



WHY SO CRITICAL?

In this month's article David Golding, GTC's Education Director, looks to dispel the myth that "the GTC wants every greenkeeper registered on an NVQ." He also looks at why there are still some very influential "turf related" individuals who seem to spend most of their lives criticising vocational training

Ignorance by dictionary definition is "a lack of knowledge" and I could add that this is the perception of many VQ sceptics as they think N/SVQ's are all about doing the job, somebody, could be anybody, ticking a few boxes and bingo give the student a piece of paper and there is no knowledge requirement whatsoever!

Sorry, but before I set off again explaining how many more competent qualified assessors are now at the forefront of formally training and assessing their staff in their normal working environment, I really need to explain the GTC's stance on greenkeeper education, training and qualifications.

The GTC looks to have a range of both work-based and academic qualifications available for turf students and employers to access.

Access to these qualifications is through a network of GTC Approved Training providers who are encouraged to devise a range of delivery options to suit the needs of all employers/students e.g. part-time, full-time off the job courses or on the job learning through workbooks or on-line learning.

Whether the knowledge is gained on or off the job, the support of the Course Manager/assessor is vital when it comes to skills and the assessment of competence is always most cost-effective and efficient when carried out by the learners supervisor under normal working conditions.

Skills training, without doubt, is best delivered on the job, however there are still specialist training requirements, such as legislative certificates which can be best suited to group training at a central site e.g. provider centre, college or golf club.

The GTC therefore works with all the key bodies, organisations and providers to ensure that the sector has as small a range of certificates and qualifications available which are delivered to a national standard, based on quality and applicable to the turf industry.

The range of turf qualifications does not stop at the N/SVQ's, albeit in excess of 90% of turf student registrations are on work-based qualifications!

There are the more academic National Certificate/Diploma qualifications, which can lead students onto the higher education qualifications such as Higher National Certificates/Diplomas and Foundation and Master Degree qualifications.

The GTC is involved in the development and review of all of these qualifications and fully supports and endorses them!

All these qualifications are developed within the Governments national

framework and attract varying levels of funding support, making courses more attractive to employers.

The qualifications often are included within schemes promoted by the Government such as the Apprenticeship Scheme or Train 2 Gain.

Given that the GTC's Provider network are now really wanting to meet the industries needs, you need to discuss the various qualifications and delivery methods as well as costs with either your favoured provider, or for independent advice, contact the GTC direct.

The GTC is looking to launch a new facility on its website which does not just link you to the list of GTC Approved Training Providers but through a sub section list, the specific turf qualifications and courses each provider offers. We appreciate just how difficult it can be when clicking on a provider to actually find the turf courses. Often hidden within Horticulture or in the case of large colleges, well hidden for even us to find. Fiona from the GTC, is on the case and we hope to take the pain out of seeking which course or qualification by having the information available on the GTC website shortly.

As for the VQ sceptics, well I don't intend to name them but I will say that the responsible providers are now fully supporting Course Managers and in particular qualified assessors to drive the skills training of greenkeepers forward. This has been acknowledged more and more by employers recognising a more motivated, competent member of staff deserves financial reward and in many cases promotion when the position arises – succession planning!

Well done to all those on the job trainers/assessors, who are now driving up the skills of their staff in association with their chosen provider and to those employers who fully understand the true meaning and benefits of vocational training and as a result have a competent workforce.

To discuss the range of turf qualifications and courses contact David direct on email david@the-gtc.co.uk or Tel 01347 838640.

The GTC's website is: www.the-gtc.co.uk

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