

Greenkeepers Training Committee

David Golding, GTC Education Director,
with a monthly update



This month David Golding, GTC's Education Director, looks at how modern technology has opened up education for all levels of greenkeepers – but have not replace the tried and tested traditional methods of learning

People of all ages now use Facebook, Twitter, Skype and other social networks. Access to computers and mobile phones have revolutionised not only the way we communicate but also learn.

The Internet is a fantastic resource to access knowledge and there is much more openness by organisations to give free information and help.

Golf is very fortunate in that there is a coming together of the many bodies who have some role to play in promoting the game, maintaining standards on and off the golf course, coaching and in the case of the GTC ensuring employers and greenkeepers have the best information available to educate and train their staff.

All of the GTC's representative bodies, Associates and Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers have excellent websites which can be viewed via www.thegtc.co.uk

One recent additional website offers employers and greenkeepers access to training courses, workshops and seminars dates and venues through an online calendar. England Golf has engaged many golfing bodies involved in organising training courses and www.golfeducation.co.uk is well worth a visit. All of the contributors including GTC and BIGGA will be posting all events as they are developed.

The GTC's Quality Assured Centres are all developing various learning platforms using the very latest technology and thankfully we are saving many trees as paper is getting replaced by online learning. The demand for hard copies of the Greenkeeper and Groundsman-ship Training Manuals is reducing as some Centres now have online versions available.

For some Centres and students the traditional methods of delivering courses towards the recognised qualifications are still the preferred option but more and more employers and students are considering the "on the job" delivery option. Either route to learn is fine by the GTC and we are very pleased as student registration numbers are still increasing annually - especially the number of apprentices.

The GTC is also pleased to report the steady increase in student registrations on higher education courses, this again is mainly where online learning is a feature of the delivery model offered by the Centre.

Education and Training from Apprentice to the Degree, all with Government Accreditation, is a model Britain should be proud of and the students who have progressed through their careers by both vocational and HE courses and qualifications are now not only managing golf courses in Britain but across the globe.

I was invited to speak at the recent FEGGA Conference in Zurich and the exchange of experience and knowledge amongst delegates was, as with any gathering in our sector, so productive and we can all keep in touch so easily using modern technology.

Many international delegates from golf developing countries are looking for support from organisations like FEGGA, BIGGA and the GTC.

I will report in more detail on our supportive role through the European Greenkeeping Education Unit (EGEU) next month but my personal involvement has highlighted just how much smaller our community is now through the development and use of modern technology.



The GTC is funded by:



BIGGA's bulletin board is another example of how members across the world help share their experiences and knowledge which is a tremendous resource.

I know for some nothing will replace the classroom with the hard copy books and handouts and the GTC fully supports that tried and tested method but nowadays the classroom can come to you.

Finally the GTC has reviewed all of its learning materials, which were originally written by specialist subject authors in 2003/4, are shortly to become available again in PDF format. A list of subjects, 18

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chapters in total, and the authors will shortly appear on the GTC's website. This review project has been part funded by The R&A.

Such has been the demand for these learning resources from across the globe, as used by the GTC's QA Centres, we have commissioned an additional chapter on the development and establishment of warm season grasses. All chapters are based on best practice and principles of golf course maintenance and management and more importantly available to everybody. Our thanks go to The R&A and all the core funding bodies for their continued support to the work of the GTC: BIGGA, England Golf, Scottish Golf Union, Golf Union of Wales, The PGA and The PGA European Tour.