

Skills development for events employers: an overview and update by People1st, Sector Skills Council for Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism (July 2008)



Introduction

This short paper provides an update on a number of skill initiatives that may be of interest and can benefit events employers. Specifically, it covers an update on:

- Qualifications development for the events industry
- The National Skills Academy for hospitality
- Good Employers Guide
- Sector Compact: providing a further funding of £115m will be available to the sector for employer training.

Qualification's development for events

It is important that vocational qualifications are employer-led and tackle the skills and knowledge employers need. For this to happen, it is important that National Occupational Standards (NOS), which outline the competency of someone doing that job in the workplace are up to date. Over the past year we have been reviewing the NOS for the events industry. It has been over ten years since they were last reviewed and so substantial changes have been made. They are currently awaiting final approval from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES).

As these are nearly ready, timescales are in place to have a new set of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in place and ready to go by Summer 2009. There will be NVQs in Events Management and Temporary Structures at levels 3 and 4. NVQs are qualifications that assess the competency of an individual in the workplace; these are not necessarily suitable for all employers and we are consulting on the needs for other types of qualifications.

If you wish to take part in a one-to-one interview as part of the consultation, or know of existing groups of employers which we can consult then please contact Ruth Miller on 01895 81 7046 or at ruth.miller@people1st.co.uk.

The National Skills Academy for hospitality

In May 2008, it was announced that the hospitality industry had received Ministerial approval in its bid to develop a National Skills Academy for the hospitality industry. The Academy's vision is to create nationally recognised excellence in hospitality training and education that is trusted and valued by employers, learners and parents nationwide.

It is unique in as much as it is a partnership between industry and education and is being funded by employers and government alike. It includes the setting up of new hotel training schools and signposting excellent learning providers. Over the first five years it aims to achieve 100 members and engage 65,000 learners. Events employers can benefit by taking advantage of the new skilled staff coming into the industry and working with the Academy to take advantage of training opportunities.

We are still awaiting formal feedback on our submission from the National Learning and Skills Council and clarification of conditions surrounding the contract. Once we have held this meeting and have a contract in place we will be able to move the Academy forward in earnest.

In the interim, we are in the process of establishing the Academy as a legal entity, putting in place an employer-led Board (chaired by Bob Cotton of the British Hospitality Association) and appointing a Chief Executive Officer.

Good Employers Guide

UKSP is a unique web based resource providing skills development tools, information, advice and guidance for a career in HLTT (Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism). It was designed to address the lack of understanding about qualifications, how to access government funding and how to find up to date information on training and the good providers; all of which had been highlighted by People1st research.

On the UKSP site you will be able to view sector employers who have been included in lists such as the Times Top 100, identifying them as good companies to work for. Our Good Employer Guide takes this to the next level; highlighting the employers who have actively signed up to our best practice standards (as set out by best employers). Once they have done this, we give their staff the opportunity to rate the company from their own experience, giving UKSP users an inside perspective and helping them to choose the job that is best for them. It is an opportunity for employers to demonstrate that they take employees needs, concerns, and professional development seriously, that they provide new outlets for companies to improve their business through seminars, networking events, news updates of the latest information from government and opportunities to shape the skills their employees need.

Go to www.uksp.co.uk

Sector Compact: providing a further funding of £115m will be available to the sector for employer training

In June 2008, it was announced that the Government had reached agreement with People1st on a Sector Compact. The Compact essentially means that £115m of funding will be available for sector employers through Train to Gain.

Train to Gain is a single point of access for employers to get training advice and support. It is run by the Learning and Skills Council's Train to Gain service and provides impartial, independent advice on training to businesses across England. Brokers come into businesses to work with employers on identifying their specific needs. Until now public funding has generally only been available for larger qualifications that Government consider as 'full'. These are often not the shorter, bite-sized qualifications employers require. Similarly, funding has tended to be available for those people that do not hold a level 2 qualification, regardless whether the qualification is relevant to their job. The compact, allows employers to access shorter qualifications, in areas such as management and leadership and customer service, as well as in many areas removing the constraints of 'firstness'.

People1st is currently working out the detail of the rollout with the Learning and Skills Council. Once this has been completed People1st will update employers and trade bodies about the opportunities available.