

Greenkeepers Training Committee

David Golding, GTC Education Director, with a monthly update



This month David updates us on how the UK's Further Education Colleges once again have to cope with more funding cuts from the government

The GTC is constantly monitoring the situation to ensure there is still access to specialist greenkeeping education and training courses for all levels of greenkeepers.

For many years the sports turf sector has relied on traditional land based colleges throughout Britain, to deliver a variety of education and training courses, all leading to the formal accredited qualifications.

The highly acclaimed Apprenticeship Scheme continues to provide the sector with many of today's top Course Managers and with distance learning and an on-line Degree available, you might think our employers and greenkeepers are well set for the long term.

In terms of a suitable range of formal qualifications the UK is fortunate as there are the vocational work based and higher education options delivered in a variety of modes.

The Centres have certainly tried their best to meet our industry's request for flexibility for learners to gain access to formal certificates and qualifications.

They've featured the very popular delivery of qualifications for learners in their workplace, to the traditional part-time option, plus distance and online learning.

In recent years we have also seen several private companies enter into the delivery of greenkeeper training, hence, the GTC's policy to introduce the Quality Assured Scheme of Centres and Training Providers.

Many readers will be aware of the various changes within Further Education colleges in recent years.

Mergers, often prolonged and unsettling for the staff, have affected almost all parts of Britain and very often policy changes at a

college has resulted in sports turf courses being subject to ongoing viability reviews.

Sadly for many friends working in the colleges, despite their best efforts, delivery of quality programmes has become increasingly difficult.

There are still colleges, private companies and individuals who are totally committed to delivering quality education, training and qualifications for our sector.

The GTC intends to work closely with them and to promote their courses and workshops to employers and all levels of greenkeepers.

Clearly the Government's policy of the early nineties, to encourage industries to become involved in vocational qualifications, required a total rethink by the colleges.

Some did, and still do promote, manage and adapt to deliver quality programmes, but sadly many failed miserably across many sectors.

Fortunately many of today's top Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers fully understand the range of courses and qualifications available.

As funding in Further Education colleges continues to be reduced, we as an industry have to work with these Centres to not only support them with students but to discuss the best options for them to deliver the various courses and qualifications.

Through the GTC's employer representative bodies, we hear that the majority of golf club employers will pay for quality education and training as long as it is relevant to their staff and business development needs.

There is still Government funding available to specific age groups, plus approved courses and qualifications including the apprenticeship scheme and the

GTC QUALITY ASSURED CENTRES

England
Bridgwater College
Contact Jake Waites Tel: 07912 555592

Duchy College
Contact Ron Skinner Tel: 01579 372220

Myerscough College
Contacts Stewart Brown, Centre based courses Tel: 01995 642305

Newcastle College
Contact Wayne Reid Tel: 0191 200 4704

Oaklands College
Contact Andy Wight Tel: 01727 737735

Plumpton College
Contact David Plumpton Tel: 01273 890454

Reaseheath College
Contact Gareth Phillips Tel: 01270 613236

Scotland
Elmwood College
Contact Mike Clark Tel: 01334 658 800

GOSTA Training
Contact Leslie Lowrie Tel: 0141 556 3999

Wales
Bridgend College
Contact John Sullivan Tel: 01656 302691

Deeside College
Contact Jenny Pitts Tel: 01244 831531

QUALITY ASSURED TRAINING PROVIDERS

Bernhard & Company Ltd
Contact Ben Taylor Tel: 07720 460026

Cutting Edge Training
Contact Jason King Tel: 01473 276205

Frank Newberry - Seminars for Golf Clubs
Contact Frank Newberry Tel: 01908 520202

John Nicholson Associates
Contact John Nicholson Tel: 0191 384 2556

Jon Allbutt Associates
Contact Jon Allbutt Tel: 0208 325032

Sports Turf Research Institute
Contact Carolyn Beadsmoore Tel: 01274 567201

Swan Golf Designs
Contact William Swan Tel: 01277 896229

Symbio
Contact Martin Ward Tel: 01428 685762

TORO
Contact Dave Jackman (Lely) Tel: 01480 228600

Turf Master One Ltd
Contact Laurence Pithie Tel: 01666 505233



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colleges and private companies will continue to assess whatever funding support they can.

The GTC's Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers, all dedicated through formal courses and informal workshops, are looking to serve our sector and we should look to support them.

Many will remember when there were over thirty "GTC Approved Training Providers" offering greenkeeper training courses but following a 2010 review the GTC has currently seven Quality Assured Centres in England, two in Wales and two in Scotland.

In summary, the GTC are continually working with the Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers.

We want to ensure there are not only the formal qualifications and apprenticeship available but also short course.

These are often the employers' preferred training courses for their staff not ready for a more formal full qualification e.g.

Level 2, 3, 4, HNC or Degree.

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