

GTC News



As we enter a new year David Golding, GTC Education Director, looks ahead to the coming months with his usual optimism for greenkeepers and golf club employers.

While the GTC spends much of its time on reviewing greenkeeping qualifications, developing new initiatives to support the golf clubs and greenkeepers it represents, one aspect of our work is often undervalued albeit vitally important to ensuring employers are tempted into engaging in staff training.

Funding or, more specifically, subsidised training courses have been a tradition in our sector for many years and I believe this must continue if we hope to ensure the golf club employers are willing to train their staff.

While in many industries thousands of pounds are invested in staff development we in the sports turf sector have had a tradition of seeing training as a necessary requirement rather than seeing it as an investment in staff development.

It has often been a frustrating aspect of my work when attending meetings, representing the sports turf sector, and hearing training providers, often the college representatives, pleading for more Government funds to make the education and training courses cheap, or better still free, otherwise employers will not train their staff.

It is true that if the Government in establishing apprenticeship schemes and national frameworks for qualifications invest millions of pounds in the development and delivery of the various awards, we should be in the frame fighting for our slice of the financial cake.

I think we have made great strides in this area, not only gaining the respect within the land base sector but much admired by other industries who are only now "tapping" into the national framework of qualifications.

Having attended many meetings representing the sector I have to say that because we now know and understand the "system" of funding I truly hope we take up the current opportunities available to educate and train staff or if you are a greenkeeper please climb on board the continual professional development (CPD) train!

I know you will be thinking hear goes David again down the jargon road, but OK if you want to take advantage of the education and training opportunities now available in greenkeeping one of the necessary "evils" is that you have to know the buzz terms!

Sorry, but I will try and keep you up to speed with them as they appear. I can assure you it is a small price to pay for the return you will receive from the training providers.

'The GTC approved training providers can access funding support from the appropriate Government agencies on your behalf'

CPD is a very common term and by reading this magazine you are contributing to your own CPD.

Attending events such as BTME are all part of your development and we must keep ourselves up to speed in the area of our work – for my part I have to read the Government websites daily, just to see if there has been a new acronym "launched". Sad but true!

Joking apart I could list many, many examples of where we now access Government funds to make

greenkeeper education and training affordable, but in this article I just want to highlight the fact that the GTC approved training providers can access funding support from the appropriate Government agencies on your behalf.

Apprenticeships, Skillseekers, National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications, Higher National Certificates, Foundation Degrees and NPTC Certificates of Competence are the most popular formal education and training awards and carry the Government's accreditation and in turn training providers can draw down funds to offer some, if not all, of these awards.

As I have mentioned in previous articles, the GTC works closely with the various Awarding Bodies to police the training providers in our sector as quality of provision is still our number one priority.

The GTC works within the Government framework to ensure that the range of qualifications are relevant to the sportsturf sector, therefore please take advantage of the courses on offer.

The optimistic view is that from vocational training to a Master Degree, from Certificates of Competence to BIGGA regional training courses and national events there is something there for everyone and the cost should not be preventative in taking up at least one option.

BIGGA has a scholarship scheme available for its members and more recently the R&A has approved a Bursary scheme for Greenkeeping.

All in all greenkeepers can be well prepared for the challenges ahead in terms of all the reports expecting greater "movement" of the golfers to the clubs who are offering the best services, which must include the condition of the course.

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For all the up to date information on which course, which qualification or which training provider please contact the GTC.

Telephone: 01347 838640,

Email: david@the-gtc.co.uk

Visit the GTC website at www.the-gtc.co.uk

Visit the GTC STAND at BTME 2005. Stand Q130 within the ClubHouse Exhibition.

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