at Sparsholt College would be interested to learn of any response from BIGGA’s education committee, as well as the industry at large.

Three years is a long time to (hopefully) gain a worthwhile qualification. I feel BTEC Golf Course and Sportsground Management is being overlooked.

D A MATHEW
Farnham, Surrey

As someone who has recently successfully completed all stages of the Master Greenkeeper Certificate I feel the need to respond to John Philips’s letter (July issue).

I was rather saddened to read, from someone who as yet has not gone through the rigours of the MGC, such a thinly veiled attack on its validity. I was dismayed at an article littered with such derogatory innuendo as ‘seemingly worthy qualification’, ‘concerned about the adequacy of the criteria’ and ‘a hollow and totally meaningless qualification’.

I do not personally know my two other fellow MGC’s I would bet are equally well certificated. I think all this disproves the theory that we may have been brain-dead for the last 20 years and have not quite grasped the basic principles expounded by Jim Arthur. I suggest that anyone who has earned the MGC might be simply ‘going through the motions of change... with little real commitment and purpose, probably fuelled by a lack of the required understanding to achieve the correct progression’ is tantamount to libel and shows a complete lack of comprehension of what the MGC is all about.

If the academic stages are so relatively easy to attain and the only true professionals are those providing the very best bent turf, why is it that as yet there is no MGC holder from a links or a major event course. I would suggest there can be only one of four reasons: 1 None have reached 200 credits - I would think this highly unlikely, or are progressing towards it. Ten years of experience will earn 40 credits leaving 150 to be obtained largely by academic achievement. This is something that large numbers will not easily attain and certainly not without the desired aim of greatly increasing the knowledge of future course managers. I am sure we can all doubt, many will possess the capabilities to pass the Stage 3 Examination’ was quite frankly an insult, especially to the unfortunate 75% of well prepared candidates who tried unsuccessfully to do so. I am sure we do not want John for his kind words of comfort.

I for one found it very difficult to acquire the academic qualifications necessary to reach 200 credits, having to gain passes in the IOG Intermediate Diploma, the EIGGA Diploma in Golf Management, City & Guilds Phase III and IV. I know Laurence Pittie to be similarly qualified and though I do not personally know my two other fellow MGC’s I would bet they are equally well certificated.

I think all this disproves the theory that we may have been brain-dead for the last 20 years and have not quite grasped the basic principles expounded by Jim Arthur. I suggest that anyone who has earned the MGC might be simply ‘going through the motions of change... with little real commitment and purpose, probably fuelled by a lack of the required understanding to achieve the correct progression’ is tantamount to libel and shows a complete lack of comprehension of what the MGC is all about.

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