

APPRENTICESHIP STANDARD FOR A GOLF GREENKEEPER

Occupation: Golf Greenkeeper

Duration of Apprenticeship: An apprentice commencing on a golf course would typically take 24-36 months to complete their education and training. However, this may be reduced if an apprentice has already gained knowledge and skills working on a golf course or a sports turf facility.

Entry Requirements: Individual employers will be advised that typically potential apprentices should already have a minimum of 5 GCSE's at Grades A-D (including Maths and English and Science) or other equivalent vocational qualifications. Employers, who recruit apprentices without the above levels of qualifications, will have to ensure they achieve level 1 in English and maths as part of their Apprenticeship.

Introduction:

The career as a Golf Greenkeeper can take you wherever the game of golf is played. Working outdoors in a healthy environment and as new countries are embracing the sport and more golf courses are being built, there is no better time to consider joining this great profession.

The **skills** required to become a competent greenkeeper will be acquired whilst working on the golf course.

By the end of the programme, the apprentice will know when, how and why the range of maintenance operations are carried out.

A golf greenkeeper is responsible for the maintenance, care and overall appearance of a golf course in line with employer's requirements. It is their job to maintain a good quality playing surface and ensure the course offers a consistent challenge and an enjoyable experience for golfers.

There are four key turfgrass areas on a golf course – greens, tees, fairways and areas of rough, each of which requires a different type of maintenance. Using a range of equipment and machinery safely and competently will play a major part within an apprentices training programme. Golf Greenkeepers will also be involved in hazard, environmental and ecological operations which may include bunker maintenance, planting turf, trees, shrubs and developing wildlife habitats.

Maintenance Skills:

A Golf Greenkeeper's work must include the following skills:

- Maintain good standards of health and safety for self and others
- Preparing the golf course for play which will include removing early morning dew and debris from the greens, raking bunkers, moving tee markers, cutting new holes on greens
- Preparing and using equipment and machinery to maintain and renovate all turf surfaces within the golf course, including the use of tractors, ride-on machines, and specialist equipment
- Apply turf treatments to help produce quality playing surfaces, including fertilisers and top dressing
- Using a variety of integrated methods to control weeds, fungal diseases, pests and turf disorders
- Maintain and renovate bunkers and other hazards such as water features
- Maintain drainage and irrigation systems
- Preparing ground to establish turf and plants when maintaining, renovating and constructing golf course features

Knowledge and Understanding:

A golf greenkeeper must understand the following technical knowledge:

- Identify their role in monitoring and maintaining health and safety within the workplace
- Identification of a number of grasses, weeds, pests, diseases, turf disorders, plants and trees
- The primary aspects of soil and plant biology to include the process of germination – photosynthesis, respiration and transpiration
- The principles of mowing and machine maintenance and their operation

- The need and implications of rolling, verti-cutting, scarification and aeration
- The strategies for controlling weeds, pests, diseases and turf disorders
- How fertilisers, top dressing and chemicals affect playing surfaces
- How course maintenance practices affect the environment
- Basic information technology
- Be aware of the importance of the Rules of Golf and golf course etiquette
- Recognise the importance of environmental and ecological best practice
- The operation of irrigation, drainage systems and their maintenance

The Behaviours of a Golf Greenkeeper:

Golf club employers are very customer focused and require their apprentices to have a set of personal skills and behaviours that will ensure success in their current and future roles as an individual and in meeting the company's aims and objectives.

The behaviours required by golf club employees will be:

- Have a strong work ethic including pride in work, attention to detail, integrity and time management
- Have a flexible positive attitude to work
- Ability to work as a lone worker and as a member of a team
- A willingness to learn and contribute to their own continuing professional development
- Having a safety mindset for self, colleagues and golfers
- A clear and effective communicator who can use a variety of communication methods to give/receive information accurately and in a timely and positive manner
- Problem solving and effective decision making

Training and Development Summary:

The apprentice will be only deemed fully competent when he/she has completed all of the maintenance skills, knowledge and understanding and demonstrates the behaviours within Standard, allowing them to work safely and effectively.

The apprentice will undertake on-going assessment of competency throughout the programme, within the workplace. This is complimented by training and education in the knowledge and understanding and will be delivered through a variety of learning methods.

There will be a final independent high level assessment at the end of the programme to ensure the apprentice has demonstrated they have acquired the full knowledge, range of skills and behaviours to the required standards. This will involve:

- A professional discussion
- A knowledge assessment
- A final skills assessment on a range of skills from the standards will be carried out at the apprentice's place of work.

Professional Recognition and Career Progression:

Apprentices will be registered with the Professional Body for Greenkeepers – The British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA) at the start of the apprenticeship as BIGGA membership will have additional education benefits and allow for career development. BIGGA maintains a Professional Register for golf greenkeepers and upon completion of the Standard they will become a BIGGA Accredited Greenkeeper.

The successful apprentice will have the opportunity to progress on to a higher level apprenticeship standard.

Job opportunities will also be enhanced for those apprentices who have completed the programme with promotion to more senior positions within a golf club facility or the option to progress by working in other sports facilities such as a Grounds Maintenance Operator/Technician.

Nominal Level: 2/3

