



# Greenkeepers Training Committee

David Golding, GTC Education Director, with a monthly update



## Learn while you earn?

David Golding addresses the 'old chestnut' of why clubs looking to save money within budgets do so by first by reducing or withdrawing any staff training

**Many readers will be familiar with the phrase "learn while you earn" and I have referred to it before in this column.**

However, this is another timely reminder to golf clubs as well as greenkeepers that, whether it be through a Distance Learning Course or an Online course, gone are the days when you would have to leave your workplace in order to gain knowledge relating to your job.

Several of the GTC Quality Assured Centres offer courses and qualifications through a variety of delivery options.

Online learning is clearly becoming increasingly popular as technology has evolved with the internet.

Both vocational and higher education qualifications such as the HNC/D in Scotland and the Foundation Degree are being achieved by greenkeepers and Course Managers whilst they continue to work.

Distance Learning whereby learning packages are mailed out from a college to the student, and returned for marking, is still a great option.

I know for a fact that two of the GTC's Quality Assured Centres are reporting interest from all corners of the globe for their online and Distance Learning courses, which is a great testimony to their programmes and the British qualifications.

More and more of the GTC's QA Centres offer online learning for those registering on work-based qualifications including the apprenticeship.

Some still prefer the off the job/classroom style of acquiring knowledge but, as long as everybody has access to learning, the GTC believes the greenkeeping profession is in safe hands through QA Centres and Training Providers.

To support its Quality Assured Centres, the GTC is updating its Learning Materials which will be launched and available at BTME 2013.

The learning materials, based on best practices, have been reviewed through a special project which has been partly funded by The R&A and GTC and which will be available in hard copy, CD Rom and Pdf formats.

The learning materials are also circulated to all GTC QA Centres, with much of the information being compiled through specialist subject writers including Quality Assured Centre staff and Training Providers.

With so much access to good quality information on greenkeeping being freely available, and Centres and Training Providers offering everything from short courses to an Online Degree, it might be thought strange to hear that some golf clubs have actually stopped any staff training and now have no allocation of funds within their budget for training.

I find this puzzling but we have seen it all before.

When the economy crashed previously, it was those companies who invested in their staff that came out of the crisis strongest and quickest.

It isn't as if thousands of pounds are required for a greenkeeping staff development programme.

Course Managers now, as the norm, train their staff on the job often with the aim of work-based qualifications supported by their chosen Centre while the more senior staff can apply for a scholarship through BIGGA or a Bursary from The R&A to gain higher Level 4 and above qualifications.

Initiative funding schemes for employers to train staff - including

apprenticeships - all help as the GTC continues to work within the Government framework.

Many courses, offered by Centres, are, indeed, subsidised.

The GTC does not expect all education and training to be free.

**"Some golf clubs have actually stopped staff training and now have no allocation of funds within their budget"**



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Employers acknowledge they should contribute but it is a false economy not to encourage any staff development at any level.

It need not cost a fortune.

Training can be a tremendous morale booster for an individual and additional skills and knowledge will always contribute to a team's performance thereby adding productivity to the business.

I still hear the cry, "we train them up and then they leave".

Well, that is not the end of the world.

The message that needs emphasising is that everyone is a valuable member of the team.

So, look after them and, if some move on, there is comfort that they are going because they have been well trained and that their replacements are similarly well qualified.

The opportunity of recruiting a new apprentice is all part of the cycle of greenkeeping.

For all the latest information on greenkeeper training including Distance Learning and Online courses, Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers visit [www.greenkeepertraining.com](http://www.greenkeepertraining.com) or [www.the-gtc.co.uk](http://www.the-gtc.co.uk)

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