

News Release: Date: Friday, 29 October 2004: For immediate use.



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

NEW FOUNDATION DEGREE FOR PLAYWORK

The Playwork Foundation Degree initiative will lead to the development of a new, free standing Level 4 qualification that is work-based, learner centred, delivery flexible and practice focused.

This is an exciting time in the history of Playwork. Playwork theory is gaining increasing recognition in academic circles, and more Playworkers are working towards qualifications. The development of a new type of qualification for Playwork – a foundation degree – comes at a time when it is most needed.

Sector Skills Councils are committed to establishing collaboration between employers and education providers to develop and promote foundation degrees. SkillsActive is keen to ensure that the nature and quality of professional practice in the Active Leisure and Learning Sector is enhanced through the delivery of up-to-date higher level knowledge and skills.

The Foundation Degree is a free-standing qualification with mapped articulation to Honours Degrees for learners seeking progression, directly or via “bridging” routes. It can offer a work based learning route into higher education, ideal for Playworkers who might not otherwise have considered degree study. Playworkers who gain the new qualification can expect an enhanced career structure and improved professional status.

The first stage of the development will involve research and analysis of the needs of the Playwork Sector and Employers and Playworkers will have the opportunity to contribute to the development through a series of consultations. A number of Sector endorsed pilots will be running from Autumn 2005.

This new Foundation Degree for Playwork promises to expand and improve play opportunities for children and young people across the country. This will come through a contribution to the professional learning and status of Playwork Practitioners and the expansion, growth and strength of professional identity for Playwork, the "youngest" profession within the children's workforce.

For more information on Foundation Degrees please contact:

Ben Gittus
Tel: 020 7632 2009
Email: ben.gittus@skillsactive.com

For more information on Playwork please contact:

Paul Bonel
Tel: 020 7632 2018
Email: paul.bonel@skillsactive.com

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 is responsible for developing National Occupational Standards for the Fitness Industry. The National Occupational Standards are vital for the development of the industry and the recognition of the achievements of those who work in it. The Standards define the knowledge and skills needed to work in the industry and define best practice.
3. SkillsActive's mission statement is: "To ensure best quality, best business and best value within the Sector to achieve its economic and social potential."
4. 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.
5. For more information about SkillsActive, please visit our website @ www.skillsactive.com