



PRESS RELEASE – 17.03.10

BBC's Kate Adie to discuss tools of the trade at South West Skills Awards

TALKING SKILLS. Kate Adie OBE, guest presenter at the South West Skills Awards.

One of the world's most respected reporters is to give the keynote speech at the South West Skills Awards 2010.

Kate Adie OBE, who became a household name as the BBC's Chief News Correspondent, will talk from her own experience of learning essential job skills.

Now presenting From Our Own Correspondent on Radio 4, she has previously reported on the Gulf War, the fall of the Soviet Union, the protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square and NATO's campaign in Kosovo.

At the South West Skills Awards, she will address an audience of apprentices, learners and employers who have been nominated for awards in workplace learning.

Malcolm Gillespie, Regional Director for the Learning and Skills Council South West, said: "It will be fascinating to hear Kate talking about her career and showing what you can achieve with skills and determination. I'm sure everyone attending the South West Skills Awards will be inspired by what she has to say."

The ceremony takes place at the Sandy Park conferencing and banqueting centre in Exeter on 2 June 2010.

The journalistic theme will be reinforced by compère Clinton Rogers, the BBC's Chief Somerset Correspondent, who is well known for his coverage on both the Points West and Spotlight news shows.

The evening will combine the Skills Awards with the South West regional heat of the National Apprenticeship Awards.

Both sets of Awards celebrate individuals at every stage of life and career, and the contributions of employers spanning all sectors.

Across the range of categories, judges look for evidence of a commitment to learning and an ability to inspire others.

This year the Awards will be run jointly by the Skills Funding Agency and the National Apprenticeship Service. The Awards are supported by the European Social Fund and Train to Gain.

For more information and to enter the South West Skills Awards, visit www.skillsawards.org.uk. The deadline for entries is 16 April 2010.

Note for editors

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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. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 received Royal Assent on 12 November 2009 for the dissolution of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) by 2010 and the transfer of its functions to local authorities and two new agencies: the Young People's Learning Agency and the Skills Funding Agency.

Young People's Learning Agency:

The YPLA will champion young people by providing financial support to young learners, by funding Academies for all their provision and by supporting local authorities' commissioning of suitable education and training opportunities for all 16-19 year olds. The YPLA will be established as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDBP) sponsored by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

Skills Funding Agency:

Responsible for channelling funding swiftly, efficiently and securely to further education colleges and other providers, primarily in response to customer (employer and learner) choice on programmes such as Train to Gain. It will operate through customer focused services: *National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)*, *Employer Skills Services*, *Adult Advancement and Careers Service*, *Learner Skills Services*. The Skills Funding Agency will be an agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

National Apprenticeship Service (NAS):

The NAS was announced in January 2008 and officially launched in April 2009. Reporting to the Departments for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), the service will drive forward the Government's ambition for Apprenticeships. The service aims to bring about a significant growth in the number of employers offering Apprenticeships.

The NAS takes total responsibility for the delivery of Apprenticeships that includes: Employer Services; Learner Services; and a web-based vacancy matching system. This online system enables individuals to search and apply for live vacancies and allows employers, and their training providers to advertise their vacancies to a wide range of interested applicants.

The service has ultimate accountability for the national delivery of targets and co-ordination of the funding for Apprenticeship places. It acts to overcome barriers to the growth of the programme and assumes responsibility for promoting Apprenticeships and their value to employers, learners and the country as a whole.