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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

250,000 WAYS TO DEVELOP LONDON'S COACHES

SkillsActive has secured £250,000 from the regional Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in London and Sport England (London) to subsidise coaching qualifications for a minimum of 400 of London's sports coaches.

This initiative is part of a multi-million pound investment package from the LSC to improve skills and training opportunities for Londoners in four key sectors related to the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games that was announced in October by Skills Minister David Lammy MP.

Skills Minister David Lammy said: "London 2012 is a once in a lifetime opportunity for individuals, employers and all of us. Working with the Mayor, we are determined to assist employers in meeting their skills needs to build and deliver the Games and their legacy. As Skills Minister I want to ensure that we use the Games to motivate people into work or training and help them compete for London 2012 opportunities and good jobs beyond 2012."

The injection of money for the development of coaching is a real boost to the region, not only will it help subsidise coaching qualifications for London's part and full-time coaches, it will promote coaching excellence in the lead up to the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.

Sebastian Coe, Chair of the London 2012 Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games said: "This increased investment to further the development of London's sports coaches is to be welcomed. The scheme is a great example of the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games inspiring change and beginning to create a lasting sports legacy for the city four and half years before the events themselves commence."

Harvey Redgrave, the LSC's economic director for the Olympics said: "We're delighted to be jointly funding this scheme, which will provide hundreds of future coaches with bursaries to pay up to two thirds of the cost of their training. The development of grass-roots sports coaching is national priority for the LSC and will be crucial in the run-up to the 2012 Games and beyond to ensure that the sporting talents of Londoners are realised".

SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council for sport and active leisure, will manage the initiative, and is aimed at existing coaches who would like to gain level 2 and 3 qualifications, and aspiring coaches starting out at level 1. All qualifications will be endorsed by the new UK Coaching Certificate (UKCC) and accredited by the QCA and the national qualifications framework.

Pat Duffy, Group CEO, sports coach UK commented: "The UK Coaching Certificate is giving coaching a recognised professional structure and helps to raise the profile of the role of the sports coach. This will play a key part in the success of the UK Action Plan for

Coaching which aims to ensure that by 2016 the UK Coaching system is number one in the world.”

The bursary is being offered on a needs-led basis to coaches already coaching or a volunteer, part or full-time basis. SkillsActive is working in partnership with the five ProActive Partnerships in London, along with the national governing bodies of sport to identify coaches who are in most need of their first level 1 qualification or all those looking to obtain their level 2 or 3.

The Mayor of London is backing the initiative, Mr. Livingston said: “We are well on track to deliver a lasting sporting legacy from the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. This bursary is a key part of that legacy, giving our London coaches a more affordable chance to gain the first class skills necessary to deliver better coaching to Londoners.”

SkillsActive’s chief executive Stephen Studd said: “With arguably the greatest sporting competition in the world coming to London in less than five years time, this is a very exciting opportunity for aspiring coaches in the region. It is based on a similar programme that was introduced in the South West earlier this year with great success, and we hope will be replicated across the rest of the LSC regions in the future. By working together with the LSC and Sport England we have been able to find the solutions to specific skills and training needs in London.

“By offering this bursary, part and full-time coaches, along with volunteers, are able to hone their skills and develop to the next level that can be utilised in London leading up to the 2012 Games and helping to deliver the legacy. This is a great example of effective partnership working in the region, and is a pre-cursor to what the National Skills Academy in Sport and Active Leisure will deliver. I am absolutely delighted that SkillsActive is driving this initiative.”

John Brewer, Chair of the Sport England London Sports Board said: "We know good coaches are as vital for ordinary participants as they are for elite athletes. Coaches can help more people get into sport by making sport fun and have been proved to encourage people to stay involved in sport. We believe that a world class workforce with the right skills, in the right place supported by a strong sporting infrastructure, is imperative to getting 276,000 more people taking part in 30 minutes of sport and active recreation three times a week, by 2012."

-ENDS-

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. SkillsActive is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the sport and fitness, playwork, the outdoors and caravan industries – known as the active leisure and learning sector.
2. SSCs are UK-wide, employer-led organisations that aim to tackle the skills and productivity needs of their sector. Twenty five SSCs make up the Skills for Business Network. The Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) underpins the network and is responsible for funding, supporting and monitoring the SSCs.

3. SkillsActive's Sector Skills Agreement defines the sector's skills needs and forms an agreement between employers, government and funding partners to shape the workforce for the next ten years. Priorities identified as a result of the SSA process are: improve the quality and range of services; improve recruitment and retention; professionalise and upskill the existing workforce; match supply to demand; redirect funding for training; increase sector investment in our people.
4. SkillsActive is *Shaping Skills for the Future*, through...
 - PEOPLE...
...ensuring all people in the sector are appropriately trained and qualified.
 - PRODUCTIVITY...
...ensuring better performance through the professional development of the sector.
 - PROVISION...
...ensuring the sector has accessible, relevant and funded training across the UK.
 - PROMOTION...
...ensuring the contributions of the sector are recognised at a governmental level.
5. For more information about SkillsActive, please visit our website @ www.skillsactive.com
6. The Learning and Skills Council exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.
 - The LSC will spend an additional £5 million across London this year to expand vocational training in four key areas: Sport, Customer Service, Audio-Visual and Construction Skills. Demand for skilled workers in these four sectors is forecast to increase in the run-up to 2012 and beyond. As a result of this investment, thousands more Londoners will be equipped with the skills they need to succeed.
 - As part of this, £125,000 will be spent on 400 UKCC-endorsed sports coaching bursaries to be allocated to individuals – covering the cost of 2/3 of their qualification. (Sport England will fund the other third)
 - 188 new sport and leisure Apprenticeships (Levels 2 and 3) in coaching, teaching and instruction, activity leadership and fitness for able bodied and disabled learners
 - 50 new Advanced Apprenticeships in Sporting Excellence (Level 3), in swimming and tennis, to prepare elite athletes for competition.

LSC website: www.lsc.gov.uk/london

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