THE JOURNEY

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Gordon Nimmo – SRUC Elmwood Campus
Fiona Lyttle – Greenkeeper Training Europe
David Golding – Greenkeeper Training Europe
Dean Cleaver – Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Association
Kamil Pecenka - Czech Greenkeepers Association
Kati Veski – Luua College
Kati Bachmann – Luua College
Raili Laas – Luua College
Participation of the Czech greenkeepers association in the GreenQAmpus project has been a logical step on the way to achieving sustainable education of greenkeepers in our country. There was a high demand for quality assurance, in our rapidly growing pool of educational opportunities.

We had the chance, as a partner, to cooperate already on the previous project Green-e, where the standards of qualification were set. We have applied fully those standards to our professional qualification system. With the GreenQAmpus project we now have the tools for maintaining those standards at a certain level. We discovered the roles of the assessor and verifier, and also we have more understanding of differences and similarities in quality assurance comparing to other countries participating on the project. We were able to finance our system of education, and also are more confident in our ability to control and verify the way, how schools and other institutions deliver their education. Thanks to the project we are able to assess ongoing programmes, both now and also in the future. We learned how to implement and use the mechanism of verifying, by state authorities and new discovered system based on the result of Qampus project is guaranteeing, that even with new point on the board, the Czech greenkeepers association, or new schools delivering greenkeeping education, will keep the quality of professional qualification „Greenkeeper“ for the future.

The GreenQAmpus project in Estonia, the first QAmpus project, has been established. Due to the pressure of greenkeeping profession has been seen as a real profession in Estonia.

During the first stage of the project, the first FECCA Roadshow was held in Estonia, and this event encouraged the Greenkeeper Association to organise another a further Seminar. Both were very well supported, with 50 plus people attending both events. Golf is now starting to realise the importance of good greenkeeper education in Estonia. There is the Pan European Standards, but the Estonian qualification has not yet been established. Therefore to develop the curriculum for greenkeepers, studies were needed to have an overview from the Estonian Golf Courses on their exact needs, and then incorporating these using the Pan European Standards. The cooperation between Luca Forestry School and the golf industry has been very close. There has been many meetings and discussions about how the greenkeepers education should be in Estonia.

The developed curriculum is ready and waiting for the ministry to now acknowledge it.

SRUC Elmwood has been delivering Greenkeeper education since the early 1960’s at the Elmwood Campus in Cupar Fife close to the home of golf at St Andrews.

We at SRUC were approached with a view to entering into the GreenQAmpus project with partners from Estonia, to advise and assist in developing Greenkeeper education and training.

Although SRUC is relatively well experienced in delivering greenkeeper education at all levels from the Introduction to Greenkeeping course to the Higher National Diploma courses, we felt it was a great opportunity not only for us to pass on the Scottish system of educating, certifying and verifying candidates, but also for us to benefit from the approach taken from the other partners countries.

As some initial meetings both online and face to face it was unanimously agreed that a set of European standards should be derived compatible to the best practices in use from each individual partner. We at SRUC have gained some valuable insights into the way in which verification and certification is administered in the partner countries.

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**Introduction:**
The structure is designed for countries looking to introduce a formal greenkeeping and golf course management programme of education, training and qualifications/certificates.

**Government/Ministry:**
If a country develops Standards for greenkeeping it can benefit greatly by having them approved by their Government/Ministry. Some Governments/Ministries allocate funding to assist organised industry bodies to develop Standards for their sector and this helps promote approved qualifications/certificates into schools/colleges.

Once approved, public funding is often allocated through colleges and training providers to encourage employers to register learners onto formal courses aligned to a qualification/certificate.

**Greenkeeper Training – Europe (GT-E):**
The GT-E, formerly the European Greenkeeping Education Unit (EGEU), was established in 2005 with financial support from the R&A to develop and promote a set of Pan-European Standards for greenkeeping. 3 Levels of Standards were developed by a working group and are now in use throughout many countries assisted by an EU project, Green-e (2010-13).

**Golf Federations/Unions/Employers/Golf Course Owners Associations:**
In many countries, the Golf Federation or Golf Union, represent the private golf club owners who can play a vital role to help gain Government/Ministry approval. Golf Course Owners Associations also represent employers and can also help promote greenkeeper training and allocate funding to those looking to develop quality education and training in their country e.g. Greenkeeping Associations.

**Awarding Organisation (AO):**
An AO can be very useful when new Standards have been developed by the industry and are looking for Government/Ministry accreditation. An AO is often responsible to quality assure a network of approved colleges/schools who offer education and training courses designed to meet the accredited Standards.

**External Verifier (EV):**
The EV is appointed and trained by the AO to ensure they are delivering programmes of learning and assessments to the agreed standards. Often the AO contacts a recognised industry organisation to nominate a suitable person who meets a criteria including: i) is occupationally competent ii) Understands the standards iii) is trained or willing to be trained by the AO to become an EV.

**Centre-College-School-Training Provider:**
Whilst any centre, college, training provider, school or individual can deliver courses of education and training it is recommended that an industry attempts to establish a number of specialist colleges/schools who have the physical and human resources to deliver a programme to meet the required standards.

Note: It would be the EV’s job to visit and monitor approved colleges/schools.

**Internal Verifiers (IV’s):**
All approved colleges/schools will be required to have a person(s) responsible to maintain the quality assurance standards. The IV’s role will be to check staff CV’s, the delivery of the education, training and assessments of learners/students. The IV will be the person(s) who the EV contacts regarding arranging visits to their centre on behalf of the Awarding Organisation. An IV will be assessor qualified.

**Assessors:**
An assessor will be a person within the Centres/schools quality assurance team He/she must be occupational competent as a greenkeeper and understands each level of the standard they will be assessing at.

**Trainer/Mentor:**
A trainer/mentor would typically be the learners/students Golf Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper or an occupational competent member of staff based at the centre/school. The trainer/mentor will need to understand the standards at the level they are training/mentoring at.

**Student/Learner:**
A student or learner is a person who is looking to gain a recognised qualification/certificate and will be registered at an approved college/school.

Prepared by David F. Golding, GT-E Standards Director February 2016

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**A MODEL QUALITY ASSURANCE STRUCTURE FOR GREENKEEPING**

**Government/Ministry of the Country**

- **Greenkeeper Training – Europe**
  - Pan European Standards

**Awarding Organisation (AO)**

- (issues certificates – align qualifications to the PanEuropean Standards, Quality Assurance)

**External Verifier**

- (works for the Awarding Organisation to ensure Pan European Standards/delivery etc. are met.
  - May work full-time or part-time with the AO)

**College/School/Training Provider**

- (Curricula aligned to Pan European Standards/delivery of qualifications in full)

**Internal Verifier**

- (works for the College/School/Training Provider. Checks Standards/paperwork/delivery/assessment)

**Assessor**

- (works for the College/School/Training Provider. Trains/assesesses to the Standards)

**Trainer/Mentor**

- Head Greenkeeper/Deputy/Trainer Trains/assesesses to the Standards

**Student**