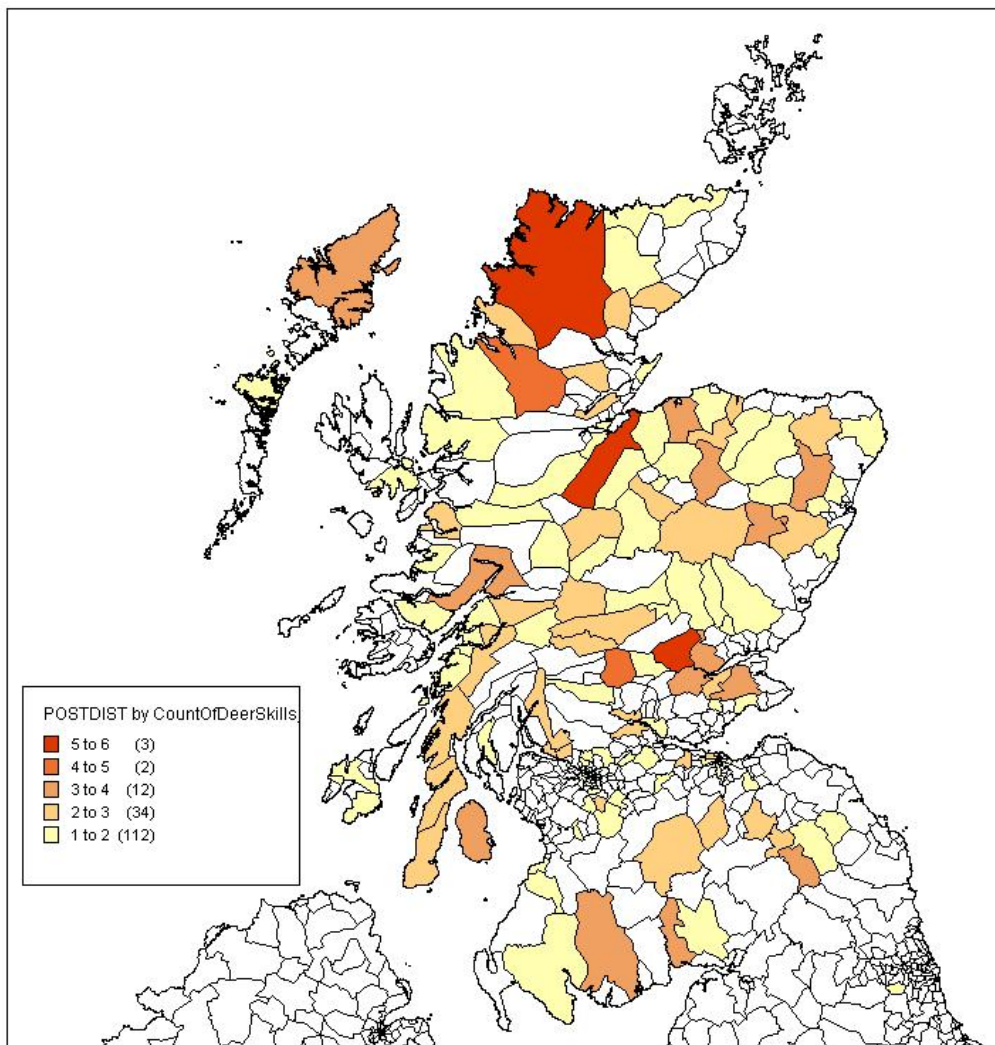
Table 1 and Map 1 below show the distribution of game and wildlife involvement across the Scottish regions, based upon the home postcodes provided by respondents. One particularly interesting finding is the apparent concentration of game and wildlife operating in the central belt region of Scotland. Why this should be the case is unclear. It could be that this relates to areas where most of the population is concentrated, or it could be that there are some big estates in a particular location. Also there could be greater number of shoots (i.e. one estate could have four or five shoots let out to tenants) requiring smaller acreage.

**Table 1: Regional location of respondents**

Region	Respondents	Percentage of total
Northern Highlands	4	1.6
Central Highlands	38	15.6
Western Highlands/Islands	4	1.6
North-east Scotland	33	13.5
Central Belt	105	43.0
South-east Scotland	9	3.7
South-west Scotland	8	3.3
England	43	17.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; missing data = 6

**Map 1: Location of respondents by postcode district**

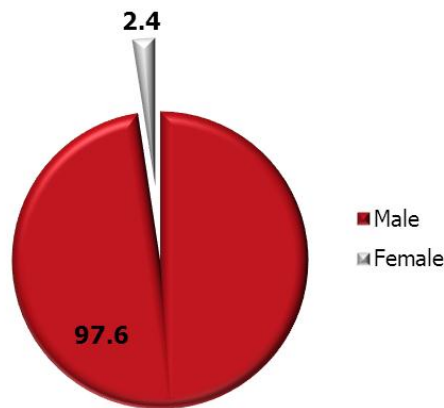


Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; the numbers in brackets indicate the total number of respondents

### 3.2 Personal profile

The respondents involved in the game and wildlife sector in Scotland were overwhelmingly male, as shown in Figure 2.

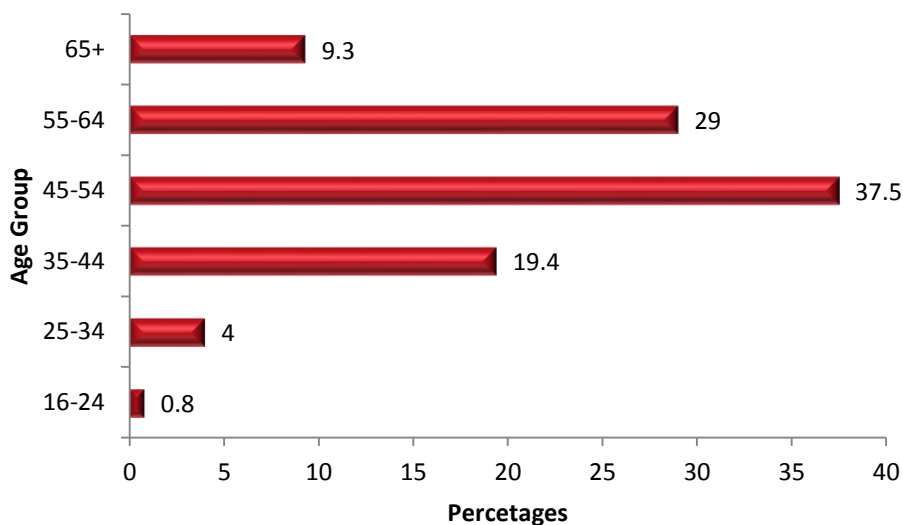
**Figure 2: Respondents by gender (percentage of total)**



Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; base = 249

It became clear during the focus group discussion that the sector was increasingly attracting more women; however, this was described as a 'trickle'. Various people were able to give examples of female pioneers, but the sector nevertheless remains male dominated due to the heavy nature of the work and the unsociable hours. Appendix D provides three case studies of people working the game and wildlife sector in Scotland.

**Figure 3: Respondents by age group (percentage of total)**



Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; base = 248; missing data = 2

As shown in Figure 3 above, nearly a fifth (19.4%) of all survey respondents were aged between 35 and 44, with a further three quarters (75.8%) aged over 45. These findings confirm the ageing nature of the game and wildlife sector workforce and point to the need to recruit from a younger age group. However, this considerable resource of mature individuals benefits the sector, as many of them are volunteers and retirees and offer skills that are 'lifetime learnt'.

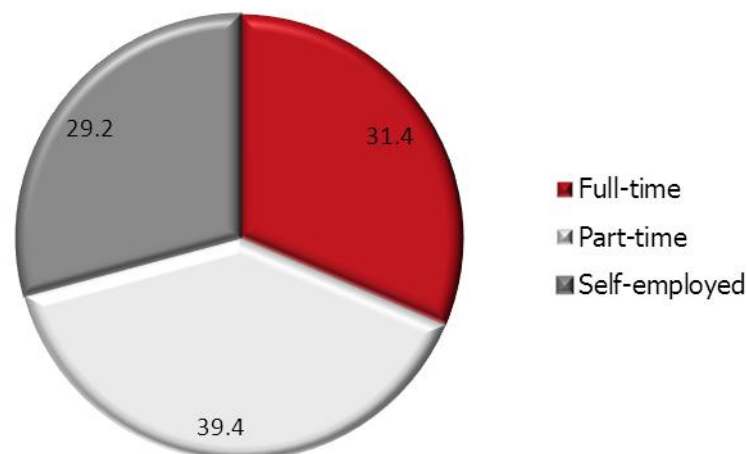
"I took over from a head stalker who had served 40 years; he had taken over from his father, his training had been passed down and that was the only training he had received that suited the estate at the time".

Conversely, it was evident from the focus groups that those who enter into paid employment within the sector are either career changers or young entrants. This bodes well as they provide some relief for a sector that has an ageing workforce with recruitment issues.

### 3.3 Work background

Almost a third (29.2%) of survey respondents involved in the game and wildlife sector were found to be self-employed. Just over a third (31.4%) had a full-time involvement in the sector, and the majority (39.4%) stated that they worked part-time within the sector, mainly in a voluntary capacity (see Figure 4 below).

**Figure 4: Respondents by involvement status (percentage of total)**



Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011  
Two respondents were retired; base = 236; missing data = 12

In most cases people were involved in a combination of activities, and the following table (Table 2) shows the nature of respondents' primary involvement in the game and wildlife sector. Some 6.9% of respondents defined their involvement as 'other', which when explored further meant that these people had a small involvement in the game and wildlife area.

**Table 2: Nature of involvement**

<b>Nature of primary involvement</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of total</b>
Game and wildlife estate	61	24.9
Commercial forestry	29	11.8
Private woodlands	26	10.6
Government agency	9	3.7
Tenant farmer/occupier	31	12.7
Crofter	10	4.1
Voluntary	49	20.0
Non-Government organisation	9	3.7
Charity	4	1.6
Other	17	6.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; missing data = 5

Evidence gained from the survey presented in Table 3 below shows that the most frequently occurring job role (48.3%) had the word keeper, manager or stalker in the title suggesting that nearly half of the respondents are employees rather than employers. In total there were 164 different job titles this may be a reflection of the titles of both professional bodies people belong to as well as the qualifications held by people operating in the sector.

**Table 3: Job titles**

<b>Job title</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of total</b>
Keeper/deer manager/stalker	112	48.3
Voluntary stalker	74	31.9
Estate owner/manager	31	13.4
Farmer/crofter	15	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; missing data = 18

In fact, when recording the job titles against Standard Occupational Classification<sup>8</sup> (SOC) codes, two thirds of the survey respondents came from the highest occupational grouping for managers and senior officials (see Table 4 below).

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<sup>8</sup> Standard Occupational Classification is a system of classifying occupations used by UK and other governments in answer to a growing need for a universal occupational classification system to enable the production of comparable data

**Table 4: Respondents by occupation**

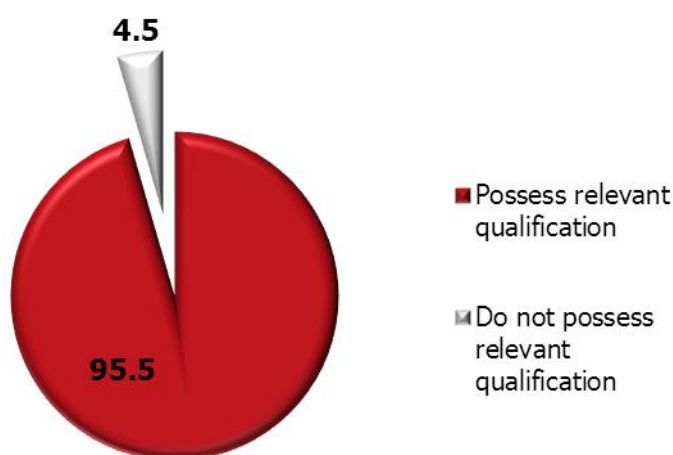
Occupation	Respondents	Percentage of total
Managers and senior officials	143	61.6
Professional	15	6.5
Elementary	74	31.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; missing data = 18

### 3.4 Qualification

Survey respondents were asked about their current qualifications relevant to their role. As can be seen from Figure 5, 95.5% stated they possessed a relevant qualification<sup>9</sup>. This could be a reflection of the types of people who respond to surveys. While this compares favourably with the 82% of the land-based and environmental sector's workforce in Scotland who hold a relevant qualification,<sup>10</sup> it still implies that at least one in 20 of those involved in the game and wildlife sector are working without any relevant professional qualifications.

**Figure 5: Proportion of people with relevant professional qualifications**



Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; base = 245; missing data = 5

The number of qualifications held by individuals ranged from none to 18, with an average of two including short specialist courses. Table 5 provides details of the highest qualifications held and shows that the most common qualification was the Deer Skills Certificate (DSC) 1 and 2. Appendix E contains information on training and career routes and qualifications required in the game and wildlife sector.

<sup>9</sup> This includes short specialist courses as the respondents perceived this as being a relevant qualification

<sup>10</sup> Skills Assessment Scotland 2010-11, Lantra

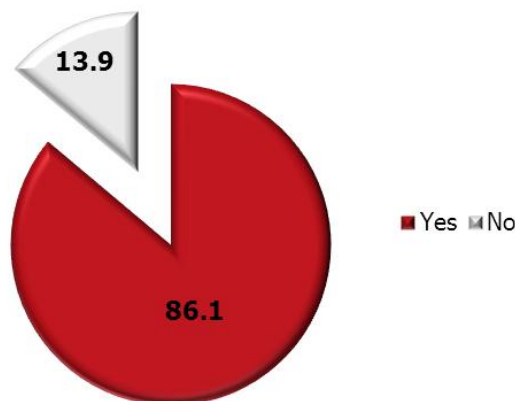
**Table 5: Respondents' highest qualifications**

Qualification	Respondents	Percentage of total
DSC1	33	15.0
DSC2	100	45.5
Postgraduate	7	3.2
HNC/HND	18	8.2
Undergraduate	24	10.9
Short specialist courses	20	9.1
NVQ/SVQ	8	3.6
None	10	4.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; missing data = 30

It is interesting that 69.6% of respondents cited non-accredited but industry-recognised practical certificates of knowledge and competence and 25.9% cited accredited nationally-recognised qualifications. The sector workforce is highly skilled; however, this is often developed through non-accredited training methods and knowledge transfer activities rather than full-accredited qualifications. For survey respondents there was no distinction between accredited and non-accredited courses<sup>11</sup> and the overarching issue was that the majority (86.1%) recognised the importance of qualifications (see Figure 6 below).

**Figure 6: Importance of qualifications**



Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; base = 245; missing data = 5

There was no significant association between age and the importance of qualification, but it was associated with levels of involvement (see Table 6/Table 7). This means that the more involved people were (self-defined by being full-time, self-employed and part-time, respectively) in the game and wildlife sector, the more qualification become important.

<sup>11</sup> Some are certificates of knowledge and competence rather than qualifications, but it is the respondents perception of these that is reported here

**Table 6: Importance of formal qualifications by age group**

	Under 45		45 and over		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	50	84.7	161	86.6	211	86.1
No	9	15.3	25	13.4	34	13.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011

**Table 7: Importance of formal qualifications by employment status**

	Full-time		Self-employed		Part-time	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	69	93.2	63	87.1	71	78
No	5	6.8	5	12.9	20	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011

There was a lesser association/correlation between levels of seniority and qualification in that those in a more senior position were more likely to value the importance of qualifications than those in professional or elementary roles (see Table 8).

**Table 8: Importance of formal qualifications by occupation**

	Managers and senior officials		Professional		Elementary	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	125	88.7	13	86.7	60	82.2
No	16	11.3	2	13.3	13	17.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011

In all three focus groups, discussion centred around the fact that qualifications can act as a benchmark to judge someone's basic level of skills, judge their intelligence and their aspirations. This was balanced with the need for practical experience and the fact that amongst the older workforce there was a lot of reluctance to change and to learn, and there were plenty of interesting examples of excuses. The groups concluded that younger people coming into the industry usually had some level of qualification, but this did not outweigh the value of practical experience as they were seen to 'go hand in glove'. Although there is no substitute for experience it was generally accepted that it was 'good to have the right pieces of paper'. There was also some debate on how and when experience can be gained, with some people saying that 'you cannot get the experience without having the DSC level 1'. This links quite suitably with the skills required in the sector.

### **3.5 Skills**

There was a lot of discussion on the issue of skills, the very broad range of skills and knowledge required for a job/activity, and equally important were those skills that are lacking.

Respondents used the term 'craft skills' to describe the technical and job-specific skills and they were also extremely proud of their skills, pronouncing them as 'second to none'. This indicates the level of passion with which people engaged with this topic.

Increasingly, those involved in the sector have to embrace skills that may be deemed outside of their work remit. The area of conservation and the identification of endangered species, for instance, need to be reported. This was identified as being a gap in higher-level skills as people in game and wildlife are expected to use ecological skills to understand environments and habitats. Raising public awareness was described as a 'massive issue' in the deer industry. Carrying a high-powered rifle, being camouflaged and wearing a veil might be quite legitimate but might be wrongly perceived by the public as antisocial or 'terrorist activity'. Thus, raising public awareness was advocated. However, computer literacy or information technology (IT) was seen to be the biggest problem within the workforce, although this was age dependent. This particular change has taken place within the last five years whereby information like firearm certificates is communicated via email, information about location of species is recorded electronically and GPS units are regularly used for map reading. For example, 'Being a stalker, the IT is it. I have been asked to go to a wind mast and remove a chip which had to be downloaded onto my computer and send to the office'.

### **3.6 Current proficiency**

Lantra is responsible for maintaining and developing NOS for Gamekeeping and Wildlife Management (2009) and Game and Wildlife Management (2010) reflecting a wide range of activities and job roles. NOS provided a clear description of the skills, knowledge and understanding needed by an individual to perform their job/activity to the standard and competency required by the industry. Competence being an amalgam in equal parts of knowledge, experience and skills, and the general view of the focus groups was that 'one can never be too competent'.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the skills they had and whether they were acquired through formal or informal training, and if they needed more training, from a list of 23 NOS criteria. Their responses are tabulated overleaf.

**Table 12 : National Occupational Standards**

Unit of National Occupational Standard	Formal training	Informal training	Training needed	Formal and informal training	Formal and informal training but need more	Informal training but need more	Formal but need more	N/A	N
Monitor game populations and habitat	27%	34%	3%	10%	4%	7%	4%	12%	225
Maintain game populations	27%	36%	3%	8%	3%	3%	4%	16%	218
Assist with heather burning activities	8%	22%	2%	2%	2%	5%	1%	57%	210
Assist with the management of public relations and access to a sporting estate	17%	34%	7%	5%	1%	1%	4%	32%	219
Care for animals used in support of game and wildlife management	15%	44%	5%	7%	1%	5%	0%	23%	218
Maintain and improve game and wildlife habitat	24%	36%	3%	9%	5%	5%	2%	16%	227
Contribute to the organisation of game shooting activities	15%	48%	2%	5%	3%	2%	1%	24%	222
Manage wild game populations	29%	34%	4%	9%	5%	3%	3%	14%	221
Contribute to the development of public relations for a sporting estate	14%	34%	7%	2%	2%	2%	2%	38%	214
Contribute to the management of game habitat	23%	38%	5%	7%	3%	4%	1%	18%	224
Contribute to the development of a sporting estate	16%	36%	3%	5%	4%	1%	0%	36%	216
Control the production of game meat for human consumption	44%	18%	4%	9%	4%	3%	4%	15%	226
Contribute to deer management planning	39%	24%	5%	8%	5%	4%	4%	11%	228
Contribute to the management of heather burning	9%	25%	5%	3%	1%	2%	0%	55%	208
Support participants on a shoot day	12%	41%	2%	5%	0%	2%	1%	36%	215
Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security	33%	33%	4%	8%	3%	5%	3%	12%	223
Construct and maintain structures and surfaces	15%	38%	3%	7%	5%	0%	2%	30%	208
Plan, monitor and evaluate the construction and maintenance of structures and surfaces	14%	36%	4%	7%	4%	0%	1%	33%	211
Maintain equipment and machines	18%	35%	4%	5%	4%	5%	1%	29%	217
Train animals to achieve specific objectives	12%	47%	6%	4%	0%	4%	1%	25%	214
Handle and care for animals to enable them to achieve work objectives	11%	48%	4%	5%	2%	2%	0%	27%	212
Stalk and cull deer	43%	21%	3%	11%	5%	5%	4%	8%	235
Prepare deer for human consumption	47%	16%	4%	9%	6%	4%	5%	8%	231

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011

As shown in Table 12 above, the wide variety of responses suggests an eagerness amongst respondents to actively engage with their own professional development and to improve the quality of the existing services they offer. The responses also indicate that all the people surveyed believed that they required additional training to be fully proficient at their jobs.

In addition to the NOS are the 80 Best Practice Guides<sup>12</sup> for Wild Deer, which have been developed by SNH to safe guard public safety, ensure food safety and the welfare of plants and animals. Recently, Lantra<sup>13</sup> was asked to map the SNH Wild Deer Best Practice Guides to NOS in the game and wildlife sector.

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12 [www.bestpracticeguides.org.uk/Default.aspx](http://www.bestpracticeguides.org.uk/Default.aspx)

13 Mapping the Wild Deer Best Practice Guides to the National Occupational Standards; Lantra, April 2011

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## 4 Learning and training

In this chapter the training courses that are currently available are explored to give an understanding of current provision and give an insight into what might be required in the future. This is balanced with respondents' own experience of training.

### 4.1 Current training/courses and qualifications

In order to assess the current provision for game and wildlife courses, further education data was collated for a five-year period from 2006-10. Table 13 lists the variety of courses offered during this time period that are available for those involved in the game and wildlife sector. The data on enrolments shows that the total number of enrolments has had a year-on-year increase with a peak in 2007-08.

**Table 13: Game and wildlife further education courses 2006-10**

Course title	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Gamekeeping	2	-	-	-
Deer Farming	5	-	-	-
Deer Management Qualification	6	7	6	5
Deer Stalking Assessment Level 1	-	-	13	6
Deer Stalking Certificate Level 2	-	-	-	-
Deer Stalking Certificate Level 2 - Open Learning	-	-	-	-
Deer Stalking Training Level 1	-	-	-	16
Deer Stalking Training Level 1 - Assessment	-	-	-	16
Falconry	-	17	-	-
Gamekeeping & Wildlife Management (Upland/Grouse) - BR	12	20	6	8
Gamekeeping & Wildlife Management (Deer) - BR	-	1	6	4
Gamekeeping & Wildlife Management (Lowland) - BR	3	7	10	6
HNC Gamekeeping With Wildlife Management - Flexi	-	1	1	1
HNC Gamekeeping With Wildlife Management - FT	9	9	6	10
NC Gamekeeping - FT	12	10	15	13
NC Gamekeeping And Wildlife Conservation	18	17	19	21
NC Highland Gamekeeping - FT	13	20	26	26
School Link - Gamekeeping	-	-	44	25
School Link Induction - Gamekeeping	-	-	-	11
Schools Programme - Gamekeeping	29	41	-	-
SVQ II Gamekeeping - BR	7	7	6	4
Wild Game Meat Hygiene	27	39	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>172</b>

Source: Scottish Funding Agency

Key: FT, full-time; BR, block release

Table 14 provides details on the types of training that can be undertaken in the game and wildlife sector at colleges in Scotland in the academic year 2009-10.

**Table 14: Game and wildlife courses by enrolments in 2009-10 by training providers**

<b>Training provider</b>	<b>Course title</b>	<b>2009-10</b>
Barony College	Deer Stalking Assessment Level 1	6
	Deer Stalking Certificate Level 2	0
	Deer Stalking Certificate Level 2 - Open Learning	0
	Deer Stalking Training Level 1	16
	Deer Stalking Training Level 1 - Assessment	16
<b>Barony College, Total</b>		<b>38</b>
Borders College	HNC Gamekeeping with Wildlife Management - Flexi	1
	HNC Gamekeeping With Wildlife Management - FT	10
	NC Gamekeeping - FT	13
	SVQ II Gamekeeping - BR	4
<b>Borders College, Total</b>		<b>28</b>
Elmwood College	Deer Management Qualification Level 1	5
	NC Gamekeeping And Wildlife Conservation	21
	School Link - Gamekeeping	25
	School Link Induction - Gamekeeping	11
<b>Elmwood College, Total</b>		<b>62</b>
North Highland College	Gamekeeping & Wildlife Management (Upland/Grouse) - BR	8
	Gamekeeping & Wildlife Management (Deer) - BR	4
	Gamekeeping & Wildlife Management (Lowland) - BR	6
	NC Highland Gamekeeping - FT	26
<b>North Highland College, Total</b>		<b>44</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>172</b>

Key: FT, full-time; BR, block release

In addition to the further education courses outlined above there are a number of short specialist courses. Table 15 below provides a flavour<sup>14</sup> of the types of short course/training that are available from private training providers.

<sup>14</sup> This list is by no means exhaustive and is here to indicate the variety of courses available

**Table 15: Game and wildlife courses offered by private training providers in Scotland**

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Course title</b>
British Deer Society	BDS Deer Management Course
	Formal range days
	General interest training talks
	Larder training courses
	Reloading courses
	Butchery demonstrations
	Cookery demonstrations
	Head measuring
	Deer watching/estate visits
	Training dogs for deer
	Ballistics
	Build bespoke rifle; develop home load
UK Deer Management Services	Firearms Awareness Course (Rifle)
	DMQ Level 1
	Intermediate Deer Course
	DMQ Level 2
	Basic Reloading Course
	Advanced Reloading Course
	Game Meat Hygiene Course
	Butchery courses
Stalking School	Introduction to Stalking One Day Course
	DSC Level 1 Self Study Two Day Course
	Four Day DSC Level 1 and DSC Level 2 Prep
	One Day Level 2 Gralloch and Lardering
	Sporting Rifle Techniques and Ballistics
	Butchery and Venison Craft
British Association for Shooting & Conservation (BASC)	Improve your Shooting
	Novice Dogs for Deer Course
	Pre-DSC Level 1 courses
	DSC Level 1 courses
	Basic Metallic Cartridge Reloading courses
	Wild Game Meat Hygiene Level 2
	Open Range Day
	Open Range Evening
	Trophy Preparation

Eskdale Wood and Wildlife Management Ltd	Deer Stalking Certificate Level 1
	Deer Stalking Certificate Level 2
Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust	Grey Partridge BAP group days
	Preparing the Perfect Pheasant
	Grouse Keepers Course
Lantra Awards	Wild Game and Meat Hygiene Level 2 <sup>15</sup>
	Pest Control (Rim Fire Rifle): Safety, Theory and Practice Level 2
	Fox Control (Centre Fire Rifle): Safety, Theory and Practice Level 2
	Firearms Use and Preliminary Safety (Rifle) L1
	Firearms Use and Preliminary Safety L1
	Sporting Shotgun: Field Safety and Practice L2
	Assisting Shooting (Loading) L2
Woodmill Shootings	Shotgun Coaching L1
	Beginners courses <sup>16</sup>
ACS Distance Education	Nature Park Management
	Wildlife Management
	Ornithology

There was a consensus in the focus groups that there were plenty of available courses but whether an individual can take advantage of the opportunities out there and/or can afford such courses was another matter. A suggested way forward was for these courses to receive Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) recognition via Scottish Funding Council (SFC) funding.

Table 16 provides data on the likely routes taken by survey respondents to obtain information about the kind of training available. In most cases, not surprisingly, this involved a combination of activities such a word of mouth, talking to the employer and/or looking on the Internet to maximise their knowledge base. A fifth of respondents defined their search for training as 'other', which when explored further meant that these people used newspapers or relevant magazines or prospectuses to search for their training.

<sup>15</sup> Scottish Centres currently delivering this are Elmwood College in Fife and Borders College in Melrose

<sup>16</sup> The courses represent a good introduction for those who may want to go on and apply for a British Deer Society Level 1 course

**Table 16: Finding out about training**

	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of total</b>
Word of mouth	47	19.6
Website/Internet	31	12.9
Through employer	15	6.3
Other	48	20.0
Two responses from above	75	31.3
Three or more responses from above	24	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; missing data = 5

Respondents were asked how they have received training, and again most people have used a combination private training provider, on-the-job experience and that from attending a college; a breakdown of the data is shown in Table 17 below.

**Table 17: Access to training**

	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of total</b>
Private training provider	62	26.4
On-the-job experience	36	15.3
Attend a college	8	3.4
Two responses from above	87	37
Three or more responses from above	37	15.7
Other	5	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; missing data = 15

Table 18 provides information on preferred delivery modes for training. As shown, short courses were favoured followed closely by those detailing a mixture of short courses, on-the-job training and distance learning.

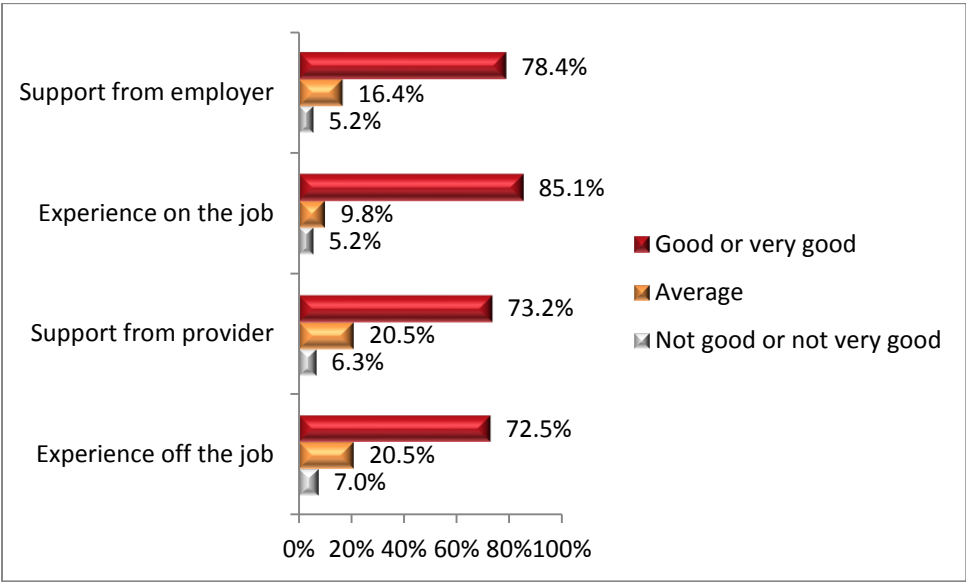
**Table 18: Most suitable delivery method**

<b>Delivery method</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of total</b>
Short course - off-the-job	78	32.8
Mixture	57	24
On-the-job and short focused courses	53	22.3
On-the-job	40	16.8
Part-time and short courses	6	2.5
Part-time	3	1.3
Full-time	1	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Wildlife Management sector skills survey, Lantra 2011; missing data = 12

There was a lot of discussion on the role of training providers in the focus groups. Some respondents thought that training providers should only teach theory and universal non-practical topics such as health and safety, while others thought that there was too much theory and not enough practical input or those providing the practical input were not industry experts. Suggestions for change included an increased role in assessing the practical element by those working in their specialist field. Some were of the opinion that training and general progress in the industry has not kept pace with changes in technology and legislation, and that new entrants are burdened with outdated working practices and requirements not in keeping with current industry standards. There was therefore a call for reviewing and reforming aspects of the training provided to standardise practice. Figure 7 below charts people’s experience of support and training received.

**Figure 7: Experience of and support of training received**



Nearly three quarters of the support and training received from both employers and providers was rated as good or very good. The experience of on-the-job training was rated the highest (85.1%) followed by support from employers (78.4%), support from providers (73.2%) and experience off the job (72.5%).

A number of training providers were contacted and asked about the number of trainers and/or assessors they employed to help deliver their current courses. This information is shown in Table 19 below.

**Table 19: Number of trainers and assessors by assessment centre**

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Number of trainers</b>	<b>Number of assessors</b>
Barony College	2	2
Borders College	3	3
Elmwood College	0	0
North Highland College	3	0
British Deer Society	7	2
UK Deer Management Services	0	0
Stalking School	2	1
BASC <sup>17</sup>	1	4 to 5
Eskdale Wood and Wildlife Management Ltd	2	2
Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust	2	0
Woodmill Shootings	0	0

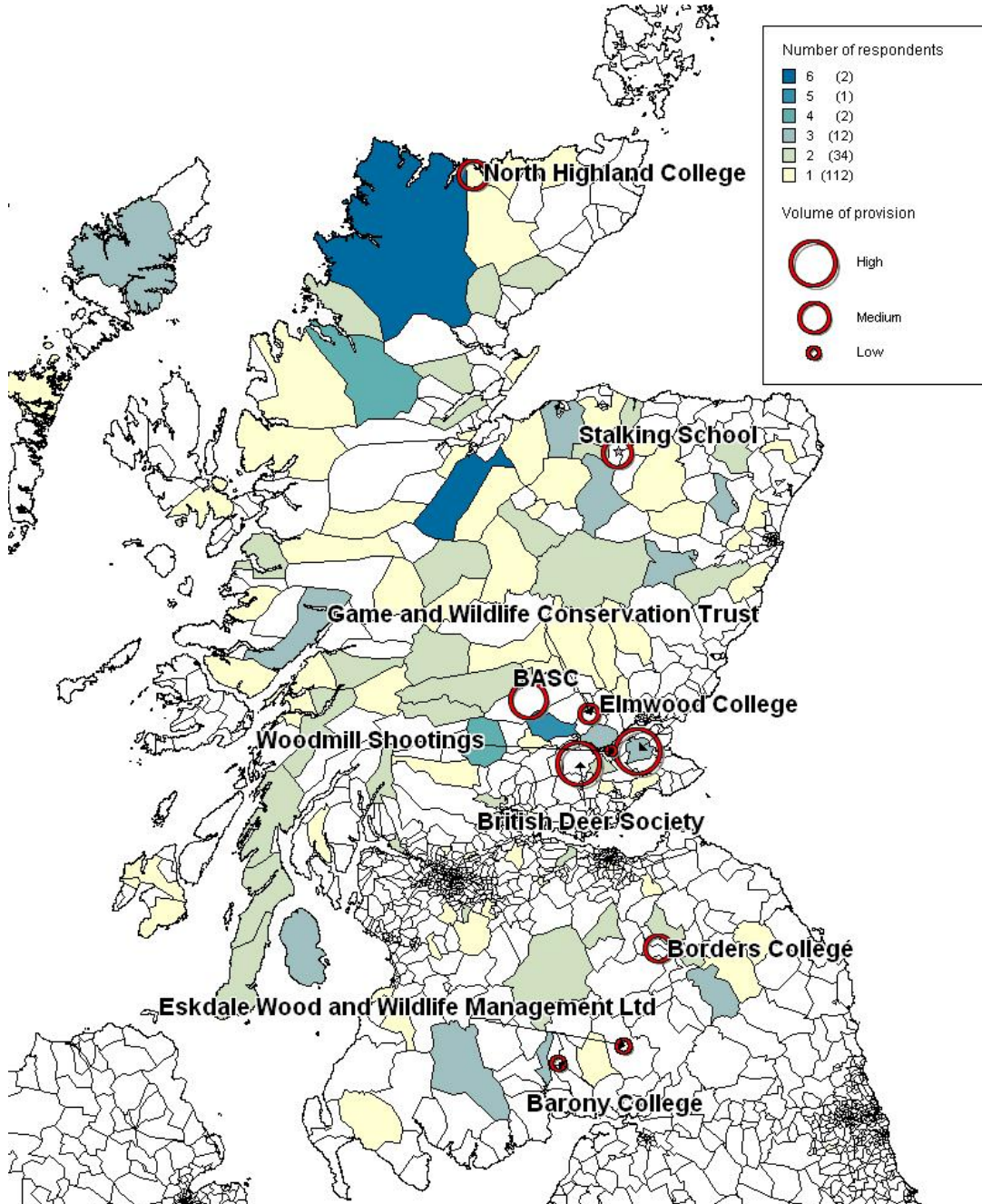
From speaking to the key person in each organisation it was possible to gain an insight into how trainers and assessors operate. In some organisations external trainers and assessors are used and the same person fulfils both roles. In other places the roles are distinct and fulfilled by different people. In some places there was no need for trainers or assessors and instructors or guides fulfilled all the functions required by the course.

The map below shows the overall distribution of game and wildlife training provision (supply) across the Scottish regions, and this has been matched to the home postcodes provided by respondents (demand). Looking at the match between supply and demand geographically enables the assessment of future training needs.

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<sup>17</sup> Operates on more than one site and this information was gathered from the Tayside offices, and therefore may not represent all trainers and assessors

**Map 2: Distribution of survey respondents and provision**



There appears to be a greater concentration of training provision in the central belt area, which coincides with the concentration of respondents.

It is difficult to assess whether the training provision currently available will be adequate to meet future skills requirements of those involved in the game and wildlife sector, thus addressing skills gaps.

## **5 Recommendations**

This report paints a picture of the game and wildlife sector in Scotland established from the primary research conducted. Based on analysis of survey responses and the focus group discussions and the appraisal of training provision, the following recommendations can be made.

### **5.1 Access to continued training**

Despite the number of training options available in Scotland, further work is required to ensure that those involved in the sector are able to access information on opportunities for further training and CPD, which will take into account possible accreditation of prior learning. The following points are recommended:

- Current provision should be reviewed in more detail to determine future skills requirements of those involved within the game and wildlife sector and whether there are gaps
- Professional organisations should provide clear signposting to raise awareness of training opportunities and to identify the content, level and relevance of CPD training courses and qualifications
- Improved communication should occur between the professional organisations in the game and wildlife sector with training providers to discuss recognition of training courses and qualifications in relation to requirements at various levels (entry, career changers, and existing staff)
- Working relationships should be improved between the different professional organisations representing those involved the game and wildlife sector to enable better exchange of dialogue on skills needed for the future of the sector

### **5.2 Training and qualifications**

To promote game and wildlife's high standards of customer and sustainable career opportunities, it is recommended that:

- Greater clarity and transparency of different training options of both accredited and non-accredited qualifications so that it does not create confusion, nor question the level of experience and competency within the professions and the wider game and wildlife sector
- More courses that embrace the areas of conservation and technological change should be made available to all those involved in the game and wildlife sector
- Public awareness should be raised to help those involved in the game and wildlife sector to perform their duties/activities as efficiently as they can

- Professional organisations within the game and wildlife sector should work together with training providers and awarding organisations to develop and agree industry-wide minimum standards for training, skills development and qualifications to ensure that people undertaking the work are suitably experienced and competent
- External recognition should be sought from suitable professional bodies and regulatory bodies for the game and wildlife sector

In order to allow clear identification of the practical skills and the underpinning knowledge required to take game and wildlife roles professionally into the future, it is recommended that the NOS for Gamekeeping and Wildlife Management (2009) and Game and Wildlife Management (2010) be combined into one. The professional organisations involved in the game and wildlife sector should be consulted as part of the revision process and their support sought.

### **5.3 Future**

The future of the sector post 2014 is the most important consideration in terms of the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act, and in view of that the following is either planned or recommended:

- According to Scottish Natural Heritage at least 40% of farmland and forestry is managed in ways to aid biodiversity; the Scottish Government has commissioned a three year study of the effectiveness of the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) in conserving habitats
- The main requirement is for the voluntary sector to be able to keep up with the ever-increasing demand for professionalism, and mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that this takes place in the best way possible
- Events should be planned and promotion of sector careers to young entrants, career changers and women performed to develop this sector further

## Appendix A Drivers for change<sup>18</sup>

<b>Career progression/labour supply</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lack of young people/new entrants to the game and wildlife industry</li> <li>• The industry needs to recognise and develop a clear career pathway to encourage new entrants to the industry, including highlighting the rewards of working in the sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a career pathway route showing a range of job titles with progression through vocational/academic qualification routes and examples of remuneration packages</li> <li>• Identify and produce case studies</li> <li>• Identify industry-specific skills ambassadors to promote career opportunities through careers services and schools</li> <li>• Consider broader approach to advertising vacancies</li> </ul>
<b>Qualification structure</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers consider the changes in qualification structures/frameworks confusing</li> <li>• Current apprenticeship schemes are still putting too much emphasis on the abstract delivery and examination of key/functional skills to which trainees, employers and training providers cannot relate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for employers/industry to contribute more effectively in review process and influence development of qualifications</li> <li>• Consider setting up regional focus groups</li> </ul>
<b>Industry recognition</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The industry's contribution to the enhancement of conservation interests and the general good condition of the countryside is not generally sufficiently appreciated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase skills in order to increase promotional opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Marketing</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The industry generally needs to improve the marketing of its products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best practice marketing and sales skills guides</li> <li>• Marketing and skills courses</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> Taken from the Game and Wildlife LMI Factsheet 2010/11 available on [www.lantra.co.uk/Downloads/Research.aspx](http://www.lantra.co.uk/Downloads/Research.aspx)

<b>Health and safety</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of awareness of health and safety requirements</li> <li>• Employers need to understand the need for, and carry out risk assessments to reduce risks of accidents and deaths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge transfer activities to understand Codes of Practice and Best Practice guidance</li> <li>• Health and safety training examples: use of rodenticides, quad bikes, gas cylinders on the rearing field, chainsaws</li> <li>• Targeted first aid e.g. First Aid in Rural Medicine (FARM); lone worker provision</li> </ul>
<b>Volunteers</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Importance of the third sector</li> <li>• There is a need to recognise the value of the volunteer sector within the game and wildlife industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure volunteers are aware of Codes of Practice and Best Practice guidance</li> <li>• Consider a process of recording of CPD and source funding to support CPD</li> </ul>
<b>Standards</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate competence through assessment within the deer industry in Scotland, which will be reviewed in the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) 2014 if not implemented by then</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry needs to develop a common standards approach</li> <li>• Ensure relevant training is available</li> </ul>

<b>Legislation</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of new wildlife, animal health and welfare legislation; need to ensure that training on the new snaring legislation is available and delivered</li> <li>• Issues raised in Wildlife and Natural Environment (W&amp;NE) Bill in Scotland e.g. issues of competence in deer management will require good deer sector involvement Use of lead ammunition; effectiveness of alternative ammunition; cost of alternative ammunition; could affect the economics of the shooting industry; potentially increased food safety; changes in legislation</li> <li>• Muirburn Code i.e. W&amp;NE bill: this is still a current issue since the W&amp;NE Bill in Scotland has a specific recommendation to review the Code. In addition, there should be some relaxation of the restrictions currently affecting Muirburn, especially in September</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a common standards approach by industry</li> <li>• Awareness of Codes of Practice and Best Practice guidance</li> <li>• Develop new integrated training and assessment and a registration process to implement legislation</li> <li>• Understanding the principles of a flock health and welfare plan</li> <li>• Consider changes to legislation and Muirburn code</li> </ul>
<b>Technology change and knowledge transfer</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure the game and wildlife industry continues to operate efficiently and effectively it must keep up to date with technological advances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure training is available and systems developed/maintained to meet needs of individuals involved in i.e. game carcass traceability</li> <li>• Raise awareness of benefits of mapping GPS/GIS skills related to wildlife management i.e. locating medicated grit boxes using GPS</li> <li>• Raise awareness of benefits of IT and signpost to training opportunities</li> </ul>

<b>Environmental issues</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity; public and social benefits e.g. hill track regime</li> <li>• Controlled Activity Regulations/Scottish Environment Protection Agency (CAR/SEPA) regulations</li> <li>• Integrating public access</li> <li>• Salmonid and other riverine SAC National &amp; Environmental targets OK though less likelihood of funding in the short-term. Knock on effects of changes in policy for targeting of CAP monies</li> <li>• Climate change including Scottish Government targets increases focus on alternative, renewable energy sources</li> <li>• Open access areas including the coastal path could impact on shooting opportunities</li> <li>• Managed realignment of sea defences may remove shooting opportunities for coastal shooting interest</li> <li>• Lack of burning in some parts of the uplands could be a conservation issue as increased risk of large uncontrolled fires</li> <li>• EU biodiversity target of halting loss of biodiversity by 2020 is an opportunity for shooters to provide additional conservation benefits for society</li> <li>• Opportunities for developing the sector linked to wildlife tourism: e.g. Land Rover safaris</li> <li>• Awareness of where funding mechanisms could be mutually beneficial or where compliance with restrictions on shooting/game management activities may be required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific best practice guidance in each area; best practice guidance</li> <li>• Focused economic support to deliver actual biodiversity benefits</li> <li>• Awareness of opportunities/challenges in local situations and in public awareness</li> <li>• Conflicting land use management objectives</li> </ul>

<b>Financial issues</b>	
<b>Drivers for change</b>	<b>Impact on skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial implications of CAP reform in 2013 and impacts on the single farm payment and environmental schemes in home countries</li> <li>• The implementation of cross compliance requirements post 2013</li> <li>• Agri-environment schemes provide financial funding for effective environmental land management in the UK. Changes to the schemes will impact on shooting (e.g. new Welsh scheme Glastir planned in 2013, present scheme closed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower funding to landowners will have knock on effects to game shooting as it decreases opportunity to apply for funds so financial management and planning skills will become more important</li> <li>• Cross-compliance knowledge needs to be increased and updated</li> <li>• Game shooting activities have to complement or be supported by the schemes e.g. planning for game cover as set aside</li> <li>• Improved business management skills to understand and implement new farming practices required under the new CAP regulations</li> <li>• Developing skills for environmentally sensitive land management</li> <li>• Increased learning provision in terms of initial and continual professional development</li> <li>• Developing skills for sustainable development</li> <li>• Higher level technical skills for new production methods</li> <li>• An integrated business advice and guidance structure to meet the needs of industry</li> </ul>

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## Appendix B Questionnaire

# Wildlife Management Skills Project Questionnaire for those who are involved in Wildlife Management

### Introduction

Lantra, the Sector Skills Council for the land-based and environmental sector, is carrying out a research project into the skills and competencies required for wildlife management in Scotland; together with the capacity available to deliver any required skills uplift. This work is particularly important at the present time with the new wildlife management legislation progressing through the Scottish Parliament.

We would be very grateful if you, as you work in this industry would take the time to complete this questionnaire and return in the envelope provided or by [wildlifeskills@lantra.co.uk](mailto:wildlifeskills@lantra.co.uk). Your response and identity will be confidential.

**Please tick the relevant boxes.**

### Some information about yourself

**1. Are you?**

Female  Male

**2. What is your age group?**

16-24 yrs  25-34 yrs  35-44 yrs  45-54 yrs  55-64 yrs  65+

**3. Is your involvement:**

Full-time  Part-time  Self-Employed

**How are you involved?**

Game & Wildlife Estate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tenant Farmer/Occupier	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial Forestry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Crofter	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private Woodlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	Voluntary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non Government Organisation (NGO )	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Charity	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Job Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Below are the skills required within your industry (full details are at the end of the questionnaire). For each skill tick the column/s that is relevant to you. Note: "Game" includes all legal game quarry species including deer**

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Formal training in these skills? E.g. College, Short Course</b>	<b>Informal training in these skills? E.g. On-job training; website</b>	<b>Do you feel a need for training in this skill?</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
Monitor game populations and habitat				
Maintain game populations				
Assist with heather burning activities				
Assist with the management of public relations and access to a sporting estate				
Care for animals used in support of gamekeeping and wildlife management				
Maintain and improve game and wildlife habitat				
Contribute to the organisation of game shooting activities				
Manage wild game populations				
Contribute to the development of public relations for a sporting estate				
Contribute to the management of game habitat				
Contribute to the development of a sporting estate				
Control the production of game meat for human consumption				
Contribute to deer management planning				

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Formal training in these skills? E.g. College, Short Course</b>	<b>Informal training in these skills? E.g. On-job training; website</b>	<b>Do you feel a need for training in this skill?</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
Contribute to the management of heather burning				
Support participants on a shoot day				
Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety & security				
Construct and maintain structures and surfaces				
Plan, monitor and evaluate the construction and maintenance of structures and surfaces				
Maintain equipment and machines				
Train animals to achieve specific objectives				
Handle and care for animals to enable them to achieve work objectives				
Stalk and cull deer				
Prepare deer for human consumption				

**5. Do you have any formal qualifications in your area of work/involvement?**

Yes  No

**6. Please would you list these in the box below?**

**7. How do you find out about training?**

Through employer  Word of mouth   
Website/internet  Other

If other – please specify

**8. How do you access training?**

a) Attend a College   
b) Private training provider   
b) On-job experience   
c) Other – please specify

**9. Which of the following course delivery methods would be most suitable for your activity?**

a) Full-time college attendance   
b) Part-time college attendance   
c) Short, focused courses   
d) On the Job/experiential learning   
e) mixture of on the job learning and college attendance

**10. What is your experience of each of the processes below?**

	<b>1. Not very good</b>	<b>2. Not good</b>	<b>3. Average</b>	<b>4. Good</b>	<b>5. Very good</b>	<b>0. Not Applicable</b>
Off the job training						
<b>Comment:</b>						
Support from college/provider						
<b>Comment:</b>						
On the job training						
<b>Comment:</b>						
Support from your employer						
<b>Comment:</b>						

**11. Is there anything else you would like to add about your requirements for training and qualifications for wildlife management?**

<b>Skill</b>
<b>Monitor game populations and habitat</b> (species, numbers, damage)
<b>Maintain game populations</b> (welfare, disturbance, provide resources)
<b>Assist with heather burning activities</b> (obtain Personal Protective Equipment PPE, ignite heather, control burn)
<b>Assist with the management of public relations and access to a sporting estate</b> (surveillance, taking action- poaching incidents)
<b>Care for animals used in support of gamekeeping and wildlife management</b> (e.g. Gun dogs, guard dogs, ferrets, ponies)
<b>Maintain and improve game and wildlife habitat</b> (cutting, encouraging natural regeneration, planting)
<b>Contribute to the organisation of game shooting activities</b> (planning of sporting programmes, contribute to planning, organise individual days, manage individual days)
<b>Manage wild game populations</b> (contribute to the development of wild game management plans; implement game management plans; supervise activities which aim to maintain wild game).
<b>Contribute to the development of public relations for a sporting estate</b> (develop public relations materials; maintain public relations in support of a sporting estate).
<b>Contribute to the management of game habitat</b> (plan game habitat; monitor habitat and usage;)
<b>Contribute to the development of a sporting estate</b> (determine potential for sporting estate)
<b>Control the production of game meat for human consumption</b> (transportation; storage; inspection; preparation; shot damage; condition)
<b>Contribute to deer management planning</b> (development of deer management plans; agree deer management plans with relevant stakeholders)

<b>Contribute to the management of heather burning</b> (develop heather burn plans; organise requirements for safe burning; control heather burning activities; supervise individuals and teams; react to a fire escape incident).
<b>Support participants on a shoot day</b> (describe the requirements of the shoot day to participants; provide information on shooting etiquette; provide information on quarry species and expected behaviour; provide information on gun usage and safety; maintain customer relations; coach individuals on the development of their shooting abilities).
<b>Promote, monitor and maintain health, safety and security</b>
<b>Construct and maintain structures and surfaces</b> (maintain equipment; prepare the site; dispose of waste)
<b>Plan, monitor and evaluate the construction and maintenance of structures and surfaces</b> (manage/plan activities)
<b>Maintain equipment and machines</b> (prepare, use, maintain equipment/tools; handle/dispose of waste)
<b>Train animals to achieve specific objectives</b> (select/train animals to support work objectives)
<b>Handle and care for animals to enable them to achieve work objectives.</b>
<b>Stalk and cull deer</b> (prepare for a stalk; identify individual and groups of deer; approach deer close enough to ensure a humane kill or effectively use a high seat; shoot deer; locate the shot deer and ensure the animal is dead)
<b>Prepare deer for human consumption</b> (hygienically transport deer; store deer so that its condition is maintained; inspect deer carcasses according to legal requirements; prepare deer carcasses to be sold for human consumption).

**Data Protection Act 1998:** Lantra will process this information for any/all of the following purposes – accounts and records; realising the objectives of a charitable organisation; advertising, marketing and public relations; consultancy & advisory services; education; research, & may be passed onto Lantra group companies, government agencies & bodies.

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# Appendix C Focus Groups Questions

## Wildlife Skills in Scotland Focus Group Questions

Introduction; Why are we undertaking this research?

- Information has been collected from secondary data sources and used to feed into annual Skills Assessment reports and factsheets for Scotland, however this research is much more detailed.
- We do not have robust skills research into all of the areas that make up the Game and Wildlife industry, and this research will help to address that and give us detailed information by a much broader cross section of industry.

1) Thinking about your current workforce, what skills are missing? (15 minutes)

Prompts:

- Do you think that the skills needed are changing? For example how are environmental changes (climate change, sustainability, biosecurity etc) impacting on the skills needed?
- Do you think that the skills needed are changing in view of technological developments which be impacting on the skills needed?
- What are you doing to help with the changing skills needs? E.g. more training?
- Is the training out there appropriate e.g. in the right location?
- It's been suggested that the industry attracts people who have trouble with literacy and numeracy. Would you say that this is true, and if so how does this affect the skills needs of these employees? Does it matter?
- How do the skills missing from the workforce affect the business?

2) What are the skills gaps with new entrants coming into the industry? (15 minutes)

Prompts:

- Are qualifications giving new entrants the skills that are needed to enable them to do their jobs?
- If not how would you change this?
- What qualifications are you looking for candidates to have?
- Do you think that there is too much focus on qualifications?
- What type of higher level quals are you looking for?
- Are higher level qualifications giving the required skills?
- From the research a comment was made that it was hard to attract new entrants with higher level quals? Do you agree?
- What type of higher level quals are you looking for?
- Are higher level qualifications giving the required skills?
- How much do you value on the job/experience compared to formal qualifications?

What do we need to do to attract new entrants to the industry? (15 minutes)

Prompts:

- What sort of people do you need to attract e.g. school leavers, career changers?
  - How many people are we looking for? Is it a growing industry?
- 3) Are there any other issues which you'd like to draw our attention to?
- 4) Please can you complete the short questionnaire and hand it back to us – if you haven't completed one already

Thank you for your time and contribution - Please could you fill out the contacts sheet?

## Appendix D Case studies

# LANTRA

Land-based and environmental skills

### **Andrew Buchan - Underkeeper From the Ben Alder Estate, Scotland**

Anyone with their heart set on becoming a gamekeeper has to be good with more than guns and game. The role is more than a job, it's a vocation, a lifestyle - and one that requires the best training.

Andrew Buchan is only 19 but he has already secured the post of Under Keeper on the private Ben Alder Estate at Dalwhinnie. He spent a year gaining invaluable work experience before joining North Highland College to take a National Certificate and Higher National Certificate.

At every opportunity he worked hard to gain more than academic qualifications. Andrew made sure he got himself noticed and lined up a set of good contacts and references, which are so important in such a specialised sector.

Andrew believes that the style of learning and the content of the courses at North Highland College are good for students and the industry. During his two years' study, he spent the vast majority of his time on the Atholl Estates while he first took his National Certificate in Gamekeeping, then spent alternate fortnights in college and on the estate for the HNC in Gamekeeping and Wildlife Management.

His extensive hands-on experience and classroom learning stood him in good stead when he left college and was approached to join the team at Ben Alder.

"I've always been around beating and shooting because my father did part time keeping. But we lived in Roslin and there aren't many deer there so I had to move to college and to get a job," Andrew explains.

"If you want to get into game keeping you have to be keen and dedicated. You have to be prepared for the paperwork and the practical stuff. It's not nine-to-five, it's hard physical work and you have to want the lifestyle."

Andrew completed his Level 1 in Deer Management at college and was able to do the Level 2 qualification at Atholl Estates, but he would also like the college course to include chainsaw training, though he appreciates that is a costly option.

"If you want to be a gamekeeper you need get your gun licences and your driving licence, and I think driving should be first. I was lucky enough to get work experience while I was at school and a year's experience before college at the Bavelaw Estate, where the gamekeeper David Graham let me help with beating and burning. He was a great help and gave me a reference for college," says Andrew.

"Kevin Grant, the keeper at Blair Athol, and Ronnie Hepburn, the head keeper at Atholl Estates, taught me a lot more. I've been really fortunate with all the people who have taught me, they have been patient and supportive."

Andrew says that any would-be gamekeeper has to be inquisitive, keen, polite - and memorable. Gamekeeping is a small world and word-of-mouth recommendations and written references are crucial to getting a job.

"Up here there's a good circle of gamekeepers. You've always got work on your own estate, but you can always go and help on others too, so you're always learning and meeting people," he explains.

Some youngsters leave college after their National Certificate, but Andrew believes the HNC is important and will gain even more standing in years to come as estates require more fully qualified staff.

"For the HNC you need to put in the hours and concentrate all the way through, but you're really chuffed when you've done it. That's been one of the highlights for me - that and shooting my first stag at Atholl and getting this job!"

He is convinced that his training has made him more aware of legislation and best practice which he can now apply at Ben Alder, where Andrew is working with on bird shoots and deer stalking.

"I enjoy it all, but mostly the grouse and deer. There is the option to go back to university to do management courses, but that would be more to be a Factor (manager) than a gamekeeper. For now I'm looking forward to my chainsaw training later this year."

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# LANTRA

Land-based and environmental skills

## **Megan Henderson – Underkeeper for the Novar Estate at Evanton in Scotland.**

Megan Henderson is just where she wants to be. Thanks to her mother, a great college tutor and an open-minded head keeper who believed that a teenage girl could become good gamekeeper...

Today Megan is Under Keeper on the Novar Estate at Evanton in Scotland - 23,000 acres dedicated to farming, forestry, traditional country sports and taking care of the environment.

Within five years she has proved the doubters, and there have been many, wrong. Not only is Megan qualified and experienced, last year her success was sealed with an award in the land based industries' sector skills council Lantra's Learner of the Year contest for Scotland.

"I was surprised because I didn't think I would win, but the award was proof. That's the biggest highlight of my career so far, because I could be proud of it, I could say 'I worked hard for this', it's confirmation that I CAN do the job!"

Megan was presented with the outstanding achievement award, sponsored by G C Taylor (Farms) Ltd, by Rural Affairs Cabinet Secretary Richard Lochhead, who said all the winners were leading a new generation of young people in the land based industries in Scotland.

For Megan, it was a personal as well as a professional triumph, and a tribute to those who believed in her ambitions - her mother Caroline, North Highland College tutor John Waters (now retired), and her first Head Keeper, Bill Whyte, on the Gruinard Estate near Gairloch, where Mrs Henderson has been housekeeper for more than a decade.

Just a couple of months into her new role as Under Keeper to Sam Milne on the Novar Estate, home to the first wind farm in the Highlands and backdrop to a scene in the movie Harry Potter and The Goblet of Fire, Megan would love to see more females join her in gamekeeping.

"You just have to work hard and give as good as you get," she grins.

Megan was inspired by her mother's farming family background to go into the job and Bill Whyte let her work on the Gruinard Estate for two seasons before she took a National Certificate in Gamekeeping, then an HNC in Gamekeeping and Wildlife Management.

"We spent most of the time on placement at the estate so you learn by doing, which is best," she says. "It helped me having experience before I went to college and I would advise anyone to complete the full two years."

Megan has always brushed aside doubts about her ability to do the job: "The careers advisor at school said I should get into veterinary medicine instead. Sometimes clients obviously wonder about a 'girl' dragging a 16-stone stag for them, and offer to help. But they all come round when they see I can do it all OK," she explains.

Megan believes that gamekeeper training today opens doors for 'outsiders' who can work alongside those who learn by generation, from parents and grandparents.

"These days you need the qualifications, the paperwork, health and safety certificates, and that helps the Estate with a highly trained workforce. The one thing missing from the college course is fishing - estates often want water ghillies and it's hardly covered."

She is enjoying her job and learning about game birds. Megan did consider taking further training in land management, but didn't want to get trapped into an office job.

At Novar, she enjoys the variety and being outdoors: "Here everyone mucks in. You work with the birds, the deer, a bit of farming. Managing game, we definitely put more into the estate than we take out."

Her advice to aspiring gamekeepers, whatever their gender, is to get practical experience, stay the course at college, learn to drive everything from tractors to dumpers, get to grips with guns and stay very fit.

"As a female it's also about creating good working relationships, which sometimes means giving as good as you get because the lads will tease you."

"But if you work hard you can do anything. Especially with people behind you like Bill Whyte, who said 'We'll see if you can hack it', and John Waters who had faith in me. And of course my mother, who never doubted me and encourage me all the way. She has been a rock."

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# LANTRA

Land-based and environmental skills

## **Steven Gran, Glenborrodale Stalker and Niall Rowantree, Sporting Estate Manager From West Highland Hunting on the Ardnamurchen Estate in Scotland**

Training successfully to be a gamekeeper requires more than dedication to college studies. Trainees need to learn on the job - where the right tutor and teaching style are crucial.

Steven Grant was lucky enough to come under the wing of veteran stalker Niall Rowantree when he embarked on his career aged just 16. Now 22, Steven is fully qualified - but readily admits he still has much to learn - and one of his greatest pleasures is passing on his knowledge to the next generation of students.

Niall and Steven work for West Highland Hunting on the Ardnamurchen Estate, the most westerly extremity of the Scottish Highlands, which is run with not only hunting, but also the environment, local community and jobs very much in mind.

"My father has been involved in recreational stalking since I was a child and my brother is a Gamekeeper. My first contact with deer was seeing two hanging in the porch at home, and I've been fascinated by them ever since," says Steven. "But I didn't think of this as a career until my brother went through North Highland College and got a job - visiting him opened my eyes to the fact that I could do it too."

He completed his SVQ Levels 1 and 2, then an HNC in Game and Wildlife Management from North Highland College, and in 2006 was winner of a Land-based Learner of the Year Awards from Lantra, the Sector Skills Council for the land-based and environmental industries.

The Ardnamurchan Estate also has another Lantra award winner on the staff - trainee stalker Grant Symmers, who is part way through a four-year placement from the same college. He was Land-based Learner of the Year for Scotland in the game and wildlife awards last year.

Steven says he wouldn't change a moment of his training, though he would like to add more elements to courses for future stalkers.

"Niall would never ask me to do anything he wouldn't do himself and when I was unsure, he would ask me to find a way of doing the job and go back to him if I got stuck. That gave me confidence to try, and to ask for help," he explains.

"Even in the few years since I started training, there is more of a requirement for academic knowledge and theory about things like sustainability and habitat. It's more scientific. But there is also a problem with confidence because young people coming into the sector are not always given the right academic support. You don't need to be the world's best mathematician, but you do need basic maths."

He knows he was fortunate in working under Niall and would like a list of approved and vetted estates to be created so that youngsters are guaranteed comprehensive training, rather than just supplying 'an extra pair of hands'.

Steven would also like to see more work experience, including an additional two weeks after school finishes and before students start college.

The gamekeeping course could also be extended with elements he has found essential, including butchery and driving all terrain vehicles (which he acknowledges is expensive but proposes could be funded 50:50 by the college and estates). He is also aware that health and safety training is vital and he has benefited from Niall's preparation of personal risk assessments for key jobs - something he would also like covered at college.

The highlight of Steven's career so far has most definitely been the Lantra award, which boosted his confidence but also made his name known around the industry. "When I'm in meetings or teaching, people remember who I am, which is great. Now I have students of my own and I'm still close to being a student myself. But I know that learning by doing embeds something in your subconscious, it's the best way to learn," he smiles. "I won't forget how I got to where I am. I'm still earning every day."

Niall Rowantree is obviously proud of his protégé: "I shot my first deer when I was nine and started on the Youth Opportunities Programme to become a Gamekeeper when I was 16. Now I'm 46 and they still call me the 'boy!'"

A third generation deer stalker, Niall has seen many changes in training and welcomes the return of apprenticeships, along with SVQs, National Certificates and HNCs in game and wildlife management - but he too would like to see more specific training to work with deer.

Niall, a former board member for the Deer Commission for Scotland and a consultant in deer management for estates around Europe, in Canada, North America and Mexico, wants to train a team of elite experts to take game keeping to a new level.

Over the years he has been involved with colleges, the Association of Deer Management Groups, and wrote some of the first best practice guides on managing deer for the Forestry Commission, where he worked for 12 years. He is now working with West Highland College on future training on the Ardnamurchan Estate.

Niall believes that controlling and managing deer populations has wider effects, including environmental protection and biodiversity for which there are more and more targets.

He first worked with Steven Grant on the Corrou Estate near Fort William: "Part of the job there was to upskill the estate to deliver sustainable deer management, a quality venison product and the sport. At Ardnamurchan we have adopted the Canadian-North American-African model for hunting. We are probably amongst the most expensive stalking in the country but we offer a quality all inclusive service are fully booked. We also offer contract management services to other estates. The owner here cares passionately about the community and works hard to maintain employment."

Niall's ambition is to build a core team of expert stalkers who can work anywhere and he believes the right training is an important cornerstone of his plans. "The financial benefit to the business underpins the point that training is worthwhile. Through Lantra it is easier now to liaise with colleges and to ensure that standards meet the needs of the industry.

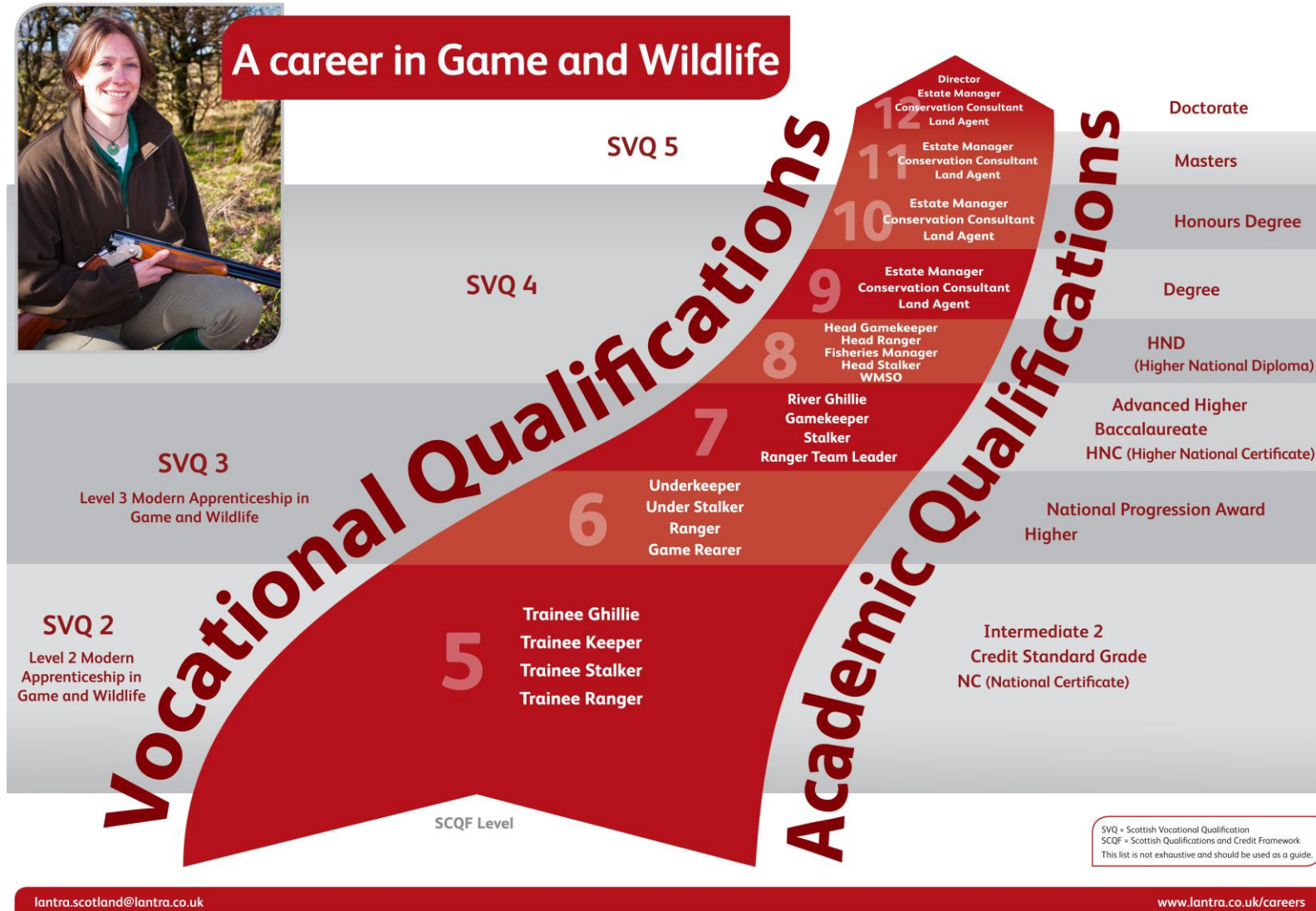
"The scope of the job has expanded and the public are more aware of what we do, there's habitat monitoring, we look at the health of woodland and look after meat production, plus some public relations and showmanship!" he laughs.

His advice to anyone wanting to become a Gamekeeper is to 'keep their nose clean', or they won't get a gun licence, to stay fit, develop academically as far as possible, to be open minded and passionate. "Remember this is a vocation. If you want to be rich, do something else."

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# Appendix E A Career in Game and Wildlife



## Lantra

Lantra is the Sector Skills Council supporting skills, training and workforce development for businesses in the environmental and land-based sector. We are committed to helping everyone access the training, qualifications, skills and knowledge they need for business success and to develop their career.

We are an independent, UK-wide organisation that is owned and managed by our industries, which are grouped around land management and production, animal health and welfare and environmental industries.

We lead the way in understanding our industries' future skills and business needs. We work together with trade organisations, unions, training providers, governments and many more to maximise investment in skills.

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