

# Education

The introduction of National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications to our industry has had serious implications for greenkeeper training.

The principles of vocational qualifications are endorsed by the Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC), however it is more than a little concerned regarding the qualification standards agreed by the Industry Lead Body for Amenity Horticulture (ILBAH) on behalf of greenkeeping.

Unfortunately, golf greenkeeping only employs around 10-11,000 persons in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, and with such numbers, this does not give the profession its own Lead Body status.

However, in order to protect the greenkeeping profession, the GTC moved swiftly in producing a new Training Manual, which incorporates the standards of NVQ/SVQ Amenity Horticulture.

The manual already includes the craft level skills and work is in progress to produce supervisory and management sections by the end of this year.

The changes in education have also coincided with major changes in how our training colleges are funded. I do not intend to explain the problems they have caused,

except to say that all colleges are now self governing and will need to be cost effective. The warning is clear to all, be careful if you plan to send a greenkeeper to college, check with the GTC Education Unit and establish that the training course on offer is at the agreed level. The GTC will soon issue a directory of colleges 'approved' to provide such courses, be they craft, supervisory or management levels.

It has to be suggested that whilst NVQ/SVQs are supposed to be work-based qualifications, it would be negligent of our industry to undo



the great work carried out at some colleges and whilst we intend to very closely monitor all training courses offered for greenkeeping, it is vital that we encourage golf clubs to support the courses which are offered, to complement the widely-acclaimed Training Manual.

There will be numerous centres offering NVQ/SVQ Level 2 (Greenkeeping Option), but beware, many of these establishments have no experience in training greenkeepers or assessing standards in our profession.

The NVQ/SVQ qualification in greenkeeping is under review by the ILBAH and the GTC is continuing to lobby for the Training Manual to be recognised as a candidate's Record of Achievement for the qualification.

The responsible GTC approved colleges will be offering training courses to complement the GTC training manual, incorporating NVQ/SVQs in Amenity Horticulture.

Having set out standards in the Training Manual and agreed to endorse and approve training courses at certain colleges, we must now provide trained assessors and verifiers to monitor these standards as an industry.

The GTC wishes to train sufficient assessors and verifiers throughout the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland and funding will be made available to allow course managers and head greenkeepers to obtain the required qualifications.

**Nominations are therefore invited by the GTC from course managers and head greenkeepers who wish to be considered as assessors and/or verifiers. Forward your current curriculum vitae to David Golding, Education Director, at Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York YO6 2NF, or call 0347 838640 for more details.**

## Management Courses

Applications have been pouring in for the limited number of spaces on the 1993 Management Courses. If you have not already booked, please do so quickly using the postcard in this magazine. A deposit of £100+VAT (£117.50) is required to secure your place. A grant of £150 per week may be available from the GTC for head greenkeepers with no supervisory qualifications.

Following the success of the last three in-house pesticide courses with 100% pass rate, a further course has been scheduled for the week beginning 27th September/1st October at BIGGA HQ. The course tutor will again be Jon Allbutt, who will guide you towards the PA1 and PA2A Certificates. Cost per delegate will be £495+VAT to include accommodation, meals, tuition and testing fees. The course is limited to six delegates, so if you wish to book, call BIGGA now.

Contact Debbie Savage on 0347 838581 for full details.

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