

## **Consultants** **Procedures for Maintaining Certification**

### **Refreshing**

Consultants must refresh by the end of the fifth calendar year following the date of the last course or refresher event by one of the following means:

- ☼ Attending all lectures of a course in the school for which credit is sought, no examination required. OR
- ☼ Attending a single-subject refresher approved by the NGC Chairman of that school. OR
- ☼ Attending a Multiple (Bi- or Tri-) refresher approved by the NGC Multiple Refreshers Chairman.

The first refresher may be taken in the calendar year following achieving Consultant status. Credit for refresher events can be granted only once per school within a calendar year.

### **Record Keeping**

The State School Chairman sends a roster of those refreshing to the NGC Accrediting Chairman for the region (or to the Multiple Refreshers Chairman in the case of a Multiple Refresher), who sends the roster to the Schools Secretary. The State School Chairman then distributes the Refresher Cards to Consultants who have completed a course or approved Refresher event. Instructions in the Handbook for Schools, Multiple Refresher Guidelines and on the forms are to be followed.

A Consultant who moves to another state must request a transfer of records (from the School Chairman in the original state) in order to be listed locally as an NGC Environmental, Gardening or Landscape Design Consultant.

### **Extensions**

A Consultant unable to refresh by the end of the fifth calendar year may request an extension of time to refresh from the State School Chairman before certification expires. The State School

Chairman forwards a form to the appropriate NGC Schools Chairman. If approved, the NGC Schools Chairman records the extension, notifies the NGC Schools Secretary and the State School Chairman, who notifies the Consultant of the time limit of the extension.

### **Reinstatement**

Lapsed Consultants may be reinstated within a seven-year period from the date of their certification by completing two courses (no exams required). The State School Chairman forwards a form to the appropriate NGC Schools Chairman, who approves the request (before the courses are taken).

### **Master Consultant**

After a Consultant's fourth refresher, the State School Chairman automatically applies for the Consultant's Master Consultant Certification Card. The Consultant must verify that the home State School Chairman has been notified of any refreshers that have been taken out-of-state. Master Consultants must continue to refresh their certification by the end of the fifth calendar year after last refreshing.

### **Consultant Emeritus**

Emeritus status is granted to Master Consultants in Good Standing who apply to the State School Chairman indicating that they no longer wish or are able to continue active participation. Unlike Master Consultants, Emeritus Consultants need not attend refresher events to maintain their accreditation.

### **Removal of Records**

Consultants' records are retained for a period of eight years from the last year of accreditation. After this period, an individual's records are removed from all files. Exception: Emeritus Consultants' records are not removed as they retain that status for their rest of their lives.

# **National Garden Clubs, Inc.**



## **Environmental Gardening Landscape Design Schools**

## **Guide for Students and Consultants**

**[www.GardenClub.org](http://www.GardenClub.org)**

## **NGC Schools**

The Environmental, Gardening, and Landscape Design Schools provide continuing education about the land, water, air, and earth on which we live, the field of horticulture and focusing on recognizing and practicing good land use. Course content is established by National Garden Clubs, Inc. (NGC). Four sequenced courses (1 through 4) comprise a series for each of the three schools. Each course consists of ten hours of instruction, which may include field trips and tours to related locations. Optional exams are offered for those wishing to become NGC Accredited Environmental, Gardening or Landscape Design Consultants.

After passing two courses a student becomes a Provisional Consultant and may join a Consultants Council, a group that provides programs and tours that further the education of its members. Those garden club members completing all four courses receive a Consultant Certification Card, which is recognized as a special achievement among NGC members, but does not convey professional status.

Those who have become NGC Consultants are eligible to judge contests and displays as representatives of the Environmental, Gardening and Landscape Design Schools program in events participated in by councils and clubs.

### **NGC Educational Programs**

Avail yourself of the knowledge to be gained in each of the above NGC educational programs, and in:

**Flower Show School** – studies horticulture, design, and flower show procedure with the primary purpose of training those wishing to become Flower Show Judges.

## **Students**

### **Member Students**

A member student belongs to a NGC garden club or to one of NGC's International Affiliate clubs. The Consultant Certification Card is issued only to members of NGC.

### **Non-member Students**

The courses and exams are open to everyone. A non-member student who has successfully completed the four courses may apply for Consultant certification upon joining a garden club affiliated with NGC within one year after completing the series. Certificates of Completion may be issued to non-NGC students.

### **Certification of Students**

Requirements: To become eligible for a Consultant Certification Card in each school, member students must have a passing grade of 70% on all required exams in all four courses. The four courses must be completed by the end of the seventh calendar year after completing the first course. While the courses are most useful to the student when taken in order from 1 through 4, taking them in any order is permitted.

Member students attending courses for credit and Consultants are required to read *The National Gardener*, the official publication of NGC. Updated information pertaining to all NGC schools can be found in each issue of *The National Gardener* (and in *Keeping in Touch*).

Consultants are responsible for maintaining a record of all courses and refreshers they have attended.

NGC Consultant pins for each school and 4-Star and 5-Star pins are available from NGC Headquarters, Member Services.

### **Extension for Students**

A student unable to complete the four courses by the end of the seventh calendar year may request an extension from the State School Chairman. The request must be made before the seven years have elapsed. The State School Chairman forwards the form to the appropriate NGC Schools Chairman. If the request is granted, the NGC Schools Chairman notifies the Schools Secretary at NGC Headquarters and the State School Chairman. The State School Chairman notifies the student of the time limit of the extension.

### **Application for Consultant Credit**

The State School Chairman in the state where the student's records are kept prepares and submits the application for the student's certification. If any of the student's courses have been taken out-of-state, the student must submit evidence of having passed such courses to his/her State School Chairman, who sends the application with the course roster to the NGC Accrediting Chairman for the region, who notifies the NGC Schools Secretary. The NGC Accrediting Chairman sends the certification cards to the State School Chairman, who updates the records and forwards the cards to the new Consultants. The certification card carries the date of the student's fourth course (date Consultant status was achieved) and the expiration date.

### **NGC 4-Star and 5-Star Members**

Members who have successfully completed all four of NGC's educational programs are honored as **NGC 4-Star Members**. Members who complete all four NGC educational programs and refresh their certificates to the Master Status in all disciplines are honored as **NGC 5-Star Members**. Refreshing requirements still apply.