



ARE YOU UP TO SPEED?

In this month's article David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, gives us an update on the importance of keeping up to speed with modern technology...

I am sure we can all relate stories of older or mature people and their use of mobile phones?

My 87-year-old father-in-law is a case in point, he has mastered the art of turning a mobile phone on and ringing our home number when he wants picking up from the railway station, now he wants to learn about texting!

I also have mastered the mobile, albeit the kids always laugh at the fact I have to find my glasses when a text comes in or when I need to use the phone – I know it is a sign of getting older but these are just a couple of examples of how nobody can, or indeed should, be afraid of modern technology.

The progress has been quite unbelievable in recent years and there is no end to its value in terms of greenkeeper education...

The speed of communication is fantastic whether it is through mobile phones or computers.

All ages now have access to these modern tools and greenkeepers are making the most of the opportunities to add to their knowledge base.

The GTC's latest data collection of learner/student information from its Approved Training Provider network has shown an incredible increase in registrations for the online learning delivery of qualifications now offered by several providers.

Greenkeepers gaining degrees online, whatever next?

Ignore the cynics; we as an industry know all the hard work over many years is paying off by the skills, based on the knowledge and experience gained by today's greenkeepers and Course Managers.

Many golf developing countries, where architects and constructors have been hard at work in recent years and there is little or no greenkeeper training system in place, are turning to the British providers and the GTC for assistance to develop a structure to suit their particular needs.

Yes you might sense a little blowing of the GTC's trumpet here but why not?

But which other countries have a range of qualifications to suit all ages, designed to multi-skill learners and has a network of providers

supporting a specialist industry with a variety of delivery methods? Not many!

However, we must not stop and think the work is completed, far from it. Investment to maintain standards and for the GTC to remain the independent, respected, authoritative organisation is essential.

The GTC must continue to lead on best practices in golf course maintenance and management. The current review of turf qualifications and apprenticeship schemes will allow the GTC to ensure all current issues including environmental legislation is incorporated into all turf qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks.



Online consultation through the Lantra and GTC websites is another example of how the internet broadens the opportunity to influence industry standards.

Back to the latest method of learning...

The online learning will be an important vehicle for this sharing of best practice.

With the sudden upturn in registrations on the higher education qualifications we also have not forgotten our roots and that is the craft level

of the profession.

The GTC now has its highly acclaimed learning materials available online. These are the same materials developed in partnership with the leading subject specialist individuals from our sector and used throughout the GTC approved centres.

These extensive materials can now be purchased chapter by chapter or as a total package.

I fully appreciate it is not everybody who wants to gain a qualification but access to information is so important to all of us.

It is the GTC's aim to share its work with as many greenkeepers and employers as possible in partnership with the approved providers.

must also add that hardcopies and CD format are still available for those who prefer these options of learning.

The World Wide Web is a fantastic resource and as I view the various turf websites including Associations forums, the greenkeeping community's willingness to support each other and share experience is so heart warming.

For those of you yet to join the cyber world there are still IT or computer courses available locally and you will be amazed at the age group having a laugh at the same time learning the basics of computing!

Check out what the GTC has to offer at its new online shop: www.the-gtc.co.uk

Employer or greenkeeper, have an input into the review of sports turf qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks by visiting: www.lantra.co.uk

I am tempted to finish with a text message using all the shortcuts but maybe I have to register on a special course for that!

David can be contacted direct at the GTC on:

Email: david@the-gtc.co.uk or

Tel: 01347 838640

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