



Examination Information

i d e n t i f i c a t i o n q u a l i f i c a t i o n s

NAME OF UNIT: **BRYOPHYTES**

REFERENCE NUMBER: **B061**

COST OF EXAMINATION: **£ 250.00**

SYNOPSIS:

The aim of the examination is to test the application of skills in identifying British bryophytes from a variety of habitats. The quality standards are those required for identifying biological material for environmental impact assessments, habitat evaluations and conservation surveys.

Material will be selected from a range of habitats in lowland to montane situations, which may include **mixed woodland, rivers (aquatics and marginals), bogs, grassland, urban and arable land**. Most of the examination material will be freshly collected or herbarium specimens, but there may also be line drawings.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate:

- the ability to identify some material to genus without the use of keys, and the majority to species using keys where necessary.
- a good knowledge of the more common elements of the British bryophyte flora as there will be insufficient time to key out all specimens.
- judgement in determining when a specimen cannot be keyed out to species e.g. due to missing diagnostic characters
- familiarity with relevant morphological terms especially those used as diagnostic or key characters.
- familiarity with identification manuals, checklists and other relevant publications
- a basic knowledge of botanical nomenclature as it relates to the current and correct use of taxonomic names.

CANDIDATE GROUPS:

Environmental consultants; biologists, ecologists and conservationists employed in the oil, gas and electricity industries, or working for the Environment Agency, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Water Companies. The qualification will also be of interest to professional and amateur biologists involved in mapping schemes and vegetation surveys.

EXAMINATION FORMAT:

The examination will consist of a practical test lasting about three hours, and a short written paper of about half an hour - total duration 3½ hours.

The main practical test will involve the identification to species of about 30-40 specimens drawn from a range of habitats: the habitat from which a specimen was collected will be indicated. Keys and identification manuals may be used in most cases, but the examination will require candidates

to identify a subset of about 10 specimens to species without reference to keys. Some specimens may be included which cannot be identified to species, either due to missing characters or to being unusual material. Candidates will be expected to note these as indeterminate; any guesses at inappropriate levels of accuracy will be considered as incorrect answers.

The written paper will consist of 5-10 multiple-choice questions on morphology and the correct use of taxonomic names.

EQUIPMENT:

Candidates will be expected to bring their own hand lens, dissecting and compound microscopes and other equipment. Where this is not possible suitable equipment will be provided.

Candidates should bring their own identification keys, handbooks and other identification aids, although single copies of relevant key works will be provided. Reference collections will not be available, nor can they be brought into the examination by candidates. Any problems over the availability of equipment and literature should be referred to the Museum well in advance of the examination date.

MARKING:

The pass mark for the examination is 90 per cent. Candidates achieving the pass mark will receive the full IdQ Certificate. As well as being informed in writing of the result, each candidate will also be given the actual percentage mark achieved.

To encourage training in bryophyte identification and the progressive acquisition of skills, candidates who fail to achieve the 90 per cent pass mark but who reach the intermediate standard of 70 per cent will be awarded an Intermediate Certificate.

VENUE:

The examination will be held at the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, London.

BOOKING INFORMATION:

For details on how to book and download an application form go to www.nhm.ac.uk/science/idq or contact idq@nhm.ac.uk, telephone (020) 7942 5816 or fax (020) 7942 5841.

REFERENCE LIST:

Knowledge of the keys in the following will be important for successful completion of the examination:

Smith, A.J.E. 1978. *The Moss Flora of Britain and Ireland*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Smith, A.J.E. 1990. *The Liverworts of Britain and Ireland*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Watson, E.V. 1981. *British Mosses and Liverworts*. Third Edition. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.