News Release

Leading learning and skills

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Final Call for 2009 Apprentice Award Entries

The search is on as the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) hunt for Nottinghamshire's top apprentices and employers for the regional Apprenticeship Awards 2009. The deadline for entries is weeks away, with final entries due by the 27th February 2009.

The awards culminate with a celebration event, as hundreds of apprentices, employers and training providers head to the East Midlands Conference Centre in Nottingham on 2nd June 2009 for the largest regional celebration of apprentices, employers and learning providers involved in vocational learning.

The Apprenticeship Awards are held annually to celebrate the success of apprentices who have made a real difference to their future and to the organisation they work for. They also recognise the work of employers who are successfully tackling skills shortages to build their future workforce through Apprenticeships.

Nineteen-year-old golden girl Rebecca Adlington from Mansfield, has been hailed as Britain's best swimmer for a century after her Olympic triumphs. Rebecca was one of six holders of Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE) to compete in Beijing where she famously brought home two gold medals for the 400m and 800m Olympic freestyle events.

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"My Apprenticeship with the Amateur Swimming Association provided me with high quality training, whilst giving me the opportunity to gain qualifications at the same time. Winning two gold medals in Beijing and breaking a world record was the greatest achievement of my life and the recognition since has been amazing.

"It just goes to show what can be achieved through hard work, dedication and commitment to training. It is important to recognise and pay tribute to young people's achievements and in support of the Regional Apprenticeship Awards I would like to encourage apprentices and their employers to enter and I wish them all the best of luck."

Mick Brown, LSC area director, Nottinghamshire, said: "The Awards are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the achievements of apprentices and the dedication of businesses committed to work based learning. In the current economic climate, it's more important than ever that we recognise and support these talented individuals, and the businesses that invest in their training. Apprenticeships are key, not only to the success of local business but also the economic future of the region."

Employers are eligible to enter one of five categories depending on their company size; **Micro** (1-9 employees), **Small** (10-49 employees), **Medium** (50-249 employees) **Large** (250+ employees) and **Macro** (5000+ employees). They are assessed on a number of criteria including implementation of the Apprenticeship programme, clear demonstration of the way Apprenticeships have benefited their business and the level of support provided to their apprentices.

In addition to the employer awards, there are three categories open to apprentices; **Apprentice** of the Year, **Advanced Apprentice** of the Year, and **Young Apprentice** of the Year. The Apprentice of the Year Awards reward people who are exceeding their employer expectations and who are making exceptional contributions to their workplaces. Perhaps they have taken on extra responsibilities, introduced a new idea, improved

productivity or proved their worth as a valuable team member. The Young Apprentice of the Year Award seeks to acknowledge and celebrate learners' exceptional achievements during the two years of the Young Apprenticeship programme which takes place whilst they are still at school. There will also be an award for the best **Entry to Employment** learner in the region.

To enter the awards, or for more information, call 0845 058 0490 or email realsuccess@headstorm.co.uk, or visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk/awards. All completed applications must be made before 27th February 2009, with all regional finalists attending the East Midlands awards ceremony. All regional winners will go forward for consideration in the LSC's national Apprenticeship Awards 2009, with an awards ceremony on 16th July 2009 in London.

Ends

Notes to Editors: -
To find out more about Apprenticeships, please visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk or call 08000 150 600.

For further information and images please contact: -

Redbrick Communications: - Helen Morton or Clive Purcell, Tel: 0115 910 1500

LSC East Midlands: - Linda Penrice, Tel: 0116 228 1849

There are currently nearly a quarter of a million apprentices working in over 130,000 organisations in England alone, across 80 different sectors of industry.

Learning and Skills Council:
The LSC 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. Visit www.lsc.gov.uk/inourhands

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About Apprenticeships

- Apprenticeships provide 16-24 year-olds with a mixture of on and off-the-job training while they are being paid. For employers, Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to improve their business's bottom line through the tailored, relevant training.
- There are two levels of Apprenticeships:
    1. 'Apprenticeships', equivalent to GCSE level, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 2; key skills and in some cases a technical certificate
    2. 'Advanced Apprenticeships', equivalent to A-levels, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 3, key skills and a technical certificate

AASE

- The Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE) was launched four years ago (2004) to promote sporting excellence and provide learners with broader education and skills off the sporting field. It is now available across 12 sporting disciplines, from football to athletics, and has around 2,500 apprentices enrolled on the programme. An AASE motor sports programme is currently being piloted at Silverstone too.

  With the 2012 London Olympics just four years away, there is no doubt that the AASE is helping a growing number of talented young sportspeople to achieve their potential and perform at the highest level.

Entry to Employment (e2e)

- Young people aged 16 - 18 years, living in England and not participating in any form of post-16 learning, can be admitted to e2e as an option to progress onto an apprenticeship, further learning or a job.

- Young people under this age, under the Extended Guarantee can also participate in e2e.

- Young people will be expected to undertake learning in three interdependent core areas: basic and key skills, vocational development, and personal and social development.

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