This month David updates us on how the UK’s Further Education Colleges once again have to cope with more funding cuts from the government.

The GTC is constantly monitoring the situation to ensure there is still access to specialist greenkeeping education and training courses for all levels of greenkeepers.

For many years the sports turf sector has relied on traditional land based colleges throughout Britain, to deliver a variety of education and training courses, all leading to the formal accredited qualifications.

The highly acclaimed Apprenticeship Scheme continues to provide the sector with many of today’s top Course Managers and with distance learning and an on-line Degree available, you might think our employers and greenkeepers are well set for the long term.

In terms of a suitable range of formal qualifications the UK is fortunate as there are the vocational qualifications, required and work based and higher education qualifications, required and with distance learning and online learning.

The Centres have certainly tried their best to meet our industry’s request for flexibility for learners to gain access to formal certificates and qualifications.

They’ve featured the very popular delivery of qualifications for learners in their workplace, to the traditional part-time option, plus distance and online learning. In recent years we have also seen several private companies enter into the delivery of greenkeeping training, hence, the GTC’s policy to introduce the Quality Assured Scheme of Centres and Training Providers.

Many readers will be aware of the various changes within Further Education colleges in recent years.

Mergers, often prolonged and unsettling for the staff, have affected almost all parts of Britain and very often policy changes at a college has resulted in sports turf courses being subject to ongoing viability reviews.

Sadly for many friends working in the colleges, despite their best efforts, delivery of quality programmes has become increasingly difficult.

There are still colleges, private companies and individuals who are totally committed to delivering quality education, training and qualifications for our sector.

Clearly the Government’s policy of the early nineties, to encourage industries to become involved in vocational qualifications, required a total rethink by the colleges.

Some did, and still do promote, and with distance learning and informal workshops, are looking to serve ‘our sector’ and we should look to support them.

Many will remember when there were over thirty “GTC Approved Training Providers” offering greenkeeper training courses but following a 2010 review the GTC has currently seven Quality Assured Centres in England, two in Wales and two in Scotland.

In summary, the GTC are working with the Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers.

We want to ensure there are not only the formal qualifications and apprenticeship available but also short courses.

These are often the employers’ preferred training courses for their staff not ready for a more formal full qualification e.g.

Level 2, 3, HNC or Degree.

The GTC is constantly monitoring the situation to ensure there is still access to specialist greenkeeping education and training courses for all levels of greenkeepers.

The highly acclaimed Apprenticeship Scheme continues to provide the sector with many of today’s top Course Managers and with distance learning and an on-line Degree available, you might think our employers and greenkeepers are well set for the long term.

In terms of a suitable range of formal qualifications the UK is fortunate as there are the vocational qualifications, required and work based and higher education qualifications, required and with distance learning and online learning.

The Centres have certainly tried their best to meet our industry’s request for flexibility for learners to gain access to formal certificates and qualifications.

They’ve featured the very popular delivery of qualifications for learners in their workplace, to the traditional part-time option, plus distance and online learning. In recent years we have also seen several private companies enter into the delivery of greenkeeping training, hence, the GTC’s policy to introduce the Quality Assured Scheme of Centres and Training Providers.

Many readers will be aware of the various changes within Further Education colleges in recent years.

Mergers, often prolonged and unsettling for the staff, have affected almost all parts of Britain and very often policy changes at a college has resulted in sports turf courses being subject to ongoing viability reviews.

Sadly for many friends working in the colleges, despite their best efforts, delivery of quality programmes has become increasingly difficult.

There are still colleges, private companies and individuals who are totally committed to delivering quality education, training and qualifications for our sector.

Clearly the Government’s policy of the early nineties, to encourage industries to become involved in vocational qualifications, required a total rethink by the colleges.

Some did, and still do promote, and with distance learning and informal workshops, are looking to serve ‘our sector’ and we should look to support them.

Many will remember when there were over thirty “GTC Approved Training Providers” offering greenkeeper training courses but following a 2010 review the GTC has currently seven Quality Assured Centres in England, two in Wales and two in Scotland.

In summary, the GTC are working with the Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers.

We want to ensure there are not only the formal qualifications and apprenticeship available but also short courses.

These are often the employers’ preferred training courses for their staff not ready for a more formal full qualification e.g.

Level 2, 3, HNC or Degree.