

# Work Based Training in Biodynamic Farming and Growing



## Info for new training farms

You have chosen to be part of a modern, inspiring and vibrant training, with the aim to enable a new generation of farmers and growers to meet the challenges of future work on the Land.

By offering work experience you will be contributing to the growing of the agroecology movement, help new entrance, receive committed and engaged work force, nurture potential future staff and succession for your own enterprise.

Below you will find information, guidance and advice that help you to successfully start and continue a rewarding training scheme.

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### the Biodynamic Agricultural College

The BDAC work-based training started in the 1990's and still is organised and carried by BD-farmers and -growers.

Since September 2010 the BDAC work-based training is accredited through Crossfields Institute and regulated by OFQUAL at level 3.

Currently (Nov 2024) there are 19 training farms that offer about 24 placements for our training scheme. However the need for additional training placements is required to match the enquiries from potential students and new farmers and gardener for a sustainable future.

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### the Training Structure

The **training farm offers** work experience, knowledge, understanding, skill, guidance, reflection and pastoral care.

The **Biodynamic Agricultural College offers** Individual support, learning guidance though a comprehensive curriculum, professional training seminars, quality assurance, assessments of portfolio work and administration.

The **Seminars** are run by professionals with teaching skills, mainly farmers and gardeners. They provide subject knowledge, help to understand through a range of exercises that develop own senses, offer a range of perspectives and social exchange. The seminars each year are three five-day blocks, face to face at different locations in England and further five monthly online training days.

The training is based on **adult learning**. A strong emphasis is on the learners self motivated engagement, which will be research, home study, diary, portfolio work, preparation of presentations for the seminars, reading, online-learning, observations and other exercises, taking on responsibility at the training centre, asking questions.

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### Start and End

The Diploma training last 24 month, based on a two-year seminar cycle. However the stay on the training farm is unlimited, often starts before and goes beyond. The learners registration with the awarding organisation lasts three years, for the portfolio and diploma to be completed.

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### Finances

Work placements employ the learner at minimum wage. This enables the learner to cover all costs for accomodation, food and BDAC Diploma fees. (this is **not** a 'government apprenticeship' and therefor apprenticeship wages **don't apply**)

The work experience and training provided to the BDAC learner will be supported by a **'training grant'** from the BDAC to the work placement of £1200 per year, per student. This grant will be paid in six month instalments, each February and August. = 24 month @ £100 = £2400 total.

The amount of work experience expected, are between 32-44 hours/week over 48 weeks per year. The remaining four weeks are filled by twenty training days per year provided by the BDAC face to face in three week-long blocks and five separate online days.

The BDAC learner:

The employed learner can be charged for **accommodation** (max. £69.93/week or £300/month see UK-Government guidelines, from April'25 max. £74.62/week or £320/month) - and food provided by the work placement. If no on-farm accommodation is available, the learner should be supported to find suitable local accommodation.

BDAC diploma fee is £500 for admission and registration, followed by 24 monthly payments of £360 (this includes the £100 monthly training grant for the work placement) for induction, individual support, 40 seminar days (incl. accommodation and food), curriculum, portfolio assessment, certification, scheme maintenance and development.

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## Training farm registration

The new training farm applies to the BDAC by filling in the application form, containing information about the holding, learning opportunities provided and the trainers/farmers CV.

This will be followed up by a free formal supportive visit by the BDAC.

The new training farm will be added at the BDAC training website as training providers and offer a link to further detailed information about the placement (provided by the new training farm).

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## Admission guidance

We recommend to establish a good admissions process. A successful two year placement contributes equally to learner and farm alike. We are happy to offer free help, support and guidance in general and with specific applications.

- make sure your choice of student fits your needs and expectations
- make sure the student knows well what to expect during the two years placement:
- what can be learned?
- what work will be done?
- what are the working conditions? Lone/team work, responsibilities, working hours, weekend duties, overtime, holiday framework, accommodation, available farm products or shared meals, ...
- a days visit is almost essential, a one or more weeks trial is recommended.

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## for more information

visit <https://bdacollege.org.uk>

or contact:

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