



The British Deer Society Skills Award



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The British Deer Society Skills Award

Introduction

In 1982 the British Deer Society (BDS) introduced the voluntary Woodland Stalkers Competence Certificate (WSCC) and had already issued many awards before it converted, with wide industry support in 1985, into the National Stalkers Competence Certificate (NSCC). When the training organisation Deer Management Qualifications was formed in 1997, again with unanimous industry support, the NSCC was gifted by BDS to DMQ and became the Deer Stalking Certificate 1 (DSC1). This has now become the accepted minimum standard for deer stalker training and, crucially, it is still voluntary. To date (July 2015), over 21,700 awards of DSC1 have been made and demand remains steady. DSC2 followed as a natural progression of learning which enabled stalkers to demonstrate practical ability under field conditions.

Since the introduction of DSC2, many stalkers have been asking for something more. DMQ have looked at a DSC3 but, for a number of very good reasons, have not pursued it. There remains nevertheless a demand for continuation training in the form of skills development in much the same way that the professions require CPD (Continual Professional Development) to maintain currency. The BDS, following a long period of development and consultation throughout the sector, is now able to deliver it. Based on a continuous acquisition of skills, stalkers and deer managers will be able to achieve a further graded award through engagement with approved sector courses.

The BDS has a number of such courses currently available and new ones will continue to be added as appropriate. The award is not however, restricted to only BDS courses and engagement with any outside organisations in all relevant sector courses and events may count towards the award. Thus for example courses such as chainsaw certification, Best Practice events, All Terrain Vehicle or off-road driving courses can all qualify towards the award in just the same way that BDS Shooting, Impact Assessment or Butchery courses can.

The BDS Skills Award is open to all, BDS members and non-members, and will be awarded to an individual on proof of achieving sufficient elements from a wide suite of courses. The award will be a progressive or accumulative one, graded as Bronze, Silver and Gold. Each element will be graded with a point value based on the level of learning and the duration of the course, and sufficient points gained from a self-selected suite of elements will qualify for the award at the appropriate level. Whilst the principle will be one of choice, there will be some compulsory elements to each level of the award. For example achievement of DSC1 will be compulsory for the Bronze award and attendance at the BDS Deer Management Course or equivalent, will be compulsory for the Gold award. Otherwise you select the most appropriate courses for your requirements and progress towards the target award with each course attended. Past courses may count towards the award as approved prior learning (APL), but time restricted courses (such as First Aid or Range Conducting Officer (RCO)) will need to be in date at the time of submission for any level of the award.

Upon registration you will be issued with a portfolio in which to record any approved prior learning and each new course as attended. All BDS courses will provide certificates verifying attendance and detailing the points awarded. External or historic courses will be awarded points based on agreement with the BDS Training Team. The award will thus be to a certain extent self-administered by the student. He or she is responsible for maintaining a record of achievement and then submitting it for

verification once the appropriate number of points has been achieved for the respective level of the award. Naturally there will be a badge in recognition of each level of the award. But there is no compulsion to enrol and register for the award – all courses can be taken as part of your personal skills development programme without any requirement to pursue the award. Each course is a stand-alone training event with which anyone is free to engage if it is of interest or relevance to them. So the system is completely flexible for all stalkers and deer managers depending upon their requirements.

In practice therefore you will need 100 points for Bronze, 150 points for Silver and 200 for Gold. DSC1 and 2 however account for 60 points and so, many stalkers will only have to complete a few additional elements to achieve Bronze. Progression to Gold is expected to take rather greater application. There is no time limit attached to any level of registration.

Claiming for an award.

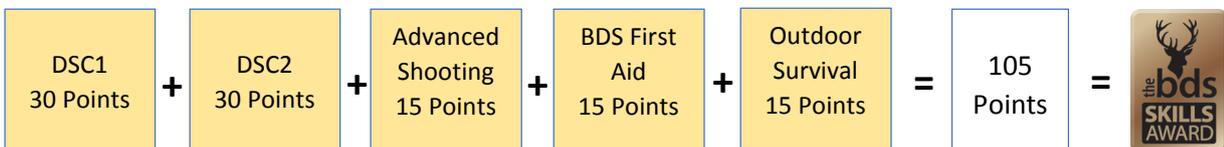
To achieve each level of skills award, an individual has to have previously been registered for the relevant level of award and produce evidence of achievement in a sufficient number of skills which in total has accumulated the appropriate number of points to claim an award.

The evidence required may take a number of different formats and each is explained under the description of a particular skill.

There are many ways of constructing a claim using evidence of achievement. If however a unit has been used to claim at a particular level, that unit may not be used again even if it is a compulsory unit for a higher level.

Examples are as follows:

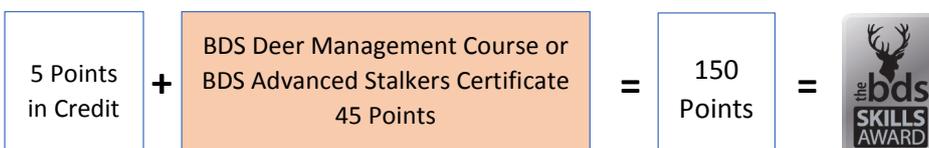
Claim for Bronze award: Points value required 100



A total of 105 points has been claimed by using the above combination of units thus qualifying for a Bronze skill award. Should an individual wish to pursue a silver award, normally an additional 50 points will be required however in the above example there are 5 points in credit so only an additional 45 are required to claim for a Silver award.

None of the already claimed for components as above can be used again and although DSC2 is a compulsory component for Silver, it has already been used at Bronze level so the points will have to come via a combination of other unit claims making up the 45 required points.

One way of achieving this could be as detailed below:



If an individual wishes to go on to achieve a gold skills award, an additional 50 points value is required. None of the units already submitted above can be used a second time so the additional 50 points needed to claim Gold will have to be accumulated through other units.

Contributing units

Below is a table detailing the various component units which may be claimed for at different levels of the BDS skills award.

	Course or Award	Points Value
1	Deer Stalking Certificate 1*	30
2	Deer Stalking Certificate 2**	30
3	BDS First Aid Course	20
4	Other Valid First Aid at Work (minimum) Course	15
5	BDS Advanced Shooting Award	15
6	High Seat Placement and Health and Safety	10
7	Carcass Butchery Course	15
8	Dogs for Deer Training Event	10
9	Off Road Driving Course	10
10	All-Terrain Vehicle Driving Course	10
11	Impact and Habitat Assessment	10
12	Theoretical Ammunition Re-loading Course	10
13	Outdoor Survival Course	15
14	Humane Animal Despatch Course	15
15	BDS Deer Management Course***	45
16	BDS Advanced Stalkers' Qualification***	45
17	Advanced Ballistics and Shooting Course	15
18	Practical Woodland Deer Census Course	10
19	BDS Instructors' Course	45
20	Range Conducting Officers' Qualification	20
21	Manual Handling Course	10
22	Chainsaw Qualification	10
23	Evidence of Attendance at Best Practice Event 1	10
24	Evidence of Attendance at Best Practice Event 2	10
25	Evidence of Attendance at Best Practice Event 3	10
26	BDS Membership	10
	Other units to be added or considered	
*Compulsory unit for Bronze Award		
**Compulsory unit for Silver Award		
***Compulsory unit for Gold Award		

The above list is not exhaustive but details the units which with evidence of achievement will readily be accepted toward a particular level of skills award.

Other courses which are deer related may be accepted if they are deemed comparable. Any decision regarding this will be made by the BDS Training Committee which if accepting a unit, will also allocate a points value.

Deer Stalking Certificate 1 Points value 30

The DSC1 assessment is a series of tests of knowledge and skill that are carried out indoors or in a simulated stalking environment. The tests are supervised by a qualified assessor often with a small team of invigilators. Although you are registered through a particular assessment centre you may take any of the five assessment elements at any approved assessment day within the 3 year registration period.

DSC1 remains a voluntary qualification but over 20,700 have already achieved what has become the deer sector accepted minimum qualification. In 2003, the right to conversion from the Woodland Stalkers Competence Certificate and the National Stalkers Competence Certificate to the Deer Stalking Certificate 1 ceased. At that time it was considered that there had been so many changes in legislation that a conversion from what had become an obsolete qualification would no longer be possible.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a DSC1 Certificate.

Please note: This is a compulsory unit for a Bronze Award. If you have lost or mislaid your certificate a replacement is available from DMQ Ltd and their contact details are available on the DMQ website www.dmq.org.uk; there is normally a charge for a replacement certificate.

Deer Stalking Certificate 2 Points value 30

Throughout the assessment process the onus is on the candidate to provide sufficient evidence that he or she has reached the necessary standard of competence to be awarded the Deer Stalking Certificate 2. To achieve this you are required to demonstrate under DMQ witness observation that you have stalked, despatched and prepared for storage, to the required standards, at least 3 deer on 3 separate occasions.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a DSC2 Certificate.

Please note: This is a compulsory unit for a Silver Award. If you have lost or mislaid your certificate a replacement is available from DMQ Ltd and their contact details are available on the DMQ website www.dmq.org.uk; there is normally a charge for a replacement certificate.

British Deer Society First Aid Course Points value 20

The British Deer Society First Aid Course is run at various locations. In addition to offering an Emergency First Aid at Work Certificate, the course focuses on areas that are particularly relevant to field sports. These extra elements deal specifically with self-help as an individual can often be operating as a lone worker in arduous terrain. Also covered are a wide range of situations not dealt with on a normal first aid course such as major gunshot injuries, animal bites, knife wounds and fish hook injuries. The course is certificated and attendees undergo observed and written assessment to achieve qualification.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a current (in date) scanned or photocopied colour copy of a BDS First Aid Certificate.

Note: A First Aid Certificate is valid for a maximum period of 3 years after which it has to be renewed by attendance at an appropriate first aid course.

Other Valid First Aid at Work courses Points value 15

Many organisations such as St John's and St Andrew's Ambulance Service, Lantra and a host of others provide First Aid at Work courses. The skills award recognises these for award claims although they carry a slightly lower point's allocation than the BDS course as they do not focus specifically on field sports situations and the varying levels of first aid required.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a current (in date) scanned or photocopied colour copy of a First Aid Certificate achieved by attending a course with a reputable training provider.

Note: A First Aid Certificate is valid for a maximum period of 3 years after which it has to be renewed by attendance at an appropriate first aid course.

BDS Advanced Shooting Skills Award Points value 15

A BDS advanced shooting skills certificate is issued to an individual who has demonstrated competency in shooting at various ranges and from various positions some of which may have involved timed disciplines. The exact format of the advanced shooting skills test is detailed on the BDS website.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a British Deer Society Certificate or Achievement in Advanced Shooting. Please note – only Certificates issued after 1 August 2015 are eligible for claim.

High Seat Placement and Health and Safety course Points value 10

This short half-day course gives an overview of high seat placement to maximise efficiency in culling potential. The course also examines possible low input, low cost, habitat improvements which benefits the productiveness of a well-placed high seat as well as examining relevant Health and Safety issues. Attendance on the course is verified by obtaining a BDS Certificate of Training.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a British Deer Society Certificate of Training in High Seat Awareness and Safety. Please note – only Certificates issued after 1 August 2015 are eligible for claims.

Carcass and Butchery Course Points value 15

These popular courses demonstrate the techniques to gain the maximum from a carcass by way of reducing wastage and producing professional standard cuts of meat. Attendance on the course is verified by obtaining a BDS Certificate of Training.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a British Deer Society Certificate of Training in Carcass Butchering.

Dogs for Deer Training Event Points value 10

Increasingly, stalkers are becoming aware of the value of having access to a dog trained for the recovery of deer. There exists a wide range of courses which address the various perceived standards and requirements. Attendance and participation at these events may be recorded in the way appropriate to the individual organisation. To use points gained from attending a dog for deer event, some form of proof of attendance will be required.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of scanned or photocopied evidence of attendance on a Dogs for Deer training event that is verifiable.

Off Road Driving Course Points value 10

Many people drive a vehicle off road as part of deer management activities. Off road driving is a skill taught by professional instructors based at numerous locations throughout Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Courses may vary in duration but most will offer a certificate of attendance.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of scanned or photocopied evidence of attendance on an Off Road Driving Course which is verifiable.

All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Driving Course Points value 10

This course mirrors an off road driving course but focuses on a different type of vehicle which in most cases will present significantly higher risks. A quad bike or tracked vehicle might afford less driver/passenger protection requiring different levels of operator awareness if accidents are to be avoided. As with off road driving, courses are delivered by specialist companies who will provide a certificate of attendance upon completion.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of scanned or photocopied evidence of attendance on an All-Terrain Vehicle Driving Course which is verifiable.

Impact and Habitat Assessment Points value 10

Deer living in a particular environment will have an impact on that environment. That impact might be positive although more commonly negative particularly when deer numbers exceed the carrying capacity of the ground. Monitoring the environment in relation to deer is becoming increasingly important, particularly when determining how many deer can be tolerated.

The BDS course builds on sound habitat assessment methodologies and teaches how individuals can contribute to this essential work within their own deer management enterprises. The BDS course is of half a day duration and attendees will receive a BDS Certificate of Training. Other organisations such as Scottish Natural Heritage, and the Deer Initiative can provide training in this area and evidence of attending an event organised by a reputable trainer can be acceptable.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of scanned or photocopied Certificate of attendance on a BDS Habitat Assessment Course or evidence of attendance at a similar event which is verifiable will be accepted.

Theoretical Ammunition Reloading Course Points value 10

Ammunition re-loading is practised by many stalkers as a way of producing ammunition which is cheaper and more accurate. Understanding the basic rules of hand loading is vital and this course of attendance takes an individual through the various procedures in a structured way to safely produce good quality reliable ammunition. Attendance is recorded by a Certificate of Training.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a British Deer Society Certificate of Training in Ammunition Re-loading

Outdoor Survival Course Points value 15

This interesting course delivered to BDS by a specialist contractor is an outside based event aimed at equipping attendees with the knowledge to survive a wilderness entrapment and to emerge from it in reasonable shape and health. Discussed, demonstrated and practised are the importance of shelter, food, fire and water as survival essentials. Attendees will receive a Certificate of Training in Outdoor Survival

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of an Outdoor Survival Certificate of Training

The British Deer Society Deer Management Course Points value 45

The BDS Deer Management Course is tailored for stalkers, landowners and managers - the decision makers dealing with deer management issues within a variety of habitats. It is also suitable for individuals who might, during the course of their work need to advise others on deer management issues and for those simply wishing to extend their general deer management knowledge. The course is of 3 days duration.

At the end of each course candidates are required to sit a short answer question paper and produce a representative deer management cull plan. On successful completion students are awarded a Lantra certificate of Assessed Training. Our Deer Management Courses are taught to a high level by Lantra Accredited Instructors who have gained their practical and deer management skills through many years working in the industry.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a Lantra/BDS Deer Management Certificate of Training.

Please note: This or an Advanced Stalkers' Certificate is a compulsory unit for a Gold Award. If you have lost or mislaid your Deer Management Course Certificate a replacement is available from Lantra via application through BDS. There is normally a charge of around £30 imposed by Lantra for a replacement certificate.

The British Deer Society Advanced Stalkers' Certificate Points value 45

The BDS Advanced Stalkers' Certificate was superseded by the Deer Management Course in 2003. Prior to that, a number of people had obtained the former qualification which has been given equal status in point's value toward a skills award.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a BDS Advanced Stalkers Certificate.

Please note: This or a Deer Management Course Certificate is a compulsory unit for a Gold Award. If you have mislaid your Advanced Stalkers' Certificate, replacement certificates are no longer available. The Society maintains paper records of all those awarded an Advanced Stalkers Certificate which are archived in off-site secure storage. If you do not have your certificate and wish to provide evidence of achievement, please contact the Society giving your name, which course you attended or think you attended and your address at that time. Staff will search the archived records for evidence of your award. If found you will be written to confirming your achievement which you can use as evidence it claiming this unit toward a skills award. There will normally be a £25 search fee charged for this service.

Advanced Ballistics and Shooting Course Points value 15

Being an accurate and consistent shot is largely dependent on a combination of good quality equipment, skill and knowledge. Understanding the finer points of ballistics will allow an individual to interpret the evidence of bullet holes in a piece of card into meaningful information helpful in improving shooting techniques and accuracy. This course which is partly classroom based examines many aspects of ballistics including the effects of range, wind, fall of shot analysis, trigger position, the effect of cant and many more subjects. The classroom session is followed by practical range work putting into practise the lessons previously learnt. Attendance is confirmed by a BDS Certificate of Training.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a BDS Advanced Ballistics and Shooting Certificate of Training.

Practical Woodland Deer Census Course Points value 10

Knowing the abundance of deer within a woodland environment can be difficult to determine. There are however many different ways that this can be addressed depending on the precision required. This half day course is based entirely outside and, examines a number of ways of carrying out a woodland deer census. Students will have an opportunity to try for themselves methods of direct and indirect census methodologies. Attendance on the course is documented by a BDS Certificate of Training in Woodland Deer Abundance Estimation.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a BDS Woodland Deer Abundance Estimation Certificate of Training.

British Deer Society Instructors Course Points value 45

The Society runs an extensive training programme both at local and national level. Identifying instructors for the various courses with the requisite ability and knowledge to train others is often difficult. As part of its succession planning, the Society periodically runs an instructors training course which is spread over 3 days during which existing skills will be identified and enhanced as will individual evaluation and suitability. Achieving a BDS Instructors Certificate will be acknowledgement by the Society that an individual has the appropriate skills, underpinning knowledge and commitment to assist on its courses and the value of these skills are portrayed in the points value awarded.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a BDS Instructors Certificate.

National Rifle Association Range Conducting Officers' Qualification Points value 20

The Society runs, via its branches, a number of range events. Centrally a number of DSC1 courses are run annually. Any BDS event where rifles are being fired must be under the command and control of a qualified National Rifle Association (NRA) Range Conducting Officer (RCO). They are also required to have undergone an internal BDS range briefing and be on the BDS Active RCO list. RCO's are valuable members of the Society and other organisations. Their value is reflected in the point's value allocated to this qualification.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of both sides of a current valid NRA Range Conducting Officers Card.

Manual Handling Course Points value 10

This training course is for any employee or self-employed person who may be required to handle, move or carry items as part of their work. Training in manual handling is important in a wide range of industries and may be a necessary element to produce evidence of competency for anybody applying for a forestry stalking lease. Attendees on a BDS course will be awarded a BDS Certificate of Training. Equivalent course attendance at other training providers will be recognised.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a BDS Certificate of Training in Manual Handling. Evidence of training from other bona fide providers will be equally acceptable.

Chainsaw Qualification Points value 10

The Health and Safety Executive have said: *Chainsaws are potentially dangerous machines which can cause fatal or major injuries if not used correctly. It is essential that anyone who uses a chainsaw at work should have received adequate training and be competent in using a chainsaw for the type of work that they are required to do.* Many stalkers use a chainsaw as a tool within their deer management role.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied colour copy of a certificate providing evidence of training from a bona fide training provider.

Evidence of Attendance at a Best Practice Event Points value 10

Scottish Natural Heritage and the Deer Initiative in England and Wales run a number of best practice demonstration events throughout the year. Attendance at this type of event which demonstrate skills development and will count as points toward a skills award claim.

Unit claim requirements: Submission of a scanned or photocopied copy of evidence of attendance at a DCS, SNH or DI best practise event. These events can be submitted up to 3 times and will be acceptable if it can be substantiated that each event was significantly different in providing training in a diverse range of subjects.

BDS Membership Points value 10

Continuing professional or skills development is achieved in a number of ways one of which is simply reading relevant material. As a member of BDS you will receive the Society's quarterly magazine which is always packed full of information and you may attend local BDS branch events. Meeting fellow members and participating in organised activities can themselves become a valuable form of development thus a point's value has been given for BDS Membership.

Unit claim requirements: Detail your BDS membership number on your claim application form and tick the relevant box.

Other units to be added or considered

It is not anticipated that the current content will remain static. As new skills are developed or new courses identified, they may be added to the award content.

The British Deer Society recognises that other organisations will run different courses or events which could appropriately form a claim toward a skills award. If you have attended something not detailed which you consider is deer related and relevant, please write a brief overview of the event, who ran it, when and what evidence of attendance can be produced. This will be considered by the BDS Training Committee and you will be informed of their decision.

Skills Award Claim Procedure

When you have registered for a specific level and/or levels of skills award and consider you have accumulated sufficient points to claim at a specific level, please complete the relevant award claim form and post to the British Deer Society, The Walled Garden, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 1EF.

Each claim form should be accompanied by copies of evidence as detailed in the specific units. Incomplete or insufficient claims will be returned for amendment and resubmission.

Please note, if evidence is accepted and an award is made, evidence submitted **will not be returned** and it is therefore important that only copies are submitted and not original documents.

Examples of the various claim forms follow. Actual claim forms are available on request by email to education@bds.org.uk and will be sent out via email attachment. Alternatively, claim forms can be downloaded from the BDS website www.bds.org.uk

BDS Skills Award Claim Form – Bronze 100 Points required + 50 more for Silver + 50 more for Gold

Please tick each component being claimed for and include copied evidence to substantiate your claim.

Course or Award <i>Each element below may only be claimed once</i>		Points Value	Bronze ✓ to claim	Silver ✓ to claim	Gold ✓ to claim
1	Deer Stalking Certificate 1 *	30			
2	Deer Stalking Certificate 2 **	30			
3	BDS First Aid Course	20			
4	Other Valid First Aid at Work (minimum) Course	15			
5	BDS Advanced Shooting Award	15			
6	High Seat Placement and Health and Safety	10			
7	Carcass Butchery Course	15			
8	Dogs for Deer Training Event	10			
9	Off Road Driving Course	10			
10	All-Terrain Vehicle Driving Course	10			
11	Impact and Habitat Assessment	10			
12	Theoretical Ammunition Re-loading Course	10			
13	Outdoor Survival Course	15			
14	Humane Animal Despatch Course	15			
15	BDS Deer Management Course (15) or the BDS	45			
16	Advanced Stalkers Qualification (16) ***	45			
17	Advanced Ballistics and Shooting Course	15			
18	Practical Woodland Deer Census Course	10			
19	BDS Instructors Course	45			
20	Range Conducting Officers Qualification	20			
21	Manual Handling Course	10			
22	Chainsaw Qualification	10			
23	Evidence of Attendance at Best Practice Event 1	10			
24	Evidence of Attendance at Best Practice Event 2	10			
25	Evidence of Attendance at Best Practice Event 3	10			
26	BDS Membership	10			
Other Qualifications or Courses for Consideration. Detail below					
*Compulsory Unit of Achievement for Bronze Award					
**Compulsory Unit of Achievement for Silver Award					
***Compulsory Unit of Achievement for Gold Award					
Please enter total points being claimed for each skills level					

Name Award Registration Number

Address

Phone Email

I apply for a British Deer Society Skill Award detailed below and have submitted copied evidence in support of each element claimed for. I understand that copied evidence will not be returned to me.

Claim made in respect of the skills level ticked below. Please ✓ all being claimed for.

BRONZE
 SILVER
 GOLD

Signed

Date