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**\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

## **SKILLSACTIVE LAUNCH NOS FOR SPORTS OFFICIALS**

**SkillsActive has launched the first ever generic standards for the UK's sports officials.**

Following an extensive consultation, SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council for sport and active leisure, in partnership with sportofficialsUK (SOUK), has led the development of new national occupational standards that are accepted and agreed by a wide-range of sports across the UK, in a bid to standardise the role of the sports official.

SkillsActive's entry to the workforce manager, who has coordinated the project, Steve Mitchell said; "We are delighted to finally launch the new standards and congratulate SOUK on their contribution to the standardisation of officiating in the UK.

"With the recent announcement of the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games, there has never been a better time to resolve the issues surrounding officiating with regards to the training and development of referees, umpires, stewards and judges. We hope the standards will contribute to an upskilling of the workforce, while marking clearer career pathways and raising the profile of officiating as a profession."

SkillsActive has worked along side SOUK to ensure the launch of the long awaited standards. It is hoped that the standards will provide a coherent framework to which officials can operate across the whole of the sport and recreation industry. Officiating will now enjoy a number of generic standards that can be utilised across all sports, and will guide the design and development of qualifications in officiating, training programmes and job profiles.

Alongside launching the new standards, SOUK and SkillsActive have been working in partnership with Coachwise to produce a series of booklets addressing the issues of sports officiating. The first of these resources, 'An Introduction to Sports Officiating', is now available.

The author of the booklet, David Pegg, has worked at world, European and national level as a badminton official but draws on sports of all kinds in discussing aspects of sports officiating.

Having established why a sports lover would want to become a sports official, the booklet discusses both the technical issues of preparation, communication skills,

managing people and situations, risk management, as well as the important responsibilities of health and safety, child protection and other legal responsibilities. The Introduction looks at how the sports official can develop his or her skills, and gives an encouraging introduction to the wide-ranging facets of being a sports official and the pleasure and achievement which may be gained.

In production is the second booklet in the series, 'Managing People and Situations' written by professor Craig Mahoney. Mahoney has worked with Premier League FA referees as a sports psychologist as well as hockey and cricket officials and is himself a sports official for squash.

The new national occupational standards for officiating are now available from SkillsActive and the SOUK website: [www.sportsofficialsuk.com](http://www.sportsofficialsuk.com)

An Introduction to Sports Officiating is available from Coachwise Ltd: [enquiries@1st4sport.com](mailto:enquiries@1st4sport.com)

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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](http://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.