



# Greenkeepers Training Committee



**David Golding, Education Director,  
with a monthly update from the GTC**

**In trying to keep you updated on the Government's current thoughts and policies for education and training, it is a little like trying to hit a fast moving target!**

**The GTC's role is to lobby various Government bodies for funding support towards the qualifications and schemes we are involved in developing and reviewing.**

Over many years employers and learners have benefited from the generous support given by the Government approved qualifications including the apprenticeship scheme but as we all know nothing is safe in the present economic climate, education has not escaped!

Our colleagues in both colleges and private training Centres are all seeing a reduction in funding support from the Government, with very few exceptions.

However, we must remain positive and seek out every opportunity for funding to ensure even the "poorest" golf club can still invest in their staff development.

I know many Course Managers have overall responsibility for their staff training but I still hear that some clubs operate without a budget item for staff training or, even hold Green Meetings without the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper present.

The best case scenario for green staff development has to be where the employer is involved and the Course Manager is at the very centre of the training programmes for their staff.

The best results are when a relationship is built with the chosen Centre whether it is a college or private training provider. It is these Centres who are able to access funding which often makes the course and qualification a very cost effective investment.

I have to report that employers will have to prepare for making a contribution towards staff training, albeit new schemes may well be launched to entice employers to take on apprentices.

Hands up who remembers the YT - YTS schemes?

The 16 - 19 year olds are still a priority group for funding support and thankfully our sector, through the GTC, has a recognised apprenticeship scheme, which is by far the route the GTC encourages employers to invest in.

"The apprenticeship scheme is available for all ages," says the Government, however, then it instructs its funding agencies to put monies towards the priority groups!

The GTC and many other industries hope to change this policy as there are many people of all ages who would benefit from the apprenticeship framework, so why the discrimination?

Clearly we all accept that the youngsters need to be in work but without me becoming political, so do many over 19's.

I know our colleagues in the Quality Assured Centres are constantly seeking every source of funding support and where costs have to be introduced these are kept to a minimum wherever possible.

It is always worth discussing with your chosen Centre how, through your support to the trainee/apprentice, costs may be kept down.

Our sector has, in the main, engaged with the work based courses and qualifications which the apprenticeship scheme is based on and that has given employers good multi-skilled staff with the related knowledge. This model is now being viewed by other countries as it is very much led by Course Managers who are best placed to train and maintain the professional standards of greenkeeping.

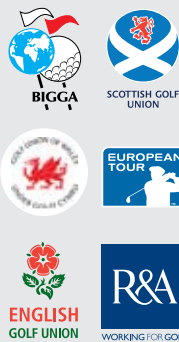
It is some years since the GTC introduced the programme of assessor training, again hands up who remember the old D32-D33 course? Maybe it was a little ahead of its time, however, it was that course that I believe supported our colleagues in colleges and Centres to bring the skills required in greenkeeping together with the knowledge.

I still hear from college and Centre staff that at some clubs Course

## In Brief

David updates readers on the present Government's priorities for funding support towards training and other financial schemes available to students.

The GTC is funded by:



Managers and Head Greenkeepers are reluctant to get involved in staff training. This I have to say I find disappointing even allowing for the fact of how difficult it can be at times for Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers when the pressure is on to present the course in top condition every day of the year!

All I will add is that if you don't get involved with your staff training it could cost you and your employer a lot more in the future.

I would also like to mention Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers who, in ensuring their staff do develop, sometimes forget their own personal development (CPD). Please remember to keep yourselves up to speed on all the subjects relating to course maintenance and management. Attend as many courses as you can and remember home study is an option to gain those formal qualifications.

The GTC are in regular contact with our Quality Assured Centres including colleges and encouraging the use of modern technology to assist with the access to knowledge and recording of evidence eg. eportfolio, on-line learning.

That moves me nicely onto Higher Education and nobody can have missed the very public debate relating to student fees albeit this differs depending which country you live in.

All I will add is that The R&A with its Bursary Scheme and BIGGA's Scholarship programme are both tremendous opportunities for those students considering entering the Higher Education qualifications.

The GTC is proud of the fact the sector has both a structured work based route to train staff and also a more academic option including on-line learning for Higher Education students.

Employers, usually in association with their Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper should always include a training budget item and with the subsidies available both through the GTC's work with Government agencies and from bodies like BIGGA and The R&A, it need not be thousands of pounds!



For more information on the various courses, qualifications in greenkeeping visit the GTC website and to contact any of the GTC's Quality Assured Centres, click on the QA Centre tab.

## Contact Details

David Golding  
GTC Education Director

01347 838640  
david@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC  
Aldwark Manor  
Near York  
YO61 1UF

www.the-gtc.co.uk