



HAPPY NEW YEAR GREENKEEPERS

As we move into a new year David Golding, GTC's Education Director, encourages everyone, employer and greenkeeper alike to review their training needs and to really take seriously the need to keep staff development at the top of the agenda!

I often read on turf related websites that the qualifications available for greenkeepers and grounds men/women “do not meet our needs” and we need to launch our own training course and qualification. Why?

While I cannot speak on behalf of the grounds men and women, I hope at all meetings we have presented the case for all the elements required to be included in the various qualifications to enable access for all working in sports turf.

The GTC has led the development of the current range of turf qualifications and has always encouraged the employers and greenkeepers to contribute to the development and review of all awards. The same applies now as we start the review of the Sports Turf apprenticeship framework - Arguably the most important stepping stone for so many entering this great profession? It does not seem that long ago that we did not even have a Turf Apprenticeship!

You can contribute to the review by sending your views direct to the GTC and I can assure you that your comments will be fed into the review process - Lantra will also be consulting widely via their website www.lantra.co.uk.

This is just one example of the transparency of the GTC who always welcome contributions from the sector. We are fortunate to have a choice between the vocational work-based training courses and qualifications plus the more college based awards. Visit the GTC website for the detail of these various awards and don't forget feedback to the GTC is so important to ensure we get it right for both the learner and the employer!

The GTC remains committed to working with both the work-based and the more academic awards as it gives everybody a choice. The career path also on our website shows how the various qualifications complement each other.

Very often criticism of the vocational qualifications is down to delivery issues not the content of the craft, supervisory and management levels. The three levels are developed from the industry skills developed in association with employers and greenkeepers and these are regularly reviewed again with the Lantra SSC. The official nationally accredited qualifications attract Government funding and offered by Centres often Further Education colleges which in turn results in subsidised education.

Back to the delivery issues and the options available to you. I am sorry to keep plugging the term work-based but that is what vocational is, directed at occupational skills, in our case on the golf course. However I make no apology for promoting Course Manager/Head Greenkeepers as the key person responsible to make these awards nationally respected qualifications. In simple terms, developed by the industry for the industry

and delivered to the required standards by the industry.

We all have our part to play!

The Centres can only operate work-based training with employer and the staff involved in the process. Work related courses are a different matter and these are more college suited, as they are more classroom based. From the National Certificate to the Masters Degree, these are brilliant qualifications and on offer through our network of GTC Approved Providers (see GTC website).

My real appeal to you as we move into a new year is that we really look at developing staff skills and knowledge by encouraging bite size learning. I don't want us all to be caught up in the Governments drive for full qualification statistics but rather focus our provider network to service our sector in a manner the GTC believes best suits golf clubs and greenkeepers.

Last month I mentioned the plethora of buzzwords so I don't want to start the New Year with another but bespoke courses or, better still, all responsible providers should offer short courses. I am always confident that courses offered by the various providers will relate to the National Occupational Standards so really there is a real opportunity for the Approved Providers including Professional Bodies to move into this area of educational development.

Employers and greenkeepers having identified staff education and training needs should contact their chosen provider and if you are not offering the subject or course in a delivery method to suit your needs please contact the GTC as we need to know when you have delivery issues.

Our work at the GTC is to work with those providers, colleges, and private companies and individuals who are willing to meet our sectors needs but we need your support by keeping us informed of when your needs are not being met.

The GTC is proud to be the independent body representing the greenkeeping sector in matters relating to education, training and qualifications and you are very much part of the consultative network.

Check out the new GTC website www.the-gtc.co.uk which includes the Training Provider network and organisations offering greenkeeper education and training.

Contact David direct at david@the-gtc.co.uk or Telephone the GTC on 01347 838640

GTC is supported by:

