



# Greenkeepers Training Committee



David Golding, GTC Education Director, examines how government funding can attract apprenticeship schemes

**Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers often think, if only I had another pair of hands...well maybe they can find that additional help through explaining to their employer the benefits of recruiting an apprentice.**

Successful businesses often refer to the fact that during difficult economical times they invested in staff development and there is no better way than using the nationally accredited Greenkeeper Apprenticeship Scheme to ensure the course team has a committed, enthusiastic new employee being trained, educated and assessed to the industry agreed national standards.

Many of today's top Course Managers started as apprentices in the UK and now are maintaining and managing golf courses all over the world.

My friend of many years, Mike O'Keefe, known to many as the man from Ohio State University who opens doors in the USA for British greenkeepers to gain lifelong skills and experience, sums up how British greenkeeping apprentices are sought after by the Superintendents across the pond.

Mike explains, "In over 20 years of working with the GTC, BIGGA and our friends at the approved Centres and colleges, literally hundreds of British trained greenkeepers have travelled across, to hopefully enjoy the experience of working on golf courses in the States.

Mike adds, "It has to be acknowledged that the promotion for many years by the GTC of vocational, work based training and qualifications in Britain has resulted in outstanding competent greenkeepers whose all round skill level is admired by the American Superintendents.

The ability to do so many tasks when they arrive for their internship period is a tribute to the apprenticeship programme in Britain."

Apprenticeships continue to be very popular with British employers and the learners as it is a clear career progression and it all revolves around the golf course.



The greenkeeping apprenticeship framework not only includes the work based vocational qualifications at Levels 2 and 3 but additional requirements to ensure the apprentice has the functional skills which arguably should have been taught and achieved during school days.

Numeracy, literacy and communication skills are all now wrapped up into what the Government calls core or functional skills!

Please rest assured the GTC and its Quality Assured Centres are working within current Government policies of the day to ensure the funding support, albeit reducing, still makes the apprenticeship a very cost effective option for employers.

The GTC is currently involved in discussions to have a Higher Apprenticeship in greenkeeping.

A Higher Apprenticeship could include the work based Level 4 Management qualification and more news will follow as discussions with the relevant bodies hopefully come to fruition.

There are still many people looking to enter the profession of greenkeeping and with a clear career pathway available from apprentice

to Course or General Manager how best do employers look to recruit an apprentice?

Short of the GTC offering an apprenticeship placement service, an option the GTC is currently considering, many golf clubs have found a suitable apprentice within their clubs Junior Section, maybe a chance career change application letter received direct, a local advert or in association with a GTC Quality Assured Centre.

We are aware of apprentices of all ages working on golf courses and thoroughly enjoying the experience and with support funding finally becoming available for all ages currently in most areas of Britain there doesn't appear to be a recruitment problem.

The GTC's Quality Assured Centres are all there to assist employers select and recruit an apprentice and explain what funding is available.

Check out the Quality Assured Centres on our website [www.the-gtc.co.uk](http://www.the-gtc.co.uk)

For any greenkeepers looking to enjoy the experience of the Ohio State programme please contact Mike O'Keefe on email: [okeefe.1@osu.edu](mailto:okeefe.1@osu.edu)



The GTC is funded by:



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