



# *Anna Gresham Landscape Design School*

## All About our School and our Landscape Design Course

## INDEX OF TOPICS

	Page
Introduction	3
Our Design Philosophy	3
Our teaching Philosophy	4
Why our Students succeed	4
Is the Program right for You?	5
How long does it take?	5
How does the Learning Process work?	6
The Aim of the Program	7
What the Lessons cover	7
Course Content	8
CAD - explained	9
Equipment List - Metric	10
Equipment List - Imperial	11
Fees - what they include and how they are paid	12
Enrollment procedure	12
Frequently Asked Questions	13 - 15
Feedback from Graduates	16 - 17

## **Introduction**

Welcome, and thank you for your interest in our Diploma in Landscape Design course.



The Anna Gresham Landscape Design School is an exclusive, private school dedicated to teaching residential landscape and garden design to students worldwide. We have become the first choice internationally amongst those wanting to become qualified for a career in Landscape Design but cannot attend a regular educational facility because of work, travel, personal, or time restraints.

The School offers a fully professional training in Landscape Design conducted as a home study program. Founded in 1998, the Anna Gresham Landscape Design School continues to lead the field in landscape design education by home study.

The School prepares students for work in the real world and to excel in their profession. The Diploma Program is intensive and comprehensive, covering all aspects of a Landscape Designer's work, from the initial site assessment, through the complexities of design development, to business and project management. A typical graduate goes on to make a career in residential landscape design by establishing their own landscape design business.

## **Graduates worldwide**

With over 50% of our students resident in the USA and Canada, and the balance spread over Europe and Australasia, our school has developed an excellent international reputation as a provider of quality education in landscape and garden design. We have hundreds of graduates in many countries many of whom are pursuing successful careers as landscape designers.

A Diploma in Landscape Design, from the Anna Gresham Landscape Design School, is a testimony to all that the holder is fully trained and competent to practice professional landscape design almost anywhere in the world.

## **Our Design Philosophy**

We believe a garden should be functional, perennially attractive and sustainable. Stylish design must accompany good functionality and be eco-friendly. The whole garden must not only endure the test of time but also improve with each passing season. We impress this philosophy on all our students and it is the cornerstone of the Landscape Design School's Diploma Program.

## **Our Teaching Philosophy**

### Learning by doing is the most effective way to learn.

By applying learned theory to real projects, our students rapidly develop the skills and knowledge to be competent and independent landscape designers.

### Clear and concise expression of design ideas is essential to success.

The landscape designer must not only be able to develop aesthetic and functional designs, but must also be able to explain the reasoning behind the designs, and clearly document the designs by way of drawings and written material.

### We teach students how to be self-educators and take responsibility for their own progress.

Our home study program motivates the student to identify and meet individual challenges. This skill enables our graduates to be life-long learners, self-reliant, and self-motivating.

### Learning the 'why' is as important as learning the 'how'.

Our instructions go beyond rote learning, and stress the reasons behind a process, and its underlying concepts. This enables the student to address any problem, anywhere.

## **Why our students succeed**

### Our program is complete.

Our very comprehensive study program of theory and practice covers every aspect of landscape and garden design. By working through many real design assignments you will learn the theory and hands-on skills needed to become an exceptional landscape designer.

### Our program is easy to follow.

Our program is arranged in a logical manner with one step following another. It is a 'building' process, which rapidly endows the student with a sense of confidence and pride of achievement.

### Our program has credibility.

The Anna Gresham Landscape Design School has been teaching landscape design to students worldwide since 1998. We have established a global reputation second-to-none in the field of landscape design education by home study.

### We are very dedicated.

We care deeply about the reputation of the Landscape Design Profession because we, at the School, are landscape designers ourselves. Training exceptional landscape designers is our only agenda. Our School teaches only landscape design.



### **Is the program right for you?**

- You long to be a professional landscape designer.
- You already own a garden, lawn or yard maintenance business and want to become skilled in landscape design in order to attract more business.
- You are a licensed landscape contractor and want to improve your design skills.
- You are dissatisfied with your current situation and want to do something creative for the rest of your life.
- You are stuck in an office/factory/store all day and need a change of scenery.
- You have been replaced in your previous profession and need to re-train.
- You want to be self-employed.
- You have a full-time job or look after children so you can only study in the evenings and weekends.
- You love gardening and have always wanted to turn your hobby into a fun and rewarding career.
- You are already employed in the 'green' industry and would love a promotion, or even to become your own boss.

These are just some of the reasons for taking this program. You don't need to have any previous experience or skills other than a good understanding of written English. Your personal tutor will guide you through the entire learning process.

As a home study student you will learn all the knowledge and skills required to become a Professional Landscape and Garden Designer. The Diploma program is a very intensive course of study designed to fully prepare you for your new career.

Previous experience in drawing and horticultural is not necessary, but a strong interest in creating beautiful gardens is.

### **How long does it take?**

Especially designed for home study, the diploma program consists of 21 modules and can be realistically completed in less than a year. Assignments vary in complexity and length. Some need only a few hours work, while others, such as the three real design projects will take longer. It is recommended that at least 10 to 12 hours per week be set aside for this program.

Even if you have a full time job or a busy lifestyle, you should be able to complete 1 or 2 modules a month. While many students can complete the entire program in less than 1 year, you have a full 18 months to complete the program.

## **How does the learning process work?**

Your study material is delivered as printable PDF manuals via internet download. You will be able to start as soon as your enrolment and fee payment has been processed. This will always be less than 24 hours from when the online enrolment form has been received by the School.

Lessons are completed in consecutive order. Once each lesson has been fully understood a compulsory assignment is completed and submitted to the School for assessment. An assessment report and comprehensive feedback is sent back to the student by email.

To help you through the program your personal tutor will guide you through the entire learning process with as much help and advice as you need. Your tutor is contacted by email, and replies are usually given within a few hours, and always within 24 hours.

Assignments are graded within 24 hours of receipt, and you will be informed by email of the result. Comments and suggestions from your tutor are also included with every assessment report when necessary.

If an assignment does not reach a passing grade, your tutor will return it with lots of helpful advice and constructive criticisms and you will be asked to do it again. This process ensures that all students will pass the program provided they satisfactorily complete and pass all the assignments.

Throughout the course you should visit gardens and other places to view real situations, look at the domain of the landscape designer, and practice your newly learned skills. This helps to make the course material more relevant and increases your understanding of the principles.

## **The Aim of the Program**

On completion of your studies you will be competent to undertake the following tasks:

- Produce professional landscape drawings using CAD.
- Create layouts and planting designs for flowerbeds and other planted areas, and design the layouts for surrounding areas such as patios, terraces, decks, paths, and lawns.
- Design concepts and plans for garden structures such as steps, patios, decks, pergolas, gazebos and water features.
- Produce Concept Plans, Planting Plans, and Plant Schedules.
- Prepare concepts for land simple land re-contouring and retaining.
- Solve common site drainage problems (not requiring specialist-engineering design).
- Design outdoor lighting concepts.
- Prepare drawings for hard landscape items (not requiring specialist/engineering design).
- Managing the bidding and the installation of the design on behalf of the Client.
- Running a landscape design and consulting business.

## **What the lessons cover**

### Project Assessment

How to talk with the Client about their landscaping concerns, assess the potential of the site, and ascertain the Client's needs, suggest the best course of action, and give a written quotation for design work.

### Site Surveying

How to measure a site, including surveying ground levels (elevations), and use this data to draw an accurate and useful survey plan (base plan).

### Concept Plan

How to show a 'birds eye' view of the proposed design. This drawing is the starting point in the development of a new garden. You will learn to create exciting and functional designs and present them to your Clients as attractive Concept Plans.

### Planting Plan

How to design the perfect planting scheme to complement the new design including the preparation of detailed planting plans and plant schedules.

### Hard Landscape Construction

The basics of hard landscape construction and materials. This will enable you to design viable hard landscapes and structures to enhance your designs.

### Ground Contouring and Retaining

How to recognize a site's greater potential through re-contouring, and how to produce plans detailing the new ground levels, including retaining walls.

### Running a professional design and consulting business

How to run your own business in a professional manner. This includes dealing with Clients and Contractors, effective communication, getting new business, industry protocols, dealing with legal issues, working to a Client's budget, bidding and tendering, and writing technical specifications.

## Course Content

The course material is intensive and highly informative with many pictures and diagrams used to illustrate concepts.

- An easy-to-follow short course on using CAD.
- 21 intensive, information-packed lessons covering all aspects of professional landscape design.
- 21 highly relevant, hands-on assignments reflecting the actual work done by landscape designers
- Several, real-life landscape design projects (no installation is required for any projects)
- Many smaller design projects (no installation is required)
- Continual assessment and feedback to keep you informed of your progress. Informative and helpful assessment comments and feed-back, plus unlimited access to your tutor via email, ensures that your learning experience is fun and highly effective.

## The Modules

Some modules deal with only one topic, some with several topics. The modules are arranged in approximately the same order as the steps taken to produce a set of landscape plans. Below is an outline of the main contents of each module.

1. Course Overview; The Design Process; Analysing a Site; Discovering the Client's Needs
2. Classification and Naming of Plants; Plants and Soil
3. Drawing to Scale; Geometric drawing
4. Site Surveying – theory and practical
5. Landscape Drawing Techniques
6. Zoning Diagrams and Functional Placement; Origins of the Modern Garden
7. Design Principles & Design Development part 1; **Major Design Project**
8. Design Principles & Design Development part 2
9. Solving Site Problems; Garden Styles and Themes; Function and Safety
10. Surveying ground levels - theory and practical
11. Elevations, Cross-sections and Working Drawings
12. Portraying planting in your drawings; **Major Design Project**
13. Planting design; Color theory; Shape and Texture
14. Designing a Border; How to choose the Right Plants; The Planting Plan
15. Hard Landscaping Material; Working with Existing Levels; Drainage
16. Water Features, Pools and Ponds; Paving and other Horizontal Surfaces
17. Introduction to Timber Construction; Steps and Ramps; Walls; Fences and Screens
18. Decorative Structures and Garden Buildings; Using Trees, Shrubs, Hedges, Vines
19. Natural Habitat Gardens; Eco-friendly Design; **Major Design Project**
20. Small Gardens and Theme Gardens; Functional Planting; Lighting and Accoutrements; Estimating approximate Installation Costs for Budgetary Purposes
21. Basic Business procedures, Documents and Contracts; the Client-Designer-Contractor Relationship; Specification Writing; Project Facilitation; Costing your Design Services; Getting your Business Started; Promoting your Business; **Final Design Project**

The School reserves the right to alter the course content at any time.

## **CAD explained**

Our Diploma in Landscape Design program requires the use of CAD for the production of landscape drawings and plans.

Using CAD to produce landscape design plans increases productivity by making drawings quicker to produce and easier to change. Most employers insist that their landscape designers are CAD proficient and landscape installers prefer to work from CAD drawings.

Those new to CAD should use the recommended CAD software and take advantage of the free CAD course. If you already know how to use CAD then you can use any suitable CAD software you choose.

Our Diploma program also includes a free CAD training course written especially for the recommended CAD software. The lessons instruct you how to use the software step-by-step, as you learn how to design landscapes and gardens professionally. A reasonable level of computer competency is expected.

### **What is the recommended CAD program?**

The recommended CAD software is not free - there is an annual license fee.

Please contact the school for the latest information about the recommended CAD software and the cost.

## **Computer requirements**

To run the recommended CAD program you must have one of the following:

PC with Windows 8 (64 bit)

PC with Windows 7 (32 or 64 bit)

Mac (64 bit)

For all computers, a 2-button mouse with a middle wheel is also required.

NOTE: Some 'mini net books' may not be able to run CAD programs.

## **Equipment list - Metric**

### **Basic equipment**

- CAD Software - as recommended by the School. Email the School if you are unsure what to get.
- A suitable computer, a mouse with a middle wheel and two buttons, and a basic home printer
- Scale rule for checking measurements on your printed drawings. You need scales of 1:50, 1:100, 1:20 and 1:10 .

This is the basic list for drawing work. You may want to add other things to suit your preferences, but this list is the essentials.

### **Site surveying equipment**

- A 30m fiberglass reinforced tape - the type builders use.
- An 8m retractable steel-bladed tape.
- About 6 metal stakes (pegs) or cheap long-bladed screwdrivers (these are used as markers and to secure the end of the long tape when measuring properties).
- A portable table about 600mm x 900mm (a cheap folding picnic table is ideal) to provide a surface to draw on when site surveying.
- Plain sketch paper - large plain sheets for recording site survey information prior to plotting on the computer (or you can take a laptop on site and plot directly)
- Drafting or masking tape to attach paper to table
- Pencils, ruler, eraser, directional compass for the site surveys.

### **Additional equipment fort site surveying**

An automatic level or surveyor's laser level with tripod and calibrated staff - this can be hired (rented) for surveying when required, or purchased. This not required until Lesson 10.

## **Equipment list - Imperial**

### **Basic equipment**

- CAD Software - as recommended by the School. Email the School if you are unsure what to get.
- A suitable computer, a mouse with a middle wheel and two buttons, and a basic home printer
- Scale rule for checking measurements on your printed drawings. You need scales of 1/4, 1/8, 1/2 and 1.

This is the basic list for drawing work. You may want to add other things to suit your preferences, but this list is the essentials.

### **Site surveying equipment**

- A 100 ft fiberglass reinforced tape - the type builders use.
- An 25 ft retractable steel-bladed tape.
- About 6 metal stakes (pegs) or cheap long-bladed screwdrivers (these are used as markers and to secure the end of the long tape when measuring properties).
- A portable table about 24" x 36" (a cheap folding picnic table is ideal) to provide a surface to draw on when site surveying.
- Plain sketch paper - large plain sheets for recording site survey information prior to plotting on the computer (or you can take a laptop on site and plot directly)
- Drafting or masking tape to attach paper to table
- Pencils, ruler, eraser, directional compass for the site surveys.

### **Additional equipment fort site surveying**

An automatic level or surveyor's laser level with tripod and calibrated staff - this can be hired (rented) for surveying when required, or purchased. This not required until Lesson 10.

## **Fees and Enrollment**

The Diploma Program consists of 21 Lessons, 21 assignments, plus supplemental material. The program also includes a free CAD training course for those that choose to use our recommended CAD software. All study material is presented in printable PDF format. On enrollment you will receive the study material by way of a download from our web site. Enrollment is via our secure Online Enrollment Form.

### **Fees**

Current fees can be found on our website [www.landscape-designer.co.nz](http://www.landscape-designer.co.nz)

The fee includes all study material in PDF format, unlimited email contact with your tutor, assessment of all assignments and assessment reports and feedback for all assignments. The fee does not include the cost of any CAD software, equipment and materials.

Payment is made by Visa or MasterCard. Payments are manually processed using the data you provide via our secure online enrollment form.

Within 24 hours of payment processing you will receive an email containing the links to the study material so that you can download the course material and get started straight away.

### **Enrollment procedure**

1. Use our secure Online Enrollment Form accessed through our website [www.landscape-designer.co.nz](http://www.landscape-designer.co.nz)
2. If you would like more information before you enrol then contact Anna who is very friendly and helpful. Please use the Contact page on our web site.
3. We will confirm receipt of your payment and enrollment by email. This is normally done before the close of the next business day (Monday through Friday).
4. As soon as your enrollment and payment has been processed you will receive a confirmation email containing the link for the course material.

**NOTE: Our Online Enrollment Form is completely secure**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why is the Anna Gresham Landscape Design School so good?

You will be learning landscape and garden design from a highly qualified and experienced landscape designer. We are the only school in the world to offer a comprehensive home study program in landscape design developed completely by an APLD Certified Landscape Designer.

The Anna Gresham School of Landscape Design teaches professional landscape design exclusively. We are dedicated to teaching landscape design and teach nothing else. We care deeply about the reputation of the profession because we belong to the profession and training exceptional landscape designers is our only agenda.

### Will the program make me a Certified Landscape Designer?

To become a Certified Designer you need to apply to a recognized and reputable independent landscape organization for Certification. Certification may be given after a close examination of your professional design work and work practices over a number of years. For instance, the APLD requires a minimum of four years professional experience before Certification can be applied for. Our Diploma Course will train you to become a professional landscape designer in preparation for future Certification.

### Is the program designed for students in all countries?

Our program is suitable for nearly all countries, and we have hundreds of past and present students all over the world. All good landscape designers can practice their craft in many diverse countries. This is because the principles and skills used in landscape design are universal. Different countries have specific requirements but the basic principles still apply. The course does not teach landscape design in relation to any particular country or climate. Landscape design is about identifying problems and requirements then finding the most suitable and creative solutions using locally available resources. Learning the rules of design and the skills of a landscape designer will enable you practice landscape design competently anywhere in the world.

### How do you handle learning about plants?

Choosing the right plant for the right place is very important with actual planting design being 20% of what a landscape designer does. But more importantly than learning specifically which plant goes where is learning how to discover this information for yourself, and use it correctly. A properly trained landscape designer can travel the world and design in any place, any climatic zone and we offer the correct training to you will enable you to do this. Your training will not limit you to one geographic or zonal location. You will learn how to select and use plants for all locations, including your own.

### Are the tutors experienced landscape professionals?

Yes they are.

Are there any extra fees?

There are no extra fees. The one-time fee for the program includes all study material, full assessment of all assignments, as much additional material in the form of notes, diagrams, pictures and tutorials as you need, postage of assignments back to you if applicable, unlimited access to your tutor via email, plus your Diploma on successful completion. The course material is very comprehensive and no specific textbooks are required, but you must obtain the CAD software and equipment required for the course yourself.

Can I start the program at any time?

Yes. You can start the program whenever you want.

Can I do the course work all from home or do I have to go to a special place for exams and practical work?

You can do everything from your home. For some of the landscape design projects you will need to 'borrow' a yard from family or friends. They will be thrilled when you design them a lovely new garden in return.

Do I need to have a natural talent for landscape design, for drawing, or many years of practical experience in horticulture or landscape construction?

No. The principles, rules and skills of landscape design are taught just like any other subject. There is no 'mystique' in landscape design. It is primarily about solving problems. All the required knowledge can be learned from reading, instruction from qualified tutors, and by properly directed practical activities, all of which our program offers.

Is it possible to learn the practical skills by home study?

Absolutely YES. Our program is uniquely written to make sure the student will learn all the practical skills necessary. Practical skills begin with learned knowledge. They are sharpened by practice and hands-on experience. Throughout the course all practical skills begin with clear descriptive notes of the principles and procedures involved. Practical exercises are set, so you can try out your newly learned skills and gain valuable hands-on experience. Finally a compulsory assignment is completed that will demonstrate your competence in the skill.

Is there a final exam?

No. Once you have completed and passed all assignments then you will be awarded your Diploma in Landscape design. Continual assessment means that a 'final' exam is not necessary.

Can I join the program without prior experience?

Yes. The lessons begin at the absolute beginning. We make no assumptions about your prior knowledge. The only requirement is that you have a good understanding of US or UK English. If you choose to use CAD you must also have a good standard of computer literacy.

Can I do the lessons in any order I choose?

No. Even though you can receive all the lessons at once we want them completed in sequential order. Each lesson follows on from the previous one. Knowledge learned from one lesson is needed to complete the next. Doing the lessons out of sequence will make it very difficult to complete the assignments satisfactorily.

I haven't studied for years. Will I be able to cope?

Most of our students haven't studied for many years and they cope very well. Doing our course is nothing like the old classroom days because you will be studying a subject you love, at your own pace. Our course is written in clear, simple English, straightforward and to the point. You'll find it interesting and very enjoyable.

How can I be sure the program will suit me?

Before anyone pays for the program we give them every opportunity to make sure the program is suitable for them. We will also answer all your questions before you sign up. Of course, if you love gardens and landscape design, and want to be your own boss, then the program is sure to suit you.

How does the Anna Gresham Diploma Program compare to others?

You will probably be aware of other schools offering home study courses in landscape and garden design. Most of these courses are interest or hobby courses, lack substance and don't cover the complete range of essential topics. Even some well known schools offering Diploma programs in landscape design have very limited course content, and many essential topics are not included. Our diploma programs have many highly relevant assignments and projects, each one dealing with a real aspect of a landscape designer's work. A great deal of time and research has gone into designing our programs to ensure that it will provide our students with a level of knowledge and experience that will fully equip them for a very rewarding and interesting career in Landscape and Garden Design.

What is a Landscape Architect? Can I call myself a Landscape Architect after completing the course?

A Landscape Architect is a person that has undertaken an extended post-graduate course of study at a university and gained a degree in Landscape Architecture. They must also be registered. Unless you are a registered landscape architect you must not call yourself one. Landscape Architects are trained to work on large-scale commercial, municipal, governmental, and environmental projects, whereas Landscape designers are trained for residential and small-scale commercial work.

Will the course give me credits towards another degree or some other study?

No. But you will be fully qualified to make landscape design your career.

Do you provide support after I complete the course?

YES. All graduates can contact the school at any time for free and helpful advice about running their business. Not only do we want you to pass the program, we want you to succeed in your new career.

**This is a sample of the comments we receive from our graduates.**

USA

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for a great learning experience and I would not be at my current job status without your course. For a while I did not think I would finish, and I thank you for extending my time. I worked in the nursery field for over thirty years and in just over two years have worked for two landscape companies. I am now employed with Young's Landscape Management along with four other designers, one of the largest landscape companies in South Jersey. I would be happy to refer your course to anyone interested. Again, thank you Anna."

Sweden

"I am now working full time in my own business as a landscape designer. I am fully booked and my website has more than 1500 visitors each month. Next year will be an exciting year; I have been asked by a garden center to come and work with them as "their" garden designer. I have also been given the opportunity to create a permanent showroom with different "garden rooms" to function as inspiration for the customers. I could not ask for more, could I! On top of that I have been interviewed by the Swedish edition of the magazine Plaza interior. The article will be published in November. All in all I am one very happy person."

Australia

"I have had two very good months, with work booked in for at least the next two. Some small jobs (front yards) some big, including two designs for acreage and one big planting job. I've also had a couple of project management jobs and my first design (started while I was still doing your course) is being built at the moment which is exciting."

Australia

"Considering we are in the middle of a drought and restrictions are now in place banning any sprinkling or hosing of gardens, business is going along pretty well. I've currently got 7 designs on the go and due to demand have decided to take on a couple of fairly large soft landscaping jobs as well."

UK

"A qualified designer once commented that I would not be able to learn the drawing skills by correspondence. I looked at my very first drawing assignment the other day and then at my latest design job and decided she was so wrong!"

USA

"I am so excited. My diploma arrived today and I can't wait to hang it in my studio. My landscape business is really taking off and I am getting a real kick from seeing my designs come to life. Thanks so much."

**This is a sample of the comments we receive from our graduates.**

Spain

"One of the assets of your course is its emphasis on real practice and on the need to keep in contact with the reality of the student's particular area. I value it most. Also, I'm beginning to see the advantages of your method: although you are always there, it promotes a degree of independence and autonomous-learning and this makes you develop your own resources more quickly (i.e. 'mature'), and in my opinion this prepares us better for 'real life'."

USA

"I have no doubt whatsoever that I made the right choice. It really encompasses everything I wanted it to and even covers some things that I hadn't thought of. I am extremely satisfied and can't wait to be finished, so that I can start my new career."

USA

"I am really enjoying this course. I even loved practicing all these drawings over and over. It gives me the confidence to KNOW how to go through the steps to achieve a design. I would've had absolutely no concept otherwise."

USA

"This provided an opportunity for me to surpass what I thought I could achieve. I think this course presents many opportunities to learn, grow and exceed past preconceived limitations."

USA

"I love this program. I like several things, really. I was pleasantly surprised that it was more than just drawing. She (Anna) teaches you how to learn about plants, how to put a presentation together for a client, what to look for and what to ask and how to interview a potential client. She teaches you exactly what the scope is as a landscape design professional and does it in a way that is preparing me for when I will be making a living at it. I think the thing I like best about it, is how well-prepared I am beginning to feel, more and more as I complete each lesson. I also like that I can do it at my pace and that Anna makes herself available. She responds very promptly when I need help."

UK

"The practical assignments have been worth their weight in gold. Putting everything I learnt into practice has given me so much more confidence than I had before."