



# Active Training Seminar

27<sup>th</sup> November 2014

active  
training  
awards

Delivered by ukactive and CIMSPA



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# Active Training Seminar

On 27<sup>th</sup> November ukactive and CIMSPA gathered over 80 employers, training providers, awarding organisations, and education institutions to discuss workforce development within the physical activity sector.

The afternoon session featured presentations and debates from:

- Mark Sesnan, GLL
- Richard Millard, Places for People & Chair of Physical Activity Trailblazer
- Harvey Gosling, Everyone Active
- Harvey Tucker, Parkwood Leisure
- Tiffeny Gould, Everyone Health
- Gary Kerr, British Military Fitness
- Nick Green, Nuffield Health
- Tara Dillon, Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport & Physical Activity
- James Duncan, Fusion Lifestyle

The session covered topics ranging from apprenticeship reform, new Trailblazer standards, Career Pathways, assessment processes and reforms to the Qualification and Credit Framework. This paper highlights the key insights from the discussion.



## Cash Contribution Cutting Apprenticeships?

Current apprenticeship reforms aim to put the employer in the “driving seat” with the power and responsibility to draft standards, build assessment processes and hold funding.

However, employers debated how the changes to funding contributions may in the long run restrict apprenticeships in the physical activity sector. The reforms currently indicate that moving forward “employer cash co-investment” will be required for apprenticeships. Specifically, for every one third that an employer invests in training an apprentice, the Government will pay two thirds up to a clear cap set for each standard.

Incentive payments will be provided to support key groups for eligible employers and apprentices during the first year.

Employers debated the impact of these reforms and agreed to produce three models for the future of apprenticeships:

- Fully Co-funded
  - Employers contract out all their assessment and training

- Partial Co-funded
  - Employers contract out some (no minimum exists) of their assessment and training and deliver the remainder in-house or do not wish to draw down government co-investment
- Direct Grant
  - Employers agree a price for the total delivery and for the element contracted out
  - The price is paid for by one third employer contribution: cash OR 'costs of direct delivery' for those employers delivering some or all in house



### **Next Step:**

The Physical Activity Trailblazer will develop new models for apprenticeship funding and test the models with the new apprenticeship standards.

An event will be hosted by the Physical Activity Trailblazer & CIMSPA in early 2015 focused on funding reform.

### **The QCF it's a Changing**

The proposed changes to the QCF could potentially lead to the sector "sleepwalking", in to a position where every AO has a different qualification and different units for every occupation or major skill area.

Awarding Organisations will no longer be restricted by common units many of which are 4-5 years old and starting to lose currency. As such awarding organisations could begin to develop their own qualifications a view starting to be supported by current changes in funding, legislation and changes in the qualification landscape nationally.

This could prompt instances where numerous Awarding Organisations could create numerous qualifications for the same role, all with various different assessment procedures and content.

Employers agreed that the changes to the QCF represent an opportunity to work with Awarding Organisations in a uniform manner and in doing so clear benchmarks for the sector.

### **Next Step:**

Employers called on sector bodies such as CIMSPA to strengthen their partnership and endorsement models in order to identify clear benchmarks and standards following the changes to the QCF.

### **Mind the Skills Gap**

The workforce is caught in a gap between not having the support of key partner professions to form part of the public health workforce and work with chronic disease

populations, whilst also not having the motivational skills to work with the growing number of inactive people across the country.



The sector must do two things. Firstly, embed key motivational, communication and counselling skills within lower level exercise professionals in order to ensure they can deliver a professional brief intervention such as physical activity counselling to the inactive population.

Secondly, we must review the competencies and understanding of more senior roles such as Exercise Referral in order to ensure that the medical community truly supports the parameters of practice for these professionals working with patients. These professionals must crucially understand the importance of evidence their outcomes.

### Trailblazer vs NOS

Richard Millard presented the progress of the Physical Activity Trailblazer and the work to establish new apprenticeship standards for Personal Training and Leisure Manager. Richard explained how over 40 employers were directly holding the pen on the creation of new standards which were already in draft format following one month of drafting.

The Standards are to be submitted in February 2015 after which work to establish assessment processes would start in earnest. At the same time employers would begin to focus on the next standards for development.

The standards should reference a qualification however currently the process is taking place separate to the review of the National Occupational Standards for the same role.

#### **Next Step:**

Employers, Awarding Organisations and Providers agreed for CIMSPA to assemble the relevant bodies to ensure the National Occupational Standards are aligned to the Trailblazer process and ultimately approved by the same group of employers.

### A sector "validity test"

The seminar heard how Awarding Organisations now have to complete "validity tests" which demonstrate the relevance of their qualification developments to employers. This process aims to guarantee that processes of developing qualifications are in line with employer demand and benchmarks.



### **Next Step:**

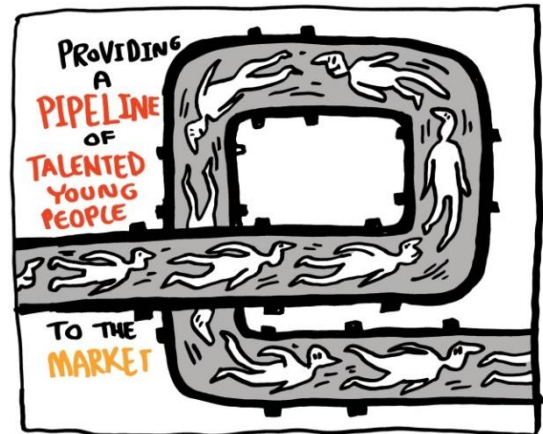
The Trailblazer employers agreed to develop a similar programme of “employer validity” for all development within the sector. This process could be operated through CIMSPA in effect guaranteeing that where the CIMSPA badge appears the education is “valid”.

### **A clear line of sight to work**

Currently the sector fails to truly partner with the Higher Education and Further Education Sector, as a result students do not have a “clear line of sight to work” and they cannot demonstrate their employability.

With over 70,000 students undertaking courses relating to sport and physical activity this area must be improved.

Moving forward the CIMSPA Higher and Further Education partnerships will build partnerships between education institutions and employers in order to deliver guest lecturing, work placements, study programmes and traineeships.



### **A single system for every step of the career ladder**

Attendants called for a clear single system once and for all! Re-iterating the asks of numerous employers the attendants debated how a single system which identified professional competencies, drafted qualifications and built assessment procedures was now necessary.

With numerous skills gaps, a pressing need for new qualifications, apprenticeship reform and many other changes attendants stated that our career pathway required drastic review.

Employers called for a single system led by a single co-ordinated effort to review the physical activity workforce development plan.

## **Where do we go from here**

Clearly, there is a lot of work to do so please watch out for:

- The Trailblazer consultation in late 2014 and early 2015 on the new standards drafted for Personal Training and Leisure Management
- The workforce development calendar to be published by CIMSPA in January 2015 detailing the sector’s plan for 2015
- The submission of the Trailblazer standards in February 2015 to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
- A follow-up event in March 2015 from ukactive and CIMSPA focusing on examples of best practice of Workforce Development from other sectors and also featuring the launch of the Active Training Awards 2015