

City & Guilds NPTC Level 2 Award In the Safe Use of Pesticides for Vertebrate Pest Control for Rats and Mice (PA- R&M) (0216-25)

Version 1.1 (March 2025)

Assessment Pack – Candidate Version

Version and date	Change detail	Section
1.0 February 2024	First version	ALL
1.1 March 2025	Formatting Unit Numbers Updated	Throughout

Contents

Introduction	4
Practical observation descriptor table	6
202 Principles of using rodenticides for vertebrate pest control (rats and mice)	6
252 Practices of using Rodenticides for Vertebrate Pest Control (Rats and Mice)	14
Appendix 1 Practical table	19
202 Principles of using rodenticides for vertebrate pest control (rats and mice)	19
203 Practices of using Rodenticides for Vertebrate Pest Control (Rats and Mice)	20
Appendix 2 Sources of general information	21

Introduction

This assessment relates to the unit in the Qualification handbook. The assessment can be achieved at pass only. If any task is not met the candidate is unsuccessful.

This assessment is for the following units and learning outcomes:

Unit 202 Principles of using rodenticides for vertebrate pest control (rats and mice) covering the following learning outcomes:

1. Know the legislative requirements and Codes of Practice relating to the use of rodenticides to control rats and mice
2. Understand the relevance of product label information
3. Understand how to minimise the risk of human contamination and implement emergency procedures
4. Know how to store and transport rodenticide products safely
5. Know how to manage and dispose of surplus rodenticide and waste materials
6. Know the record keeping requirements
7. Understand how to minimise the risk of environmental contamination and implement emergency procedures

Unit 203 Practices of using Rodenticides for Vertebrate Pest Control (Rats and Mice) covering the following learning outcomes:

1. Be able to comply with the legislative and safety regulations relating to rodenticide use for the control of rats and mice
2. Be able to assess the environmental factors relating to application
3. Know the characteristics of rats and mice and their impact on the environment
4. Know the methods of preventative management and control for rats and mice
5. Be able to complete a site survey prior to carrying out rat and mice control
6. Be able to apply rodenticide products safely
7. Know how to carry out post operational procedures

General guidance on the requirements for assessment can be found in the Assessor Guidance General guidance on the requirements for assessment can be found in the Assessor Guidance document available on the City & Guilds web site **www.nptc.org.uk**

The assessor must complete the Practical Table mark sheet for each candidate which should be kept by the assessor for a minimum period of twelve months.

Assessment Time

The expected assessment time for this qualification is 1.5 – 3 hours.

Summary of responsibilities in the assessment process

Centre responsibilities	Candidate responsibilities	Assessor responsibilities
A suitable site is made available for the assessment to take place		Ensuring that the site provided is suitable for the assessment to take place
Machinery, equipment and materials are available to enable assessment of all the activities to take place	To be familiar with the machinery/equipment being used for the assessment	Ensuring that the machinery, equipment and materials provided satisfy the assessment requirements
	To bring appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to the assessment	Ensuring that candidate's PPE complies with the requirements of the assessment
	To bring relevant training materials (including calibration sheet if applicable)	
	To bring a product label appropriate for the assessment	To ensure that the product label is appropriate for the assessment (or provide a suitable alternative)

This is not an open book assessment; however additional technical information may be sought from the relevant manufacturer's operator manuals or any other appropriate training or safety publication.

Practical observation descriptor table

202 Principles of using rodenticides for vertebrate pest control (rats and mice)

Activity number and description from check list		Assessment criteria
1.1	Identify operator responsibilities under current legislation relating to the use of rodenticides to control rats and mice	<p>Health and Safety at Work Act (1974):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take reasonable care of him/herself • take care of others • co-operate with employer • follow employer requirements • the self-employed have very similar duties. <p>COSHH regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • operators to follow the COSHH Assessment • use the control measures as provided • check that control measures are working • report any defects promptly • use the provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) • do not smoke, eat or drink whilst using rodenticides • maintain personal hygiene. <p>Part III of the Food and Environmental Protection Act 1985:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect the health of human beings, creatures and plants • only use humane methods of pest control • safeguard the environment • prevent the pollution of water • make information available to the public. <p>The Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012/The Biocidal Product Regulations 2012:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all statutory conditions must be complied with • all products must be approved for the intended use

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • product labels and data sheets must be read and complied with • maximum dose rates must be complied with • all users must take all reasonable precautions to protect the health of human beings, creatures and all the environment • all users have had adequate instruction, training and guidance • comply with The Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012. <p>Poisons Act 1972:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seller must identify purchaser • purchaser must provide verification if not known to seller • establish purpose for use • complete the poisons book • rules for wholesaling. <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all bait must be covered • regular checking of baits • protection of general public • protection of domestic pets and animals • restrictions on placing of specific baits.
1.2	State an operator's responsibilities under current Codes of Practice when applying rodenticides to control rats and mice	<p>Codes of Practice</p> <p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dealing with non-target species poisoning • reporting of incidents involving wildlife except fish (WIFS) Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme • reporting incidents involving fish to the Environment Agency • abide by the static and mobile storage guidance laid out in HSE information sheet AIS16 • always transport rodenticides as stated on the label • always follow the requirements relating to the container. <p>Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRUU) Code of Best Practice</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changing emphasis rather than practices

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rodenticide application to be considered as a temporary solution after other procedures have been considered and implemented, e.g. making sites less conducive to rodent infestation • Concept of 'risk hierarchy' should be at the forefront when deciding a rodent control strategy i.e. the least severe methods must always be used. <p>Permanent baiting</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A procedure used in the UK by competent professionals • Placement of rodenticide baits with the purpose of preventing the establishment of rodent infestation where one does not currently exist. • Conducted only at sites where a high risk of re- invasion is likely and there is a risk to human and animal health. <p>Indoors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally conducted against house mice using tamper proof stations • Very little risk to non-target animals • Small quantities only of bait are used • Non-target animals are virtually absent from indoor baited areas • May be appropriate for the control of rats where other alternatives cannot be applied. <p>Outdoors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justification where there is a risk of reinvasion of rodent free sites which may result in a risk to human and animal health and welfare • Usually conducted against rats • Requires tamper-resistant bait boxes should be used • Prevent access by non-target animals and human by-standers. <p>Risk Mitigation measures</p> <p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate risk assessments are required
--	--	--

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only trained and competent professionals to carry out permanent baiting programmes • Permanent baiting should not be routine practice • Consider permanent baiting if a building is under an ongoing threat of rodent infestation and human/animal health is at risk • Other means of rodent prevention infestation should be considered first • Reasons why alternatives are impractical or unlikely to be effective should be documented • Sites should be inspected regularly as per label instructions. <p>Resistance associated with permanent baiting</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of resisted anticoagulants will spread resistance and increase its severity • Products which contain more potent anticoagulants must be used • Use a non-anticoagulant rodenticide if available and appropriate. <p>Alternatives to permanent baiting</p> <p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no direct replacement • Ability to control adjacent properties which provide harbourages for rodents • Proofing • Trapping • Predators. <p>Animal species potentially at risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Voles • Badgers • Deer • domestic animals • birds, in particular Barn Owls and Kestrels • farm animals • other non-target mammals.
2.1 - 2.2	<p>State the relevance of product label information</p> <p>State how the product must be used</p>	<p>Requirements from the rodenticide label Highlighted/annotated label is acceptable</p> <p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the statutory status of the label

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of the statutory box • the significance of the CHIP box information • the product being used • approval number • active ingredient • approved Field of Use • the target species on which the product can be used • specific product precautions • approved directions for use • maximum dose rate • correct method of baiting • application timing and guidance • where the product may be used • numbers of bait boxes • PPE to be used • Risk and Safety statements • First Aid information • additional information • always keep product in original container. <p>Permanent baiting label phrase examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent baiting is strictly limited to sites with a high potential for reinvasion where other methods have not worked • Permanent baiting strategies shall be periodically reviewed within the context of IPM and the assessment of the risk for re-infestation • Sites under a permanent baiting regime should be inspected regularly as per product label directions • The period between visits for outdoor sites under continuous baiting will not exceed four weeks • Follow all additional instructions provided by the CRRU Guidance on Permanent Baiting.
3.1	State possible routes of contamination	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • absorption • inhalation • Ingestion. <p>Methods of avoiding contamination</p> <p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no eating drinking or smoking • maintain personal hygiene.

		<p>Personal Protective Equipment to be suitable and serviceable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • store PPE and safely and away from contamination • correct handling and disposal of rodenticide containers • dispose of PPE safely • only use as directed on the label • treatment area must be marked during use.
3.2	List appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coveralls • suitable gloves • appropriate footwear.
3.3	Describe the symptoms of contamination	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spontaneous haemorrhage from nose • internal bleeding into the organs • bleeding seen under the skin • awareness that symptoms may be delayed.
3.4	Explain appropriate procedures for dealing with contamination	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stop work • remove all contaminated clothing • wash exposed skin and hair • call doctor at once and show the label • identify first aid to measures to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ remove from the source of contamination ○ airway clear ○ treat as an emergency ○ stay with the casualty.
4.1	State how rodenticides should be stored	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate warning signs • visible contact number for storage ownership • storage recording system • fixed location storage conditions, stored off the floor above a bund • store in original container, tightly closed in an approved store • the storage container should be marked • should be kept locked, key only accessible to those approved to use the product • store location logged with the local Fire and Rescue Service • ensure correct firefighting equipment in store (dry powder extinguishers) • correct PPE to be available.

4.2	State how rodenticides should be transported	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate warning signs • documentation required during transport • rodenticide products should not be routinely carried (only required when carrying out a planned treatment) • products to be segregated from people during transport • product records required in case of emergency • ensure correct safety equipment is located in the vehicle.
5.1	Identify appropriate methods to reduce waste	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete a site survey • implement the Risk Assessment and control procedures • check site prior to operation • ensure rats and mice are active • protect bait from the weather.
5.2	State how to manage and dispose of surplus rodenticide	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spillage around the bait box must be removed and disposed along with any spoilt bait removed from within the box • the bait box must be completely emptied at the end of the treatment period • disposal by a licensed waste disposal contractor.
5.3	State how to manage and dispose of waste materials	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tap any remaining dust out of container at treatment location • always dispose of the container according to the label • disposal via a licensed waste disposal contractor with consignment note issued by waste contractor • comply with relevant waste disposal legislation.
6.1	State the records required to comply with legislation and industry best practice	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training records • Environmental Assessment • Risk Assessment • COSHH Assessment • control and emergency procedures • stock records • PPE stock numbers • bait box maintenance checks • application records.

7.1	Describe the risks to the environment from rodenticide products	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contamination of non-target species • contamination of watercourses • harmful to wildlife.
7.2	Describe how to carry out rodenticide application to minimise the risk to the environment	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete a detailed site survey • read and follow the product label • follow the Environmental Assessment • by complying with CRRU CoBP in regard to permanent outdoor baiting, specifically only using this strategy where justified by risk assessment • remove all spillages • use the correct baiting procedure • use of bait blocks • use of bait bags.
7.3	Explain appropriate procedures for dealing with environmental contamination	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • secure the area • contact the Emergency Services • contact the Environment Agency • contact the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WIIS).

203 Practices of using Rodenticides for Vertebrate Pest Control (Rats and Mice)

Activity number and description from check list		Assessment criteria
1.1	Demonstrate how to comply with the legal requirements relating to applying rodenticides to control rats and mice	<p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COSHH/Risk Assessment completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ hazards identified ○ persons at risk ○ risks evaluated ○ hierarchy of control measures used ○ review requirements identified • legal requirements followed • rodenticide used correctly • comply with The Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012 • the operator must hold the appropriate certification for the materials and equipment they are using.
1.2	Apply rodenticide safely using the correct baiting procedures following industry best practice	<p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comply with Pesticide Codes of Practice • comply with CRRU UK Code of Best Practice • adopt industry best practice • use the correct equipment • apply rodenticide safely • use the correct baiting procedures.
2.1	Identify risks to the environment by completing an Environmental Risk Assessment	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water courses • drains • non-target animals • sensitive crops/areas • housing • public access • other risks particular to the site.
2.2	Explain how to minimise risks to the environment	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete a detailed site survey • read and follow the product label • follow the Environmental Assessment • use an appropriate rodenticide • careful timing of application • comply with Environmental Assessment • warning signs • monitoring

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of appropriate bait boxes.
3.1	State the biology of rats and mice	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • litter size (6 – 8) • breeding season (all year-round if conditions are favourable) • gestation (24 days rats) (21 days mice) • neophobic differences between rats and mice.
3.2	Describe the feeding behaviour of rats and mice	May include: Rats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feed at two or three familiar points each night • average intake 25 – 30 grams • avoid new objects • can be bait shy • require free water. Mice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feed at many points each night • average intake approx. 3 grams • naturally inquisitive • not usually bait shy • do not require free water, can extract moisture from food.
3.3	Describe the activity patterns of rats and mice	May include: Rats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prefer a stable environment • very active in familiar areas • can climb rough walls and pipes • jump well up to 100cm • good swimmer. Mice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigate new objects • naturally inquisitive • good climber • often live above the floor • jump up to 30cm • can squeeze through gaps as small as 5mm.
3.4	State where damage may be caused by rats and mice on a site	May include damage to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • crops and stores • municipal and amenity land • sports ground • industrial land • buildings and structures • electrical installations.
3.5	State the possible implications of the damage caused by rats and mice	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduction in crop values • costs related to damage

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • costs related to control • transmission of disease • public reaction • environmental impact • issues relating to safety • agricultural crop assurance schemes.
4.1	State preventative management for rats and mice	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exclusion barriers • closed containment or removal of potential food sources • habitat/environment changes • use of repellents • use of sonic devices.
4.2	State the natural control methods for rats and mice	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life expectancy • common diseases • natural predators • species competition • impact of weather conditions/seasons.
4.3	State alternative methods of population control for rats and mice	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proofing buildings • exclude food and water • removal of harbourage • trapping • sticky (glue) boards • alphachloralose • gas - Aluminium Phosphide (rats only) • first-generation anticoagulants • second generation anticoagulants. <p>When second generation anticoagulants should be used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second generation anticoagulants present the highest risk and should be used as a last resort.
5.1	Identify the natural habitats of rats and mice	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • position and topography of home • outside burrows • roof spaces • storage areas • evidence of gnawing (holes etc).
5.2	Identify signs of rats and mice on a site	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • droppings • smears • holes • damage to structures and food • urination pillars (mice only) • smell • runs.

5.3	Identify signs of other non-target species on the site requiring protection	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people • children • farm animals • domestic animals • birds • other mammals.
6.1	Prepare the site for application	To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • position of bait box • size of area to be treated • amount of activity • correct timing of application • warning signs on bait stations.
6.2	Demonstrate how to place the rodenticide product safely to control rats and mice	To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • correctly place the rodenticide in a suitable bait container • protect from non-target species • be aware of and comply with, the safety implications identified in the Risk Assessment • comply with relevant Code of Practice • comply with the label requirements.
6.3	Carry out all activities protecting human health and the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all activities were carried out protecting the environment.
7.1	Complete an application record	Completion of the treatment record must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate • legible (if handwritten).
7.2	Explain how to dispose of rodent carcasses	To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rodent bodies are located and removed • disposal according to legislation • buried in appropriate location • use a licensed waste disposal contractor.
7.3	Describe the storage requirements for any surplus bait boxes	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boxes are emptied and left at the location • Boxes are emptied and kept in secure storage.
7.4	Describe the follow up procedures after treatment	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reason for follow up visit(s) • when to make any follow up visit(s) to a site/revisit frequency • who should carry out the visit(s) • signs to note regarding efficacy of treatment • dispose of all carcasses correctly • recording information • removal of warning signs

Appendix 1 Practical table

202 Principles of using rodenticides for vertebrate pest control (rats and mice)

All criteria must be achieved.

Activity number and description	Achieved
1.1 Identify operator responsibilities under current legislation relating to the use of rodenticides to control rats and mice	
1.2 State an operator's responsibilities under current Codes of Practice when applying rodenticides to control rats and mice	
2.1 State the relevance of product label information	
2.2 State how the product must be used	
3.1 State possible routes of contamination	
3.2 List appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	
3.3 Describe the symptoms of contamination	
3.4 Explain appropriate procedures for dealing with contamination	
4.1 State how rodenticides should be stored	
4.2 State how rodenticides should be transported	
5.1 Identify appropriate methods to reduce waste	
5.2 State how to manage and dispose of surplus rodenticide	
5.3 State how to manage and dispose of waste materials	
6.1 State the records required to comply with legislation and industry best practice	
7.1 Describe the risks to the environment from rodenticide products	
7.2 Describe how to carry out rodenticide application to minimise the risk to the environment	
7.3 Explain appropriate procedures for dealing with environmental contamination	

203 Practices of using Rodenticides for Vertebrate Pest Control (Rats and Mice)

All criteria must be achieved.

Activity number and description	Achieved
1.1 Demonstrate how to comply with the legal requirements relating to applying rodenticides to control rats and mice	
1.2 Apply rodenticide safely using the correct baiting procedures following industry best	
2.1 Identify risks to the environment by completing an Environmental Risk Assessment	
2.2 Explain how to minimise risks to the environment	
3.1 State the biology of rats and mice	
3.2 Describe the feeding behaviour of rats and mice	
3.3 Describe the activity patterns of rats and mice	
3.4 State where damage may be caused by rats and mice on a site	
3.5 State the possible implications of the damage caused by rats and mice	
4.1 State preventative management for rats and mice	
4.2 State the natural control methods for rats and mice	
4.3 State alternative methods of population control for rats and mice	
5.1 Identify the natural habitats of rats and mice	
5.2 Identify signs of rats and mice on a site	
5.3 Identify signs of other non-target species on the site requiring protection	
6.1 Prepare the site for application	
6.2 Demonstrate how to place the rodenticide product safely to control rats and mice	
6.3 Carry out all activities protecting human health and the environment	
7.1 Complete an application record	
7.2 Explain how to dispose of rodent carcasses	
7.3 Describe the storage requirements for any surplus bait boxes	
7.4 Describe the follow up procedures after treatment	

Appendix 2 Sources of general information

The following documents contain essential information for centres delivering City & Guilds qualifications. They should be referred to in conjunction with this handbook. To download the documents and to find other useful documents, go to **www.cityandguilds.com** or click on the links below:

Centre handbook: quality assurance standards

This document is for all approved centres and provides guidance to support their delivery of our qualifications. It includes information on

- centre quality assurance criteria and monitoring activities
- administration and assessment systems
- centre-facing support teams at City & Guilds/ILM
- centre quality assurance roles and responsibilities.

The Centre Handbook should be used to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the Centre Contract.

Centre assessment: quality assurance standards

Approved centres must have effective quality assurance systems to ensure optimum delivery and assessment of qualifications. Quality assurance includes initial centre approval, qualification approval and the centre's own internal procedures for monitoring quality. Centres are responsible for internal quality assurance and City & Guilds is responsible for external quality assurance. All external quality assurance processes reflect the minimum requirements for verified and moderated assessments, as detailed in the Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS), section H2 of Ofqual's General Conditions. For more information on both CASS and City & Guilds Quality Assurance processes visit: the **What is CASS? and Quality Assurance Standards** documents on the City & Guilds website.

This document sets out the minimum common quality assurance requirements for our regulated and non-regulated qualifications that feature centre assessed components. Specific guidance will also be included in relevant qualification handbooks and/or assessment documentation.

It incorporates our expectations for centre internal quality assurance and the external quality assurance methods we use to ensure that assessment standards are met and upheld. It also details the range of sanctions that may be put in place when centres do not comply with our requirements, or actions that will be taken to align centre marking/assessment to required standards. Additionally, it provides detailed guidance on the secure and valid administration of centre-assessments.

Access arrangements: when and how applications need to be made to City & Guilds

Provides full details of the arrangements that may be made to facilitate access to assessments and qualifications for candidates who are eligible for adjustments in assessment.

The **centre document library** also contains useful information on such things as:

- conducting examinations
- registering learners
- appeals and malpractice.

Useful contacts

Please visit the Contact Us section of the City & Guilds website, **Contact us**.

City & Guilds

For over 140 years, we have worked with people, organisations and economies to help them identify and develop the skills they need to thrive. We understand the life-changing link between skills development, social mobility, prosperity and success. Everything we do is focused on developing and delivering high-quality training, qualifications, assessments and credentials that lead to jobs and meet the changing needs of industry.

We partner with our customers to deliver work-based learning programmes that build competency to support better prospects for people, organisations and wider society. We create flexible learning pathways that support lifelong employability because we believe that people deserve the opportunity to (re)train and (re)learn again and again – gaining new skills at every stage of life, regardless of where they start.

The City & Guilds community of brands includes Gen2, ILM, Intertrain, Kineo and The Oxford Group.

Copyright

The content of this document is, unless otherwise indicated, © The City and Guilds of London Institute and may not be copied, reproduced or distributed without prior written consent. However, approved City & Guilds centres and learners studying for City & Guilds qualifications may photocopy this document free of charge and/or include a PDF version of it on centre intranets on the following conditions:

- centre staff may copy the material only for the purpose of teaching learners working towards a City & Guilds qualification, or for internal administration purposes
- learners may copy the material only for their own use when working towards a City & Guilds qualification.

The Standard Copying Conditions (see the City & Guilds website) also apply.

Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Published by City & Guilds, a registered charity established to promote education and training

City & Guilds
Giltspur House
5–6 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DE

cityandguilds.com/about-us