



# GARDEN DESIGN SCHOOL

Expert Tuition | Inspired Learning

## Garden Design Diploma – frequently asked questions

### Question

**Do I need any specific qualifications or experience to enrol on the Diploma course?**

### Answer

No. We teach you all the skills and knowledge necessary to complete the course from scratch, by going back to the basic principles of garden design. At the start of each section we assume everyone is starting with no knowledge. What we do often find is that students bring transferable skills with them (gained from previous life experience), so it is likely that you'll find some elements easier than others.

If you are interested in enrolling on the Diploma course what is required is a good grasp of the English language, a keen passion for garden design and a commitment to learn.

### Question

**Can I work at the same time as studying at the Garden Design School?**

### Answer

Yes, it is possible to work part-time whilst enrolled on the garden design Diploma but it will take considerable dedication. You will need to be available one day a week to attend school on Thursdays in Bristol and find a further 24-30 hours a week to study garden design at home on top of that. Our Diploma course is intensive and has a vertical take-off, so if you are considering working part-time whilst studying it will take significant commitment.

### Question

**What sort of people enrol at the Garden Design School?**

### Answer

Students who enrol with the Garden Design School come from a huge variety of backgrounds. They are often unsatisfied in their current careers and looking to follow their dreams or considering a career change as a result of redundancy or change in personal situation. Some students have worked in horticulture or design and are looking to expand their capabilities and opportunities. The one common characteristic that binds our students together is their desire to indulge their passion for garden design and their eagerness to learn.

### Question

**How quickly will I be able to start earning money as a garden designer?**

### Answer

Once you have passed your Garden Design Diploma from the Garden Design School you will be qualified to work for an established garden designer and we can help you apply for these jobs. If you want to set up your own garden design business it will take time to become established - like all new businesses. Some chose to work part-time on the garden design business, and part-time in a salaried role during these early days. You will, in effect be a freelancer, so the first step is to identify and develop clients, and then you can start to build a portfolio and design case studies. Our course is specifically designed to help you become a successful garden designer starting from the day you graduate, but it may take a couple of years for you to start earning a living from it.

### Question

**How successful am I likely to be as a garden designer?**

### Answer

The more you put into the course, the more you get out of it. Many of our graduates go on to have fulfilling, successful careers in garden design and you can read some of their stories on our website. If you attend a taster day you will also have a chance to meet a selection of graduates, and you can talk candidly to them about their personal experience at the college and their own businesses.

### Question

**Is the Diploma accredited?**

### Answer

No, our Diploma is widely acknowledged as having set the industry standard in today's garden design diploma courses but we have chosen not to be accredited. This enables us to teach our unique vocational Diploma course, which is designed specifically to equip you with the extensive set of skills and knowledge required to become a successful garden designer, not to pass an exam.

### Question

**Will I know who is going to be teaching me?**

### Answer

Yes, the school's principal tutors Robin Templar Williams and Moira Farnham teach 85% of the course content themselves. Robin and Moira work with a select number of additional specialist tutors, who are all recognised as industry experts. The taster days provide the ideal opportunity to meet and get to know the principal tutors and find out more about our supporting experts.

#### Question

**Are the tutors practicing garden designers?**

#### Answer

Yes. Both principal tutors are very well known and respected in the garden design industry and have thriving garden design businesses. Robin Templar Williams established his practice 32 years ago, and has delivered over 1,000 gardens. You can find out more about Robin's design business by visiting <http://www.robinwilliams.co.uk/>. Moira Farnham originally trained at Kew, and has worked with over 500 clients to date. Moira's website can be found at <http://www.moirafarnham.co.uk/>.

#### Question

**What happens if I need help outside of the regular classroom hours?**

#### Answer

You will get it. Support is provided to each student by the entire team at the Garden Design School. If students email questions to the office someone will respond promptly – usually within 24 hours. It is also important to recognise the support fellow students bring. Because our class sizes are small, each year our students quickly form a strong bond and further help each other to get the most from the course.

#### Question

**Will there be group discussions and critiques?**

#### Answer

Yes. Our course numbers are strictly limited to a maximum of 18 per class, which provides an optimum student-to-tutor ratio and allows ample opportunity for group discussion and critique. This is seen to be a vital part of the learning experience at the Garden Design School and considered invaluable by students.

#### Question

**Can I pay in instalments?**

#### Answer

We will do our very best to be flexible, if you would like to discuss payment terms please call the office on +44 (0) 1380 728788.

#### Question

**Is it possible to study with the Garden Design School remotely, or online?**

#### Answer

As our course only requires you to be at school one day a week, it is possible to commute some distance for the 9 months it takes to study our Diploma course. However, we do not offer online or remote learning for one reason – the face-to-face interaction with tutors and fellow students that you receive from the Garden Design School is invaluable.

#### Question

**What qualification will I get at the end of it?**

#### Answer

A Professional Garden Design Diploma from Garden Design School.

#### Question

**Am I guaranteed to pass the Diploma?**

#### Answer

No. The course consists of 4 design modules together with 2 portfolios, and you will need to pass all of them in order to complete the Diploma. Because our feedback is so rapid and you spend so much time face-to-face with your principal tutors, we can identify very early on if someone is struggling. If this happens, we provide the additional support and direction needed, to help get you back on track. If necessary it is possible to re-sit modules, but failure to pass any of the 6 modules will result in an overall fail.

#### Question

**How much does it cost to attend a taster day?**

#### Answer

You do need to reserve a space at our taster days, but there is no charge to attend. We appreciate that returning to study is a big decision to make, and being sure you have chosen the right college can be tricky. The taster days provide a great opportunity to meet the principal tutors and a selection of graduates, ask lots of questions and get a true flavour of what it feels like to be part of the Garden Design School.

#### Question

**Do you offer other Diplomas?**

#### Answer

No. The schools sole focus is on garden design and it is the only Diploma offered by Garden Design School.

#### Question

### **Do I need to budget for specialist equipment?**

#### **Answer**

You will need a drawing board, drawing equipment and access to some specific books. Books are often available in libraries or can be bought second hand. A full list of equipment will be supplied before the commencement of the course. Each student will also need a PC and camera, but most students already have these.

#### **Question**

### **How can I stay updated on news about Garden Design School?**

#### **Answer**

You can sign-up to receive regular email updates from Garden Design School, or become our friend on Facebook. Please click the button on the website, or contact the office to sign-up to receive our emails.

#### **Question**

### **What are the term dates?**

#### **Answer**

School days run from 09:30 – 16:30

The term dates for Bristol Botanical Gardens School (Thursdays) are as follows

Autumn term starts: 22 September 2016  
Half term (no lectures): 27 October 2016  
Autumn term ends: 16 December 2016

Spring term starts: 5 January 2017  
Half term (no lectures): 16 February 2017  
Spring term ends: 7 April 2017

Summer term starts: 27 April 2017  
Half-term (no lectures): 1 June 2017  
Final day of course: 13 July 2017

## Question

**Why should I study at Garden Design School?**

## Answer

If you are passionate about following your dreams to work in garden design and have a commitment to study, a Diploma from Garden Design School offers;

A unique, pragmatic Diploma curriculum designed and delivered by two of the UK's leading practicing garden designers

An ideal learning environment; our nurturing and supportive approach has helped graduates go on to pursue their garden design career dreams for over a decade

An industry recognised qualification gained within just one academic year

Free taster days; a valuable opportunity to meet the tutors, students and graduates to get a flavour of what it feels like to be part of the Garden Design School