

## THE NSA - ON 4 PAGES

### WHAT IS THE NSA?

The NSA will **revolutionise** the sport and active leisure industry by providing one single, coherent approach to all skills training in our sector.

Opening in 2008, it will be the **best place** you can go to find out about and access the qualifications and training you need to most effectively do your job (paid or unpaid) in the industry.

### WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE?

The NSA will have a physical presence - comprising **nine 'hubs'** (one for every region in England) - one of which (London) will also act as the NSA's **national base**.

Most people, however, are likely to access the Academy virtually - via an innovative **website** - currently being designed to act as the NSA's overall entry point/'front door'.

### WHERE WILL THE 9 REGIONAL HUBS BE LOCATED?

Three have already been chosen, based on employer demand and investment pledged.

The first will open in **London**, initially at Crystal Palace in 2008, before moving into the London 2012 Olympic Stadium immediately following the conclusion of the Games. The second and third centres will be in **Sheffield** (at Sheffield United FC) and in **Penrith** (at COMET - the Centre for Outdoor Management, Education and Training) respectively, also as part of phase 1 (by September 2008).

Three more centres (location still TBC) will be added in phase 2 (by September 2009); and a final three centres (TBC) in phase 3 (by September 2010).

### WHAT ABOUT THE HOME COUNTRIES?

Public funding and support for the NSA is only available in **England** at present. We do not want this to constrain our thinking, however, and the hope is to extend the network by developing similar styled 'hub' centres in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland over time - investment permitting.

### IS THE NSA 'ANOTHER GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE' THEN?

Definitely not. While the NSA concept has been launched by government, the thinking behind it is very much the product of several years' lobbying of Ministers by business leaders and major employers. Accordingly, the government's preferred role has been focused on kick starting the NSA initiative across 12 industries - of which 'sport and active leisure' is one.

Our NSA is to be very much **employer-led** and **employer-directed** - in short, designed by the industry for the industry.

Of the estimated set up costs of £12.7m, for example, sport and active leisure employers will pay for £9.2m (or **£3 out of every £4**), in comparison to the government's investment of £3.5m. In addition, 'public purse' revenue subsidy will only be called upon during the first years of the Academy operation, with our NSA estimated to become fully self-sustaining from year 3 onwards.

Furthermore, employers are leading the NSA as Board Members; driving the way the virtual platform website and each of the nine regional hubs becomes operated; and will be the eventual purchasers of training.

### WHICH EMPLOYERS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED SO FAR?

An NSA Development Board has been established, made up of **17 industry leaders**, representing the main investors/supporters of our Academy to date. Its members are:

Amateur Swimming Association  
Birmingham City Council  
Bromley Mytime  
Dog and Duck Leisure Park  
England and Wales Cricket Board  
Fitness First

Greenwich Leisure Limited  
KAM Limited  
Montgomery Leisure Services  
PGL  
Rugby Football Union  
Sheffield United Football Club  
SkillsActive  
Sports Coach UK  
Sport England  
Warrington Borough Council  
Westminster City Council

A further **200 employers** covering a workforce of c50,000 have also been directly engaged with the development of the NSA so far.

### SO WHAT WILL THE NSA ACTUALLY DO?

In short, train **100,000** new entrants, existing staff, and future leaders into the sport and active leisure industry **every year**.

### TRAINING IN WHAT?

The main vision for the NSA will be to enable the **professionalisation** of the sport and active leisure workforce and so support a sector in transition. As a result, training will be highly personalised, but also **prioritised** - to address our industry's three most pressing skills issues:

1. At level 1 - more **school leavers** entering the workforce with suitable employability skills (particularly self-confidence, taking responsibility, and people skills);
2. At levels 2/3 - more workers gaining **technical qualifications** (29% shortfall currently) and **customer service** skills (estimated lacking in 79% of front line staff);
3. At level 4 - more staff progressing onto **management and leadership** roles (relevant skills lacking in 69% of existing managers, and high drop out rate).

### WHAT WILL THE NSA'S PRODUCTS AND SERVICES BE?

The NSA's main products will be **Train to Gain**, **Learner Accounts** and the newly developed '**Active Passport**' - the latter evidencing the high transferability of skillsets that can be applied to other industries from within our sector - ie people skills, leadership, teamwork, motivation etc.

Main **qualifications** targeted for 'integration' and development under the NSA umbrella will include:

1. Apprenticeships, including YAs and AASE (Advanced Apprenticeships in Sporting Excellence).
2. The newly developing Sport and Leisure Diploma.
3. Technical qualifications in Fitness leading to a Licence to Practice/REPs (Register of Exercise Professionals).
  4. UK Coaching Certificate.
  5. Sport and Leisure related Foundation Degrees.
  6. Business and Management courses at Levels 3/4.

The full SkillsActive 'footprint' of sub-sectors will be rolled out under the NSA as follows:

- Phase 1 (by 2008) - Sport, Fitness, the Outdoors.  
Phase 2 (by 2009) - Playwork.  
Phase 3 (by 2010) - Caravanning.

Finally, it remains an aspiration to open the Academy with **masterclasses** from high profile industry leaders such as Lord Sebastian Coe.

### HOW WILL IT WORK NATIONALLY? IN MY REGION?

The **NSA Board** will manage the setting up, governance and operation of the complete Academy structure nationally, including:

- ✓ Endorsing all the products and services offered.
- ✓ Ensuring consistency of delivery throughout the network.
- ✓ Quality assuring any national training providers selected.

Each regional hub will be governed locally by its own **NSA Regional Management Group**. These will undertake a similar function to the NSA Board at the local level, particularly:

- ✓ Ensuring regional skills needs are met.
- ✓ Quality assuring all regional/local training providers selected as designated NSA '**Centres of Excellence**'\*.

*\* It is envisaged regional/local training providers chosen as NSA 'Centres of Excellence' are likely to be selected against pre-determined criteria from amongst the country's best sport and active leisure related FE Colleges, CoVEs (Centres of Vocational Excellence), Universities, Specialist Sports Colleges, scUK Regional Coaching Centres, NGB Course Providers, Private Training Companies, and Regional Playwork Centres.*

#### WHAT'S THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?

The NSA learning environment will be **leading edge** and **innovative**, but entirely dependant on the training provided and more importantly, the individual preference of the learner.

Much learning could take place **online** via the new virtual platform website, which will have three main components - an information centre, a resource centre, and a communication centre - and through the latter, will have the capacity to store and update an individual's learner account and personal training data.

Learners will also be able to access a more traditional **trainer-student** environment at their nearest regional hub and/or associated centre of excellence. Finally, there will be a strong emphasis on **work based**, and bite size, training, taken to and tailor made to an employer or individual's needs.

#### HOW WILL THE NSA BE DIFFERENT TO WHAT'S AVAILABLE NOW?

There will be **nine main differences** immediately apparent for learners:

1. **Ease of access** to learning that is nationally directed, locally delivered.
2. Quality of learning that is **badged** and guaranteed.
3. Clear routes to **employment**, underpinned by recognised qualifications.
4. High quality **careers advice** provided pre-entry.
5. Increased access to **level 3** qualifications.
6. Increased chances to be promoted to **supervisor/manager** level.
7. All learners equipped with an '**Active Passport**' to support their qualifications and CPD.
8. Increased **opportunities** for volunteering through better skills acquisition.
9. A specific offer to **volunteers** that is based on equal access to qualifications; tailor made courses; increased flexibility of access; skill needs, not unpaid stereotypes; and embracing:
  - ✓ technical skills - for coaches, referees, stewards.
  - ✓ business skills - for club management, accounts, governance skills for staff managing volunteers.
  - ✓ bite size programmes - in first aid, key skills, child protection.
  - ✓ an emphasis on portability of skills and accreditation of in-house volunteer programmes.

#### SO WHY IS THE NSA NEEDED/WHAT'S THE OVERALL VISION?

Our industry is being driven by **twin ambitions** set with government (*Game Plan, 2002*) - to stage a successful London Olympic Games in **2012**; and to see 50% of our nation active and healthy by **2020** (currently 21%).

The above said, our sector today is very much one in **transition**, and under pressure. While employment has grown at 3.9% pa (four times that of the whole of UK industry put together), handling such growth remains constrained by a static, low skills base. 20% of our **36,500 organisations** report skills gaps, and only 40% of all training is government subsidised.

To deliver successfully on our targets, we will require **100,000** new jobs by 2014; plus **85,000** new employees each year (to replace leavers). This is just the paid staff. Our sector is dominated by volunteers (1 in 5 of all volunteers across UK industry), yet our 2.7m total still represents a **28% shortfall** overall. We also have a lead responsibility to train 15,000 of the 86,000 volunteers required for the two week duration of London 2012 itself (source: LOCOG).

A new approach is needed to tackle these challenges and improve current fragmentation - the NSA is it.

#### WHAT IS SKILLSACTIVE'S ROLE?

Sector Skills Councils are being asked to coordinate the employer effort and oversee the development and monitoring of each NSA. The proposal is our NSA be established as **subsidiary company of SkillsActive** (itself a charity). SkillsActive's role (in line with the recent Leitch Review of UK Skills) will be:

- ✓ To oversee NSA policy.
- ✓ To develop the products and services that the NSA will deliver.
- ✓ To continue to rationalise and approve the estimated 200 qualifications on offer within our sector.
- ✓ To ensure the Academy's funding via government/LSC (Learning and Skills Council) investment; commercial sponsorship; and all other gifts/donations.
- ✓ To continue to provide research and labour market intelligence on skills needs and economic growth.

### SO WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME - AS A LEARNER, AS AN EMPLOYER, AS A TRAINING PROVIDER?

#### As a Learner

- ✓ **Clarity** to a confused provision picture, by offering a single point of access.
- ✓ Clear **career pathways** from apprenticeships, diplomas to foundation, graduate and postgraduate degrees.
  - ✓ Increased availability of supported and structured **work placement**.
    - ✓ Training at lower, or even no **cost**.
    - ✓ '**Best in the sector**' guarantees.

#### As an Employer

- ✓ Consistent, **quality** provision in every region through a network of approved providers.
  - ✓ **Cost efficiencies** through the collective buying power of employers.
- ✓ Impact on **business performance** as vocational learning will provide learners with applicable skills.
  - ✓ **Local accessibility** and flexibility via the use of e-learning and work based provision.
- ✓ **Funding** redirected to work based learning, working in collaboration with the regional LSCs to allocate funding towards provision and priorities highlighted by the Academy.
- ✓ The opportunity for in-house training to be **accredited**, enabling transferability of qualifications.
  - ✓ Greater **retention** of better motivated staff.
  - ✓ **Influence** over the training provided.

#### As a Training Provider

- ✓ Centres of excellence built on quality training providers, thus **raising standards** and ensuring applicability.
  - ✓ Greater and easier **access** to employers.
  - ✓ Raised standards, profile, and enhanced **quality**.
- ✓ Increased investment, **funding** opportunities and cost efficiencies due to greater learner numbers.

### FINALLY, WHAT ARE THE FINANCES - AND HOW MUCH WILL IT COST ME?

The capital cost of the Academy is estimated at **£12.7m**. Our sector is dominated by micro organisations (73% of employers) with limited cash reserves. A **FTSE 100** title sponsor from outside of the sector is also being sought, therefore, to help finance the NSA. The proposed **virtual platform website** is seen as a key tool in this ability to attract commercial backing. The proposed split of capital contributions is as follows:

- Employers (61%)
- Title Sponsor (8%)
- Government/Learning and Skills Council (27%)
- Shareholders (4%)

The revenue deficit in years 1 and 2 is estimated at **£1.09m**. The initial aspiration (pre business plan) is to develop the Academy so that it is self-financing in revenue terms **within three years**. Once fully up and running, an estimated **100,000 learners** will pass through the NSA per year.

Clearly, it is difficult to put a cost on individual training at the moment. That said, the aspiration is to **maximise** government and commercial subsidy for all NSA learning provided. In this regard, the current plan is to raise revenue for the Academy through 5 main sources:

- ✓ A contribution from **learner fees** - estimated at around 5% based on current models for Train to Gain.
  - ✓ An annual **membership fee** for chosen training providers.
- ✓ **Employer subscriptions** in return for reduced cost online support services, training provider support systems, learning materials, short course programmes and business development tools.
  - ✓ **Government/LSC** subsidy.
  - ✓ **Commercial** sponsorship and group buying power.

### HOW DO I GET MORE INVOLVED?

For more information, contact the NSA Project Executive, SkillsActive on 020 7632 2000 or [NSAsupport@skillsactive.com](mailto:NSAsupport@skillsactive.com)