

# **The British Beekeepers Association**

**Examinations Board**



**Standards in Honey Bee Husbandry**

**A Route towards Beekeeping Excellence**

**SYLLABUS**

for the

**Honey Bee Health Certificate**

# **Honey Bee Health Certificate**

## **SYLLABUS**

### **Applicable from January 2020**

#### **Aims**

To encourage beekeepers who have been awarded the BBKA Basic Certificate and have at least three years of beekeeping experience to improve their understanding and practice of beekeeping.

The Candidate will be able to demonstrate a range of beekeeping skills.

#### **Conditions of Entry**

Candidates shall have been awarded the BBKA Basic Certificate . The date when this certificate was awarded shall be entered on the Application Form. The candidate shall be a member of the BBKA

The Candidate shall have kept and managed bees for at least three years.

**This Assessment cannot be taken in the same year as the Basic Certificate, General Husbandry Certificate or Advanced Husbandry Certificate.**

The Secretary to the Board shall have received a completed Application Form and fee by the **28<sup>th</sup> February** in the year the Candidate intends to be assessed.

#### **The Assessment**

The Assessment will normally be conducted in May, June or July at an Association or other suitable Apiary (not at the Candidate's apiary) and will last about one and a half hours.

The Assessor will test the Candidate's practical skills and knowledge of the important aspects of beekeeping as defined in the Syllabus. The Assessor will observe the Candidate's practical skills at opening and manipulating colonies and note the correct use of beekeeping equipment and apiary hygiene. The Candidate should be aware of the procedures adopted by The National Bee Unit Inspectors and be able to demonstrate them.

**The candidate is expected to pass all sections of the assessment; management and hygiene, brood disease inspection, two further practical tasks and the discussion.**

Assessors appointed by the Board shall conduct the Assessment. The Board may wish a trainee Assessor or Board Member to be present as an observer, but prior written agreement of the Candidate shall be obtained.

Where assessors travel to an apiary, it is essential that an apiary manager or other responsible person should be present for the duration of the assessment(s). Details of how to contact emergency services must be available and should include a map reference and postcode (where applicable).

**If these health and safety requirements are not met, the assessment will not proceed and fees will not be refunded**

#### **Award of Certificate**

There are no grades given. The Candidate either reaches the required standard or not. The Candidate will normally be informed of the outcome within six weeks of the Assessment. The Certificate will be sent to the Local Examination Secretary for presentation to the successful candidates at a later date.

# **Honey Bee Health Certificate**

## **SYLLABUS**

### **General**

- 1.1 The practical assessment will be conducted on any suitable day agreed with the Assessor, normally in May, June or July.
- 1.2 The Assessor will look for a satisfactory method of controlling the bees and proficient manipulation of colonies during the required demonstrations.
- 1.3 Scientific names of disease producing organisms will not be required.

### **Hygiene.**

The Candidate will be able to:

- 2.1 Describe the role of good hygiene in the apiary. This should include the importance of changing combs.
- 2.2 Demonstrate satisfactory procedures, both with personal effects and apiary equipment.
- 2.3 Describe the procedures taken to avoid or reduce the transmission of infectious diseases.
- 2.4 Describe the appearance of healthy brood and demonstrate the inspection of suitable frames.

### **Statutory requirements**

The Candidate will:

- 3.1 Be aware of current regulations and other statutory requirements as they affect pests & diseases concerned with beekeeping, and how the beekeeper should implement them.

### **American Foul Brood (AFB)**

The Candidate will be able to:

- 4.1 Describe the signs of AFB and its effects on the colony.
- 4.2 Demonstrate how to hold, view and describe frames of brood suspected of having AFB.
- 4.3 Demonstrate methods of inspection in the field to determine whether a colony has AFB and actions to be taken.
- 4.4 Discuss use of a lateral flow device.

## **European Foul Brood (EFB)**

The Candidate will be able to:

- 5.1 Describe the signs of European Foulbrood and its effects on the colony.
- 5.2 Demonstrate how to hold, view and describe frames of brood suspected of having EFB.
- 5.3 Demonstrate methods of inspection in the field to determine whether a colony has EFB and actions to be taken.
- 5.4 Discuss use of a lateral flow device.

## **Other brood diseases**

The Candidate will be able to:

- 6.1 Describe the signs of Chalk Brood and Sac Brood, and their possible effects on a colony.
- 6.2 Demonstrate knowledge of other brood diseases to include Chilled Brood and Bald Brood.

## **Adult Bee Diseases**

The Candidate will be able to:

- 7.1 Demonstrate the taking of a sample of bees of suitable age from the comb for adult bee diseases. Any suitable container may be used.
- 7.2 Describe the impact of Nosema disease on a honey bee colony, and its diagnosis and treatment.
- 7.3 Describe Acarine, its detection and possible effects on a colony.

## **Viruses**

The Candidate will be able to:

- 8.1 Discuss the impact of virus damage related to Varroosis.
- 8.2 Discuss other viruses that may have an effect on bee health.

## **Nutrition and Spray Poisoning**

The Candidate will be able to:

- 9.1 Describe methods to detect colony starvation and procedures to overcome the problem at any time during the bee keeping year.
- 9.2 Describe signs of spray poisoning, actions to be taken if suspected and knowledge of the BBKA & NFU–Bee Connected web based alert system.

## Pests

The Candidate will be able to:

- 10.1 Describe effects bee pests have on the bees and the comb.
- 10.2 Describe methods to monitor and control Varroosis, using authorised treatments.
- 10.3 Discuss the impact of re-infestation of Varroa on the management and timing of Varroa control.
- 10.4 Discuss Integrated Pest Management (IPM), to include details of the methods used.
- 10.5 Discuss Parasitic Mite Syndrome.
- 10.6 Knowledge of mite resistance and how to demonstrate it.
- 10.7 Discuss methods of controlling wax moths.
- 10.8 Be aware of the requirements for keeping records of treatments to colonies.
- 10.9 Be aware of potential new threats to beekeeping in the United Kingdom and an understanding of the importance of the National Bee Unit's BeeBase web site.

## Practical Tasks

The candidate will be required to demonstrate:

- 11.1 Mandatory task: brood disease inspection. If the queen is found she should be reserved in a safe place.
- 11.2 **One** task from the following list:
  - Shook swarm as part of varroa control
  - Bailey comb change for a weak colony
- 11.3 **And One** task from the following list:
  - The collection of a suitable sample of 30 bees for an adult bee disease inspection
  - Use of a lateral flow device

# **APPLICATION TO ENTER**

## **Application to Enter**

These should be made through the Local Examination Secretary of the Area Association. Applications are required not later than **28<sup>th</sup> February** in the year the Assessment is to be taken.

## **Application Form**

Any application must be accompanied by a completed Application Form together with the Examination Fee. Cheques should be made payable to BBKA. The dates when relevant certificates were obtained must be entered on the Application Form. Certificates should not be sent.

## **Assessment Fee**

Details of the current fee for the Assessment may be obtained from the BBKA web site

## **AUTHORITY**

The above is issued by the BBKA Examinations Board and all communications in respect of this Assessment should be addressed to:

The Secretary,  
BBKA Examinations Board,  
The British Beekeepers' Association,  
National Beekeeping Centre  
Stoneleigh Park,  
Kenilworth,  
Warwickshire.  
CV8 2LG

Published December 2017  
Revision November 2018