

# Green QAmpus

## THE JOURNEY

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## Following on from the success of the EU Green-e project, a second EU project Green Qampus is now nearing completion

The purpose of the GreenQampus project is to contribute to an agenda by design, test and implementation of a Quality Assurance framework monitored by Greenkeeper Training Europe, formerly the European Golf Education Unit (EGEU). This will ensure standardisation of golf education, enhance the employability of individuals and provide global recognition of qualifications. This project addresses general objectives of Vocational Education and Training, focusing on operational objectives to improve quality, transparency and recognition of qualifications and increase volume of co-operation between organisations providing learning. The Green Qampus project includes 7 partners from 4 European countries, these being:

- Benesov College, Czech Republic
  - Czech Greenkeepers Association
  - Kainuu College, Finland
  - Luua Vocational Training Centre, Estonia
  - SRUC Elmwood Campus, Scotland
  - Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Association
  - Greenkeeper Training – Europe
- The results of this project will be based on research methodology, reporting, collection of data, development and testing, training, analyzing and validation of results and dissemination. Through the project, a robust Quality Assurance framework, will be adapted to suit the Ministry requirements of each country. This will be offered to new and existing staff within the Golf industry in order to enhance the work in the sector and help them to gain recognised qualifications within the European community. Following on from the previous project, the work will have a major impact on the Vocational Education Training programs in each partner country. The implementation of a homogeneous Quality Assurance framework, monitored and supported by GT-E/ FEGGA shall ensure future knowledge, skills and qualifications are accepted across Europe.



### Participation of the Czech greenkeepers association in the GreenQampus project was 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 assessors and verifiers, 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 finalise 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, set by the state authorities. This newly discovered system based on the result of Qampus project is guaranteeing, that even with new people on the board of Czech greenkeepers association, or new schools delivering greenkeeping education, we keep the quality of professional qualification „Greenkeeper“ for the future.



### Thanks to the partnership and involvement in the GreenQampus project (and in the preceding Green-e project Benesov College) has been establishing an effectively working structure of Greenkeeping Vocational Education during this time.

The college has also gained the opportunity of becoming one of the first governmentally approved state providers of Greenkeeping Vocational education on secondary level within the Czech Republic area.

The School has also incorporated the use of the Pan European Standards for Greenkeeping education into the national curriculum standards of secondary vocational education. Thanks to this unique opportunity of cooperation within the GreenQampus Partner group, the scale of the advisory board has been consolidated within the sustainable scheme of Greenkeeping Vocational Education, including the required amount of theory and practice necessary for the professional Greenkeeping qualification.

Through the GreenQampus project the college got a chance to build and implement the mechanism to assure the quality of Greenkeeping education - The Quality Assurance Framework, monitored and supported by GTE and FEGGA, ensuring that future knowledge, skills and relevant qualifications are recognised and accepted on a European level.

### During the GreenQampus project in Estonia, the first Estonian Greenkeeper Association has been established. Due to the project the greenkeeping profession has been seen as a real profession in Estonia.

During the term of the project, the first FEGGA Roadshow was held in Estonia, and this event encouraged the Greenkeepers Association to organize another a further Seminar day. 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 Luua 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 Green Qampus project with partners from across Europe to assist and advise in delivery of 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, certificating and verifying candidates, but also for us to benefit from the approach taken from the other partners countries.

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

### GREENKEEPERS TRAINING – EUROPE (GT-E) Testing the Quality Assurance system

In the early stages of the Green Qampus project, the GT-E, at a meeting in St Andrews Scotland, circulated a draft structure of how quality assurance could be implemented for partners to comment on.

The structure was designed to ensure that any country looking to use the 3 levels of Pan-European Standards, developed as part of the Green-e project, would have a model to consider using in their own country.

The model QA structure has been adopted, in part, by all partner countries and adapted according to each countries specific educational and ministerial requirements.

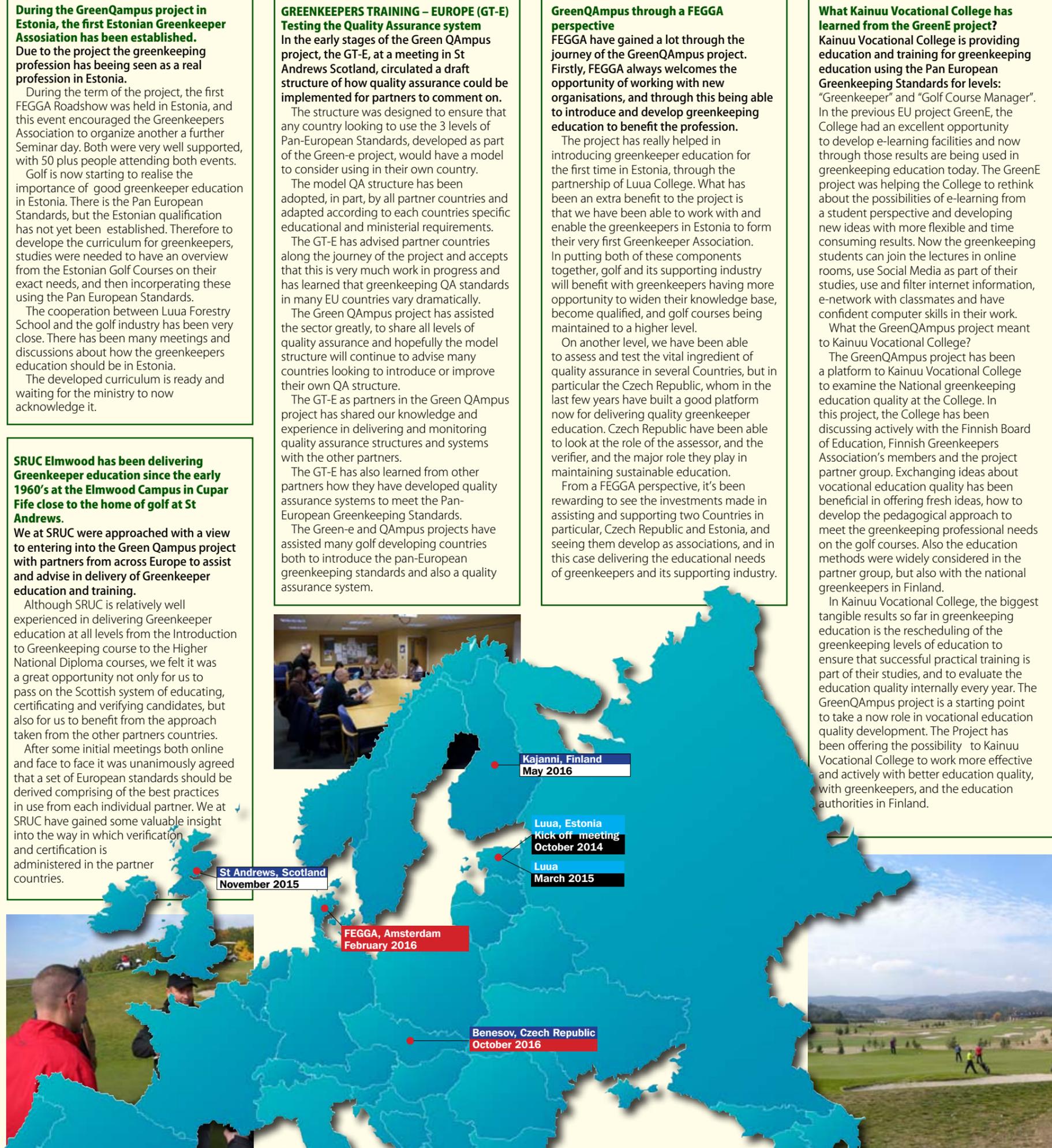
The GT-E has advised partner countries along the journey of the project and accepts that this is very much work in progress and has learned that greenkeeping QA standards in many EU countries vary dramatically.

The Green Qampus project has assisted the sector greatly, to share all levels of quality assurance and hopefully the model structure will continue to advise many countries looking to introduce or improve their own QA structure.

The GT-E as partners in the Green Qampus project has shared our knowledge and experience in delivering and monitoring quality assurance structures and systems with the other partners.

The GT-E has also learned from other partners how they have developed quality assurance systems to meet the Pan-European Greenkeeping Standards.

The Green-e and Qampus projects have assisted many golf developing countries both to introduce the pan-European greenkeeping standards and also a quality assurance system.



### GreenQampus through a FEGGA perspective

FEGGA have gained a lot through the journey of the GreenQampus project. Firstly, FEGGA always welcomes the opportunity of working with new organisations, and through this being able to introduce and develop greenkeeping education to benefit the profession.

The project has really helped in introducing greenkeeper education for the first time in Estonia, through the partnership of Luua College. What has been an extra benefit to the project is that we have been able to work with and enable the greenkeepers in Estonia to form their very first Greenkeeper Association. In putting both of these components together, golf and its supporting industry will benefit with greenkeepers having more opportunity to widen their knowledge base, become qualified, and golf courses being maintained to a higher level.

On another level, we have been able to assess and test the vital ingredient of quality assurance in several Countries, but in particular the Czech Republic, whom in the last few years have built a good platform now for delivering quality greenkeeper education. Czech Republic have been able to look at the role of the assessor, and the verifier, and the major role they play in maintaining sustainable education.

From a FEGGA perspective, it's been rewarding to see the investments made in assisting and supporting two Countries in particular, Czech Republic and Estonia, and seeing them develop as associations, and in this case delivering the educational needs of greenkeepers and its supporting industry.

### What Kainuu Vocational College has learned from the GreenE project?

Kainuu Vocational College is providing education and training for greenkeeping education using the Pan European Greenkeeping Standards for levels: "Greenkeeper" and "Golf Course Manager". In the previous EU project GreenE, the College had an excellent opportunity to develop e-learning facilities and now through those results are being used in greenkeeping education today. The GreenE project was helping the College to rethink about the possibilities of e-learning from a student perspective and developing new ideas with more flexible and time consuming results. Now the greenkeeping students can join the lectures in online rooms, use Social Media as part of their studies, use and filter internet information, e-network with classmates and have confident computer skills in their work.

What the GreenQampus project meant to Kainuu Vocational College?

The GreenQampus project has been a platform to Kainuu Vocational College to examine the National greenkeeping education quality at the College. In this project, the College has been discussing actively with the Finnish Board of Education, Finnish Greenkeepers Association's members and the project partner group. Exchanging ideas about vocational education quality has been beneficial in offering fresh ideas, how to develop the pedagogical approach to meet the greenkeeping professional needs on the golf courses. Also the education methods were widely considered in the partner group, but also with the national greenkeepers in Finland.

In Kainuu Vocational College, the biggest tangible results so far in greenkeeping education is the rescheduling of the greenkeeping levels of education to ensure that successful practical training is part of their studies, and to evaluate the education quality internally every year. The GreenQampus project is a starting point to take a new role in vocational education quality development. The Project has been offering the possibility to Kainuu Vocational College to work more effectively and actively with better education quality, with greenkeepers, and the education authorities in Finland.



# A MODEL QUALITY ASSURANCE STRUCTURE FOR GREENKEEPING

## 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 employers and 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 carry out visits to approved colleges/schools 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 occupationally 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.

NOTE: The Internal Verifier cannot IV learners/students if they have assessed them during their period of education and training.

## 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

