

Unit 38: Stalking and Shooting Deer

Unit code:	L/600/9443
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

This unit aims to give learners an understanding of deer stalking and shooting and how these can be applied in practice. The focus is primarily for learners in a centre based setting looking to progress into the sector or onto further/higher education. This unit provides the knowledge and skills required to approach wild deer, select animals for culling, carry out a cull and deal with carcasses in an appropriate manner.

● Unit introduction

Deer are the UK's largest wild, land mammals. Native deer species are an important part of the UK's natural heritage and many people who visit the countryside enjoy seeing them. In general, the range and number of deer are increasing. The continued growth in deer numbers means that their health, and the habitats they live in, can be compromised. In most cases it is necessary to cull deer to maintain herd health and balance deer numbers within their habitat.

Those employed in managing deer must be able to do this humanely and safely, dealing with the by-product, venison, in a hygienic manner. They must carry out culling operations within a strict legal framework and current codes of practice.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand the requirements of deer stalking
- 2 Be able to handle firearms safely and accurately
- 3 Know how to cull deer and follow this up humanely
- 4 Be able to handle deer carcasses hygienically and keep records.

Unit content

1 Understand the requirements of deer stalking

Deer stalking: deer habitats; likely location of deer; age (young, yearling, adult, old); prevailing conditions (wind direction, weather conditions); public safety; personal safety; access; seasonal issues; possible stalking route; notification of relevant persons; cull requirements; current relevant legislation and codes of practice eg Country Code, Deer Act; health and safety; risk assessment; animal welfare

Equipment: suitable clothing and survival kit (if appropriate); transport; optical equipment; firearms, ammunition; communications; maps; compass; personal protective equipment (PPE)

2 Be able to handle firearms safely and accurately

Shooting: risk assessment; stable shooting position appropriate to conditions; legal calibre rifle; deer or deer targets (according to humane requirements); health and safety; insurance, current relevant legislation and codes of practice

3 Know how to cull deer and follow this up humanely

Humane culling: internal deer anatomy; humane shot placement (bullet behaviour, position of deer, importance of ideal shots); consequences of poorly placed shot eg unnecessary carcass damage, carcass contamination; health and safety; current relevant legislation and codes of practice

Follow up and despatch: action following shooting in circumstances of well or poorly placed shot; location of shot deer; blood trailing; use of dogs; methods of humane despatch (thoracic sticking, short range shooting); current relevant legislation and codes of practice; health and safety

4 Be able to handle deer carcasses hygienically and keep records

Equipment: selection; preparation; PPE; knives; saws; transport equipment; deer larder/collection centre and equipment, waste disposal

Carcass: prepare (bleeding, opening, emptying/gralloch) carcass to local requirements; prevention of contamination; maintenance of the cold chain; transport; storage; waste disposal; health and safety; current relevant legislation and codes of practice

Inspection: current relevant meat hygiene regulations and codes of practice; external inspection; internal inspection; detection of abnormality in carcass, organs, lymph nodes; isolation of suspect parts or carcasses; notifiable diseases eg TB; record keeping

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 produce a plan for the stalking of wild deer	M1 stalk into a position where a safe and humane shot could be taken at a selected wild deer	D1 evaluate the stalking of selected deer and recommend improvement.
P2 select equipment, including firearm/ammunition for selected deer stalking		
P3 demonstrate the safe handling and humane use of selected firearms using appropriate shooting positions/distances to meet given objectives [EP]	M2 explain safe use and handling of selected firearms, and appropriate shooting positions and distances	
P4 suggest improvements to shooting positions and distances		
P5 describe the humane culling of deer		
P6 describe follow-up actions for given scenarios	M3 describe the procedures for the humane despatch of deer in given scenarios	
P7 carry out carcass hygiene inspection [EP]		
P8 prepare deer carcass for food chain [EP]	M4 bleed and gralloch a selected carcass according to local requirements, with regard to hygiene requirements.	
P9 keep relevant records of deer culled.		

PLTS: This summary references where applicable in the pass criteria, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Delivery of this unit will involve practical assessments, written assessment, visits to suitable collections and will link to work experience placements.

Whichever delivery methods are used, it is essential that tutors stress the importance of animal welfare, human health, sound environmental management and the need to manage the resource using legal methods.

Health and safety issues relating to working in an outdoor environment and with animal material and firearms must be stressed and reinforced regularly, and risk assessments must be undertaken before practical activities.

Tutors should consider integrating the delivery, private study and assessment for this unit with other relevant units and assessment instruments learners are taking as part of their programme of study.

The learning outcomes are all linked and every opportunity should be used to help learners to make connections between units so they gain a fuller understanding of the subject area.

Learning outcome 1 deals with planning deer stalking and the selection of appropriate equipment. Planning should be typical of that carried out by an experienced deer manager before stalking deer in an unfamiliar area. The legislative framework within which deer managers work should be referred to when appropriate. Delivery is likely to be through formal lectures, discussions, site visits, supervised practical sessions and independent learner research.

Learning outcome 2 covers handling deer calibre firearms safely and accurately. Health and safety issues must be addressed before learners visit any outdoor site or handle animal material or firearms.

In particular, it is strongly recommended that learners are supervised on a one-to-one basis at all times while carrying a rifle and in such a way that the supervisor can intervene at any time. Adequate PPE must be provided and used following the production of suitable risk assessments.

Due to age restrictions, firearms licensing or humane requirements, it might not always be possible to allow learners to cull live deer. In these circumstances the use of deer targets is acceptable, provided the nationally recognised Deer Stalking Certificate Level 1 shooting test format is used. This test approximates the distances and shooting positions that learners might encounter in the field and uses unmarked targets.

Tutors should check the legal requirements for unlicensed learners using rifles on ranges or private land. The *Home Office Firearms Guidance to Police* is a good source of advice. Shooting practice on a small bore rifle range can be very useful as a training method. Delivery is likely to be through formal lectures, discussions, site visits and supervised practical sessions.

Learning outcome 3 looks at the culling of deer and its humane follow-up. Delivery is likely to be through formal lectures, discussions, site visits, supervised practical sessions and independent learner research. Learners need to describe methods of humane despatch but, unless witnessed evidence is available, this should be simulated on carcasses previously confirmed dead, perhaps during carcass preparation. Visits or visiting expert speakers could add to the relevance of the subject. For example, a deer manager or deer initiative or deer commission officer could talk about their work, the situations they face and the methods they use.

Learning outcome 4 covers the handling of deer carcasses hygienically and the maintenance of records. Delivery is likely to be through formal lectures, discussions, site visits, supervised practical sessions and independent learner research.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan gives an indication of the volume of learning it would take the average learner to achieve the learning outcomes. It is indicative and is one way of achieving the credit value.

Learning time should address all learning (including assessment) relevant to the learning outcomes, regardless of where, when and how the learning has taken place.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction and overview of the unit.
Theory session: deer stalking equipment, legislation and regulations, health and safety, techniques related to different species and times of year.
Practical stalking techniques – planning stalking, terrain and wind direction, equipment.
Assignment 1: Stalk Deer (P1, P2, M1, D1) Tutor introduces the assignment brief.
Learners assessed on 1:1 basis – assessor following behind learner as they stalk selected deer.
Assignment 2: Deer Shooting (P3, P4, M2) Tutor introduces the assignment brief.
Practical rifle shooting – theory and practical sessions covering legislation, codes of practice and practical use of deer calibre rifles.
Learners shoot standard deer targets from various ranges and shooting positions.
Humane shooting and follow-up – terminal ballistics, internal deer anatomy, ideal shot placement and effect on deer, misplaced shots and typical immediate reaction, signs and evidence at strike, appropriate follow-up actions.
Assignment 3: Follow-up and Dispatch Deer (P5, P6, M3) Tutor introduces assignment brief.
Learners describe appropriate follow-up and dispatch techniques for at least three different wounding scenarios.
Practical carcass preparation – theory and practical sessions covering legislation, codes of practice, hygiene regulations and practical carcass handling.
Assignment 4: Carcass Preparation (P7, P8, P9, M4) Tutor introduces assignment brief.
Learners demonstrate how to field drallock a freshly shot deer and prepare the carcass for consumption meeting all hygiene requirements.
Unit review.

Assessment

For P1 and P2, learners must produce a plan for the stalking of wild deer and select equipment, a firearm and ammunition to meet given objectives. Tutors should identify the objectives or agree them through discussion with the learners. Learners must produce a stalking plan for a specific area, which takes into account the factors indicated in the unit content. They must identify and select the equipment required to carry out a planned outing. This could include suitable clothing and survival kit (if appropriate), transport, optical equipment, firearms and ammunition, communications, maps, compass, written permission (if required), firearms certificate, food and drink. The equipment selected should be relevant to the plan produced.

Evidence is likely to be in the production of a completed stalking plan together with evidence of equipment selection. Practical evidence of equipment selection could include observation records completed by learners and the tutor, accompanied by appropriate worklogs or other relevant learner notes. If assessed during a placement, witness statements should be provided by a suitable representative and verified by the tutor.

P3 and P4 require learners to demonstrate the safe handling and humane use of selected firearms using appropriate shooting positions and distances to meet given objectives. Tutors should identify the firearms and objectives or negotiate them through discussion with the learners. Where possible, to ensure fairness of assessment the size and complexity of the tasks should be the same for all learners.

When approaching deer, learners should see the animal(s) for themselves, decide on the most appropriate approach route and if necessary adjust that route as the approach progresses. They should make appropriate use of optical aids and available cover to close the distance to within reach of a suitable shooting position. The use of high seats is not allowed except in circumstances such as where a disability would prevent a normal approach. This will require practical assessment, during which learners demonstrate that they can adopt prone, sitting/kneeling and standing shooting positions and achieve a suitable level of accuracy in each.

Assessment taking place on a rifle range should be carried out under the protocol developed for the Deer Stalking Certificate Level 1 shooting test. Practical evidence must be given in the presence of an assessor, probably during a deer stalking practical, prior to, or after, a final approach to deer. Small bore rifle practice on a rifle range could be a useful assessment vehicle. The use of observation records or witness statements would be appropriate.

P5 and P6 requires learners to describe the humane culling of deer and follow-up actions for given scenarios. Tutors should identify the scenarios or agree them through discussion with the learners. Scenarios could include normal heart or lung shots, fatal wounding, eg to the liver, or wounding from which recovery is possible, eg a broken leg. It is thankfully very rare that the opportunity will arise for the wounding circumstances to be assessed 'for real' but if witnessed evidence is available this could be included.

Where possible, the size and complexity of the tasks should be the same for each learner to ensure the fairness of assessment. As a minimum, learners should provide evidence covering three culling and follow-up situations. Learners must know the correct shot placement and the reasons for it. The emphasis should be on knowledge of internal anatomy and bullet behaviour such that a humane shot can be taken even if the deer is not in the perfect position in relation to the shooter. Learners should recognise the ideal shots and demonstrate that these are what should be striven for in the majority of cases. The damage caused to the carcass by shooting and the potential for carcass contamination should also be taken into account. Evidence for P3 could take the form of a pictorial presentation with notes (possibly using appropriate software or an overhead projector), an annotated poster or a project.

For P7, P8 and P9, learners must carry out carcass hygiene inspection and preparation according to current legislation and codes of practice, keeping relevant records to meet given objectives. Tutors should identify the objectives or agree them through discussion with the learners. Where possible, to ensure fairness of assessment the size and complexity of the tasks should be the same for all learners. These criteria could be assessed by a combination of practical and other forms of assessment. Inspection could be assessed by practical demonstration and must include both external and internal inspection. Learners are expected to

identify all of the major carcass parts, organs and lymph nodes, and to be aware of their normal appearance. Learners should be aware of notifiable diseases including bovine tuberculosis and foot and mouth disease as well as parasites such as lung worm, liver fluke, ticks, keds, lice and warble fly. Learners must show that they know the correct procedure for isolating suspect parts or carcasses and informing the appropriate organisations. They must also provide evidence of appropriate records for cull records and meat hygiene regulations.

For M1, learners must demonstrate appropriate and safe stalking. Evidence is likely to be collected during practical activities using observation records and/or witness statements.

M2 requires learners to explain safe use and handling of selected firearms, and appropriate shooting positions and distances. Assessment could be in the form of evidence collected during practical activities or a presentation or project that links to P2 and/or D2.

M3 requires learners to describe the procedures for humane despatch of deer in given scenarios. Tutors should identify the scenarios, or agree them through discussion with the learners. Where possible, to ensure fairness of assessment the size and complexity of the tasks should be the same for all learners. As a minimum, learners should provide evidence covering three scenarios. Short-answer or multi-choice questioning could be suitable.

For M4, learners are required to bleed and gralloch a selected carcass according to local requirements, having due regard to hygiene requirements, and evaluate the activity. Tutors should identify the carcass or agree it through discussion with the learners. Where possible, to ensure fairness of assessment the size and complexity of the tasks should be the same for all learners.

This is a purely practical assessment and could be carried out on carcasses supplied by experienced shooters in a wild or park situation, or by learners themselves. Considerable practice may be required before learners are ready to attempt assessment. The gralloching, transport and storage operation must be carried out with the reduction of contamination risk and personal safety in mind. During the process the following should be considered: safe lifting and handling; avoidance of carcass contamination from environment, chemicals, equipment, personal hygiene, vermin, disease, gralloching technique, transport and storage. The methods used can follow those used locally or those habitually used by learners, and emphasis should be placed on a good end result rather than on 'commercial speed'.

For D1, they must evaluate the stalking of selected deer and suggest recommendations for improvement. Tutors should identify the deer or agree them through discussion with the learners. This could be based on deer stalked for P1. Where possible, to ensure fairness of assessment the size and complexity of the tasks should be the same for all learners. As a minimum, learners should provide evidence covering two deer. Evidence of assessment could be in the form of a project that links to P1 and/or M1 or a presentation to the group.

Programme of suggested assignments

The following table shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, M1 D1	Stalk Deer	The learner will plan how to stalk an area of ground and then execute that plan to get into a shooting position for a selected wild deer.	Practical observation and assessment.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P3, P4, M2	Deer Shooting	Consistently hit the kill zone on standard deer targets at ranges up to 200 m from a variety of positions.	Practical observation and assessment.
P5, P6, M3	Follow-up and Dispatch Deer	Describe appropriate follow-up and dispatch techniques for at least three different wounding scenarios.	Written/verbal report.
P8, P9, M4	Carcass Preparation	Demonstrate how to field gralloch a freshly shot deer and prepare the carcass for consumption meeting all hygiene requirements.	Practical observation and assessment.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Land-based sector suite. This unit has particular links with:

Level 2	Level 3
Introductory Deer Management	Element CU49.1 Stalk deer Element CU49.2 Cull deer
	Understand Deer Management

Essential resources

Learners will need access to a sizeable area of land holding wild deer and suitable transport for gaining access to and moving carcasses. The area must include a large part of the typical home range of the species of deer present. For some purposes access to a deer park might be useful as would the following: a supply of fresh deer carcasses; binoculars and/or spotting scopes; legal deer rifles and ammunition; access to a rifle range of at least 200 m; radio or other communication for field-based stalking practicals can aid effective fieldwork and satisfy health and safety requirements; a deer larder ('deer collection centre') and associated equipment; knives and other equipment, including appropriate PPE, for gralloching and transporting deer carcasses. In a woodland situation, regularly maintained high seats can be useful but tutors should note the restrictions on their use during assessment.

Tutors delivering this unit should be competent and experienced deer managers. Ideally they should have recent industrial experience within deer management or show evidence of regular contact with the industry and/or technical updating.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

This unit focuses on practical aspects of deer stalking and will give learners the necessary background knowledge. Centres are encouraged to create and develop links with local sporting estates. This could be via guest lectures, practical workshops or visits to see gamekeepers/deer managers actively involved in deer management.

It is likely that the cooperation of local landowners will be required to give learners opportunities to stalk deer and this should be developed and encouraged.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

- Alexander T – *Management and Diseases of Deer* (Veterinary Deer Society, 1994) ISBN 0951082612
- Carne P – *Deer of Britain and Ireland: Their History and Distribution* (Swan Hill Press, 2000) ISBN 1840370912
- Chaplin R – *Wild Deer in Britain* (Jarrold Publishing, 1977) ISBN 085306721X
- Chapman D and Chapman N – *Fallow Deer: Their History, Distribution and Biology, Second Edition* (Coch-y-Bonddu Books, 1997) ISBN 0952851059
- Chapman N – *Fallow Deer* (Mammal Society, 1984) ISBN 090461414X
- Clutton-Brock T – *Red Deer: The Behaviour and Ecology of Two Sexes* (Edinburgh University Press, 1985) ISBN 0852244479
- Clutton-Brock T and Albon S – *Red Deer in the Highlands: Dynamics of a Marginal Population* (Blackwell Science, 1989) ISBN 0632022442
- De Nahlik A – *Management of Deer and Their Habitat: Principles and Methods* (Wilson Hunt, 1992) ISBN 0907519024
- Forestry Commission – *Muntjac Deer* (Forestry Commission, 1996) ISBN 0855383356
- FSA – *The Wild Game Meat (Hygiene and Inspection) Regulations 1995* (Statutory Instruments: 1995: 2148) (The Stationery Office Books, 1995) ISBN 0110533623
- Mayle B, Peace A and Gill R – *How Many Deer?: A Field Guide to Estimating Deer Population Size* (Forestry Commission, 1999) ISBN 0855384050
- Prior R – *Trees and Deer: How to Cope with Deer in Forest, Field and Garden* (Swan-Hill Press, 1994) ISBN 1853104329
- Prior R – *The Roe Deer: Conservation of a Native Species* (Swan-Hill Press, 1995) ISBN 1853105325
- Putman R – *Sika Deer* (Mammal Society, 2000) ISBN 090628239X
- Putman R – *The Natural History of Deer* (Cornell University Press, 1993) ISBN 0801422833
- Ratcliffe P – *The Management of Red Deer in Upland Forests* (The Stationery Office Books, 1987) ISBN 0117102105
- Ratcliffe P – *Roe Deer Biology and Management* (HMSO, 1992) ISBN 0117103101
- Red Deer Commission – *Red Deer Management: A Practical Book for the Management of Wild Red Deer in Scotland* (HMSO, 1981) ISBN 0114916926
- Smith-Jones C – *Muntjac: Managing an Alien Species* (Coch-y-Bonddu Books, 2004) ISBN 190478402X
- Whitehead G – *The Whitehead Encyclopaedia of Deer, ISecond Edition, CD ROM* (Swan-Hill Press, 2003) ISBN 1904057195

Other publications

- British Deer Society – *Deer Stalking Certificate Level 1 Manual* (BDS, 1995)
- Dansie O, Cooke A and Farrell L – *Muntjac (Muntiacus Reevesii) and Chinese Water Deer (Hydropotes Inermis)* (British Deer Society, 1983)
- McCulloch N – *Deer Management Conference* (Red Deer Commission, 1990)

National Trust – Management of Deer on National Trust Land (National Trust, 1996)

Prior R – Deer Management in Small Woodlands (British Deer Society, 1987)

Prior R – Deer Watch: Watching Wild Deer in Britain (Swan-Hill Press, 1993)

Websites

www.basc.org.uk	British Association for Shooting and Conservation
www.bds.org.uk	The British Deer Society
www.dcs.gov.uk	Deer Commission for Scotland
www.deer-uk.com	Deer UK
www.defra.gov.uk	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
www.english-nature.org.uk	English Nature
www.environment-agency.gov.uk	Environment Agency
www.food.gov.uk	Food Standards Agency
www.forestry.gov.uk	The Forestry Commission
www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk	The Deer Initiative

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)

The following table identifies the PLTS opportunities that have been included within the assessment criteria of this unit:

Skill	When learners are ...
Creative thinkers	evaluating a deer stalk
Reflective learners	evaluating a deer stalk
Effective participators	stalking selected wild deer shooting standard deer targets preparing a deer carcass.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	researching legislation, regulations and codes of practice relating to stalking and shooting deer
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	
Mathematics	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	
Identify the situation or problem and the mathematical methods needed to tackle it	
Select and apply a range of skills to find solutions	calculating correct shot placements/distances
Use appropriate checking procedures and evaluate their effectiveness at each stage	
Draw conclusions and provide mathematical justifications	

Skill	When learners are ...
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	producing a report on follow-up and dispatch techniques.