



## TIMES ARE CHANGING

*In this month's article David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, looks at how greenkeeper education has changed and the options now available...*

**It might have taken the GTC longer than we would have liked to change the traditional education providers to become more flexible with their delivery methods of courses and qualifications but it really is the kid in the sweet shop analogy now!**

Which way do I turn? So much choice!

There are still the traditional methods of day and block release courses available and for vocational (work-based) courses it is these days which are important for tutors to deliver the knowledge and agree the plan for the learner to gain the evidence to achieve the qualification.

Vocational qualifications are all about proving competence against the National Standards and the 'college for knowledge' statement is important when time off work is so important.

The skills are best taught on-the-job but at all times using the National Occupational Standards (NOS).

I am sorry but once again a timely reminder to Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers - your role in vocational courses/qualifications is key to the success of the system.

The on-going involvement of Course Managers/Head Greenkeepers or their nominated on the job trainer, has without doubt improved the skills base of hundreds of craft level greenkeepers. A bold statement but feedback again this year from Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development at BIGGA, that following the regional judging of the Toro Student of the Year competition, where a student's boss has actively been involved with the training and assessment process, the result is there for all to see.

For the non-vocational courses such as National Certificates, Advanced National Certificates and the Certificates in Higher Education including HNC/D and Foundation Degrees, this is where there has been so much development by certain colleges.

Again traditional college options are available but add to that online learning as an increasing popular pathway to gain knowledge and the move

to short courses by private providers including BIGGA is meeting employers needs as well as the personal development of the employee.

The GTC has also reviewed its traditional Approved Training Provider network and while until recent years it only included a small number of colleges, we are looking at the quality of the training provision rather than just approving say one or two colleges.

There are some excellent colleges who offer local provision and at the same time some new private companies who have excellent resources to deliver courses and we would rather them approach the GTC so we can work together to service our specialist sector with quality education and training.

The GTC will work with any organisation or company seeking to support our aims to ensure employers and greenkeepers have choice but at all times quality will be at the forefront of our criteria.

Health & Safety training is so important and between the revised HSE-GTC Guidance Notes (as shown) the wall chart and the Safety Management System developed by BIGGA and the GCMA, the information is readily available.

There are now specialist courses available to ensure golf clubs are well provided for in this crucial area of golf course maintenance and management.

Many golf clubs have improved the working conditions for their staff but we know the Environmental Officers are once again dropping in on golf clubs throughout the country so please take the opportunity to prepare for the visit using the "tools" and training available.

As the winter approaches the seminar and workshop seasons tend to take off with the Home



Unions, BIGGA, STRI et al in full swing. Keep up to date on what events are on offer and when and where.

I know modern jargon can be boring but we all must record our Continual Professional Development (CPD) whether it be a formal qualification, short course, Certificate of Competence, workshop, seminar, exhibitions etc., by now I am sure you are aware of the importance of good record keeping.

We at the GTC endeavour to keep all the events available through links from our website to the various organisations and Training Provider network so please visit [www.the-gtc.co.uk](http://www.the-gtc.co.uk)

David can be contacted direct at [david@the-gtc.co.uk](mailto:david@the-gtc.co.uk)  
Tel: 01347 838640

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