

## Two Qualifications - One Set of Study

Mark Zealander has been taking a Certificate of Higher Education and BSc at Cannington College.



It's coming up to the halfway point in my qualification, so I thought it is a good time to report on my progress under the BIGGA and Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd sponsorship scheme.

First I will explain the route I am taking in the search for a BSc Hons. My original route was to study a Foundation Degree in Soil Science and Technology at Cannington College as a year part-time course. I was advised by my tutor to study the first two years at Certificate of

Higher Education (C of HE) level and bridge to the third year of the foundation degree. This way I would achieve two qualifications without extra study. So from September 2002 I started the C of HE part-time. The Certificate of Higher Education breaks down into the following modules:

### Year One - Golf Course Construction

- Grass Establishment and Sward Maintenance
- Foundation Science
- Statistics

### Year Two - Ecology

- Plant Protection
- Machinery

Each module comprises of two written assignments and one end of module exam. The overall grade breaks down as follows:

- Assignment 1 = 30%
- Assignment 2 = 30%
- Module exam = 40%

### GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION

This module is self-explanatory and covers the history and background of construction methods, site and soil surveying, aspects of golf course design and construction of golf course features.

The first assignment required me to research the methods of greens construction and produce a report for a committee, recommending a suitable method and display the costing.

The second assignment involved assessing the layout of two golf holes and redesign them to test the modern high and low handicap club golfer.

### GRASS ESTABLISHMENT AND SWARD MAINTENANCE

This module covers the science behind the daily course maintenance, such as aeration, top-dressing and nutrition.

Assignment One was aimed at the definition and meaning of many greenkeeping terms, allowing me to thoroughly research each one.

Assignment Two was based around:

- Understanding the causes of wear and tear.
- Ways of reducing the problems.
- Design and layout assessments.
- Compaction problems.

### FOUNDATION SCIENCE

This was the more intense module as I looked at elements and atomic structures, chemical bonding and analysis, organic chemistry and biology.

The first assignment required me to analyse soil macro nutrients and why they are important to healthy plant growth. I also researched into the damaging effects of soluble fertilisers when over used.

In the second assignment we researched the structure of a plant cell and the role of each organ.

### STATISTICS

This module is included for progression reasons and is needed when going on to do a BSc. It includes distribution, regression, and general data processing.

### ECOLOGY

In ecology I have been looking at woodland and hedge management and planting, techniques of grassland and heathland maintenance for habitat management.

I am currently working on the first assignment, which requires me to assess a golf course for new tree planting and recommend a suitable design. Including a maintenance plan and any problems over the next 50 years.

### PLANT PROTECTION

This looks at Integrated Pest Management (IPM), the use of pesticides on the golf course and the health and safety implications.

In the first assignment I researched into pest and disease management and cultural, chemical and biological methods of management.

### MACHINERY

As I have been in greenkeeping for over eight years I was able to get full credit for this module and not have to study it. The module includes all aspects of machinery management and health and safety.

I have received good grades throughout the modules, and I am on target to complete the C of HE this summer. I am now considering the option of completing the Foundation degree online as distance learning. Once this is complete I can start the BSc qualification. I would like to take this opportunity to thank BIGGA and Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd for the sponsorship, which has helped me with the tuition fees. I am also fits grateful to my former tutor Mr Phil Sharpies for his help and support and wish him success in his new post.