

News Release: Date: 17 March 2005.



*****NEWS RELEASE*****

YOUNG PEOPLE ENCOURAGED TO STAY IN TRAINING

SkillsActive's role in encouraging young people to remain in education and training was commended to the House of Lords yesterday.

Lord Pendry PC, Chair of the All Party Sport Group and President of the Football Foundation, highlighted the importance of young people being motivated to stay on in education and training past the age of 16.

His comments came in a debate on the Government's response to the Tomlinson Review.

Referring to SkillsActive's work to develop a Sector Skills Agreement for the Active Learning and Leisure Sector, Lord Pendry said:

"This will mean that for the first time vocational education and training will be demand-led and that each student can look forward to better opportunities for employment when they enter the job market. I can't think of a better incentive for young people to participate in education and training than that."

Lord Pendry also commended the efforts of the fitness industry to embrace the Apprenticeship framework and create a genuine offer for young people.

He said: "Professionalisation of the fitness industry through the Register of Exercise Professionals, a SkillsActive company, means young people are informed about what qualifications are valued, where they can get them and what qualities employers are looking for.

"This is exactly the kind of employer-led direction that many young people who may be considering leaving full time education and training need."

Finally, Lord Pendry turned to the power of sport and recreation to engage young people, citing the example of the DfES scheme "Playing for Success". He said: "Lessons must be learned from projects such as Playing for Success and, where applicable, applied to the 16-19 stage so that we can truly release the potential of our young people, as Tomlinson set out to do."

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. SkillsActive is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for Sport and Recreation, Health and Fitness, Playwork, The Outdoors and the Caravan industries.
2. SkillsActive's mission statement is: "To ensure best quality, best business and best value within the Sector to achieve its economic and social potential."
3. SSCs are employer-led organisations that aim to tackle the skills and productivity needs of their sector throughout the UK. SSCs provide employers with the opportunity to provide leadership to meet their sector's skills and business needs. In return they receive substantial public investment and greater dialogue with government departments across the UK.
4. For more information about SkillsActive, please visit our website @ www.skillsactive.com
5. SkillsActive is currently developing a Sector Skills Agreement for the Active Leisure and Learning Sector which will define the Sector's skills needs and ultimately form an agreement between employers, Government and funding partners to shape the workforce for the next ten years.