



CORNWALL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Charity Number 298470 www.cbka.co.uk

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Education Policy and Teaching Guidelines

Revision 1

10th November 2023



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1. Introduction

The aim is to provide guidelines for enjoyable and progressive opportunities for our members to improve their beekeeping skills, remembering that we also take opportunities to visit schools and to meet the general public to promote better understanding.

2. Policy

The CBKA seeks to ensure that all members have access to a planned programme which can be used to improve their beekeeping skills and knowledge.

It is desirable that, before acquiring a colony of honey bees, one of the introductory courses available in the area is attended. There are eight Groups in Cornwall, and all will welcome new members, giving the opportunity to see bees close-up either in the Group apiary or in an experienced member's hive.

Once bees are acquired, usually in the Spring followed by successful over-wintering, and with experienced support, novices eventually learn about swarm control, swarming and swarm collection. Studying the basic syllabus will then increase knowledge and ideally, after two or three seasons, provide the opportunity to take the assessment.

3. Guidance

The five-year plan devised gives guidance for a progression through practical and theoretical knowledge. Members will learn at their own rate. There is no pressure to take any of the practical or written examinations, but by following each syllabus and using the recommended websites and books, one will gain the most success and enjoyment from beekeeping.

However, the examinations will increase confidence and the ability to help others. Study groups during the closed season to share knowledge are usually run between October and March.

Winter meetings give the opportunity for Groups to provide talks and demonstrations.



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4. Recommend Resources

Guide to Bees & Honey (5th edition) 2010	Ted Hooper
Haynes Bee Manual 2011	A & C Waring
BBKA Guide to Beekeeping	Ivor Davis & Roger Cullum-Kenyon
The Honey Bee Inside Out	Celia Davis
The Honey Bee Round and About	Celia Davis
The Healthy Hive Guide	Dan Basterfield, Roger Cullum-Kenyon & Ivor Davis
The BBKA Special Editions	
Dave Cushman (Roger Patterson)	
The Apiarist (Dave Evans)	
The Norfolk Honey Company	
NBU Advisory	
The Welsh Beekeeping Association	



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5. Suggested Teaching Guidelines for the first 5 years

**BEFORE STARTING YEAR ONE -
ATTEND A RECOGNISED "INTRODUCTION TO BEEKEEPING" COURSE LASTING MORE THAN ONE DAY**

		LENGTH OF BEE EXPERIENCE	OWN BEES?	STUDY	EXAMINATION	NOTES
YEAR ONE	SUMMER	NONE OR 6 MONTHS MAX. (APRIL TO SEPTEMBER)	NONE OR FIRST COLONY	PRACTICAL FAMILIARISATION WITH BEES, USUALLY IN GROUP APIARY	NONE	For preference, beginners should attend a course before they have bees, and can then progress smoothly through the years. Beginners who just get bees in their first year should then attend a winter course. The length of their bee experience may need to be adjusted. Their progress through the years may thus be slower.
	WINTER	6 - 12 MONTHS (in total, if bees kept through winter)	AS ABOVE	SELF STUDY. GROUP MEETINGS. ATTEND A COURSE AS ABOVE, IF NOT ALREADY ATTENDED	NONE	Experience should be <u>continuous</u> , taking the colony through summer and the following winter without loss.

NOTES

Each "Box" in any year can be advanced or delayed.

"Summer" = April to September and "Winter" = October to March.

"H.B.H." = BBKA Honey Bee Health Certificate.

Practical Tuition should (whenever possible) be in a Group Apiary.



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		LENGTH OF BEE EXPERIENCE	OWN BEES?	STUDY	EXAMINATION	NOTES
YEAR TWO	SUMMER	12 - 18 MONTHS (in total)	FIRST COLONY OR YES (from last year)	FAMILIARISATION WITH BEES AND/OR "BASIC" PRACTICAL WORK	NONE	Monitoring by experienced beekeepers of progress made will be useful to encourage both more confidence, and pupils to progress to the next stage.
	WINTER	18 – 24 MONTHS in total, if bees kept through winter	YES (perhaps 2 colonies)	"BASIC" THEORY COURSE	NONE	
YEAR THREE	SUMMER	24 – 30 MONTHS	YES	REVISION AND CONSOLIDATION OF BEST PRACTICE	TAKE AND PASS "BASIC ASSESSMENT"	
	WINTER	30 – 36 MONTHS	YES	? MODULE 1 COURSE	? MODULE 1 EXAM	



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		LENGTH OF BEE EXPERIENCE	OWN BEES?	STUDY	EXAMINATION	NOTES
YEAR FOUR	SUMMER	3 - 3 ½ YEARS	YES	INTERMEDIATE 1		Probably those taking the "H.B.H. certificate" will benefit from early study of the module 3 syllabus, and perhaps taking the exam as well.
	WINTER	3 ½ - 4 YEARS	YES	IF DESIRED "H.B.H. COURSE" ? MODULE 2 COURSE	? MODULE 2 EXAM	
YEAR FIVE	SUMMER	4 - 4 ½ YEARS	YES	"H.B.H." PRACTICAL WORK AND/OR INTERMEDIATE 2	IF DESIRED "H.B.H. CERTIFICATE"	
	WINTER	4 ½ - 5 YEARS	YES	? MODULE 3 COURSE	? MODULE 3 EXAM	Completing these 5 years of practical and theoretical study should provide a good foundation towards husbandry and master beekeeper qualifications.



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6. Suggested Guidelines for Year 4 Intermediate 1

YEAR FOUR – INTERMEDIATE 1

REVISION

- Apiary Hygiene*
- Varroa monitoring and IPM
- Methods of clearing bees/supers
- Feeding and Robbing
- Finding and marking the queen
- Drone laying queen, laying workers***
- Pagden Swarm Control with and without finding the queen**
- Asian Hornet, identification and trapping
- Record Keeping

NEW TOPICS

- Disease Inspections and use of a Lateral Flow Device*
- More detailed study of Diseases, Pests and their signs and symptoms*
- Bailey Comb Change.
- Shook Swarm.
- Managing brood and a half and double brood boxes.
- Swarm Control using a nuc box**
- Making up nucs.
- Queenlessness and introduction of a queen and a queen cell***
- Dealing with a bad tempered colony.
- Uniting.
- Bee Improvement (generally)
- H.B.H. topics as required by pupils.

(Items marked * or ** or *** might conveniently be taught together)



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7. Suggested Guidelines for Year 5 Intermediate 2

YEAR FIVE – INTERMEDIATE 2

REVISION

As required by pupils from any of the topics listed in the box for **Intermediate 1**

NEW TOPICS

- Queen Rearing – without, and with grafting, and including some study of basic bee genetics.
- More detailed Bee Improvement.
- Queen clipping.
- Other methods of Swarm Control commonly used.
- More detailed study of diseases, pests, treatments and IPM.
- Basic bee behaviour and biology.
- Microscopy, if desired.
- General Husbandry topics of interest or as required by pupils.
- Asian Hornet, equipment available to combat attacks on the hive and how to use it.