

Level 2 certificate in Golf greenkeeping

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Here is a quick overview of the new End Point Assessment (EPA) process.

All apprenticeships will now have an independently assessed EPA.

The Level 2 Greenkeeping apprenticeship is an 18 - 24 month duration apprenticeship. Candidates can complete in less time but **may not** complete in less than 366 days.

The apprenticeship will most likely follow the outline below.

- Apprentices must sign an Apprenticeship Agreement with their employer before the apprenticeship begins.
- The apprentice will be employed at a golf course and an application to a training provider is made.
- Initial advice and guidance, skills scan and development of a training programme with an assessment of maths and English takes place.
- The employer negotiates the cost of training based on the results of the skills scan and training programme.

Note: all apprentices must be given 20% of their working hours to train e.g. if they are working a 40-hour week then eight hours per week must be directed to training. This can include study and practical training, such as instruction in machinery use. If an employer is unwilling or unable to provide this they should not apply for

an apprenticeship. For more information visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-off-the-job-training

- Enrolment onto the apprenticeship takes place.
- A period of study to gain the knowledge required, backed up with training in the workplace on the skills required.
- Regular reviews of progress will be held between the apprentice, employer and provider.
- Around three to four months before the planned end date, the employer and provider will meet to decide if the apprentice is ready for the "Gateway". This means the apprentice is considered ready to take the End Point Assessment (EPA).
- Provider books EPA and EPA period begins.

The EPA consists of the following:

The learner will be required to collect a portfolio of evidence throughout their training. This supports their development in the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to carry out the role of a golf greenkeeper.

1. Trainee statement – (20% of the final mark) to be completed at least 2 weeks prior to the EPA.

The learner will be required to use the evidence from their portfolio to write up a short reflective summary of the training, focussing on their personal development and behaviours. It will concentrate on the apprentice's impact on his/her greenkeeper team and the business.

This statement must be word processed (hand written statements are not acceptable).

It will cover the required behaviours of an apprentice Greenkeeper, such as:

- a. A strong work ethic including pride in work, attention to detail, integrity and time management.
- b. A flexible positive attitude to work.
- c. Ability to work as a lone worker and as a member of a team.
- d. A willingness to learn and contribute to their own continuing professional development (CPD).
- e. A safety mind-set for self, colleagues and golfers.
- f. A clear and effective communicator who can use a variety of methods to give and receive information accurately and in a timely and positive manner.
- g. Problem solving and effective decision making.

2. Written exam – (30% of the final mark)

A 1.5 hour exam with a combination of short answer and multi-choice question paper.

The further two sections will take place at the candidate's place of work and between 24 to 48 hours prior to the visit, the independent assessor will make contact with the apprentice's

workplace to arrange the visit with employer. Due to the seasonality of works, it has been recommended that the practical task assessment day is not carried out between the months of December and February.

3. Practical end assessments (50% of the final mark)

Course walk

A 1.5 hours course walk of one hole at the apprentice's place of work. The course walk will consist of a candidate-guided tour and discussion of one hole, selected by the independent assessor and the candidate on the day, as appropriate. This may begin at the tee and proceed through to the green.

The discussion must include:

- Basic knowledge of soil type on the course and its potential effects on maintenance (for example drainage and irrigation where applicable).
- The mowing regime (mowing types, heights and frequencies, equipment, its effects on play and presentation).
- Typical maintenance operations carried out and the reasons for doing them (frequency, intensity and types: switching/brushing, aeration, top dressing, scarifying/verti-cutting, over seeding, feeding/turf conditioners, repairing divots, irrigation, drainage, repairs and rolling).

During the walk the independent assessor will assess the candidate's communication skills and ask them to identify the following:

- A range of plants present (grasses, trees, shrubs, wild flowers, weeds). Genus and species will be required for higher grades. It is acceptable to test this criteria anywhere on the golf course if insufficient evidence is available on the selected hole.
- Potential threats to the health of the turf surface and to name actions that can be taken to deal with them (pests/diseases/ disorders or factors that may encourage these such as shade).

Practical tasks

The independent assessor must select **five tasks** for the candidate to undertake. This decision should be based on the time of year and golf course maintenance activities scheduled, as advised through the discussion with the employer. The selection of tasks must also meet the following criteria.

See the diagram to the right.

The assessment will also include verbal questioning.

Note: all tasks are graded fail, pass, merit or distinction and an overall grade is given at the end.

Task Groups

Group A: Both tasks must be selected

- Course preparation
- Grass identification

Group B: Select one task

- Prepare a tractor with attachments for operation
- Prepare ground for establishing plants
- Dealing with threats to the health of turf
- Plant identification

Group C: Select one task

- Turf scarification, verti-cutting & grooming
- Applying top dressing
- Applying fertiliser/ turf conditioner
- Irrigating playing surfaces on the golf course
- Maintain drainage systems
- Mowing a turf area on a golf course
- Establish plants on a golf course
- Renovation and repair of turf
- Aerating turf surfaces on the golf course
- Rolling turf

Group D: Select one task

- Switching and brushing
- Moving tee markers
- Maintaining bunkers
- Changing the hole on a golf green

Who pays for the cost of the EPA?

The cost of the EPA is capped at 20% of the Apprentice Greenkeeper funding band which is £6,000, so the EPA will be £1,200. The £1,200 can be used from the £6,000 funding to pay for the EPA. Any cost over this price would have to be paid for by the employer. At this point in time it is anticipated that the EPA will fall within the 20% cap.