



Olympics Special Interest Group
Report of the Second Olympics SIG Workshop,
University of Hertfordshire, 23rd June 2009

Introduction

The second meeting of the Olympics SIG was hosted at the University Hertfordshire Sports Village conference venue.

The event provided an opportunity for delegates to not only hear about the potential benefits and legacy of the 2012 games in the East of England, but also share experiences with other academics who are delivering Olympics related topics in the curriculum within Hospitality, Sport, Leisure and Tourism.

Clive Robertson, Director of the HLST Network, welcomed participants to the workshop and highlighted the opportunity which a Special Interest Group gave to develop and share resources related to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games – and thus to enhance the learning opportunities and experiences of students.

Legacies in Essex and Hertfordshire

Nick Brooking, Director of Sport at the University of Hertfordshire provided an overview of the two Olympic sites that the region will be hosting during the 2012 games:

- Essex - mountain biking,
- Hertfordshire - slalom water centre at Broxbourne

Nick highlighted how the county of Hertfordshire is managing the potential benefits that the Olympics offer the region and how at the cost of £30 million, for a 4 day event, it was key from the outset that the venue would need to consider the legacy of the site.

The co-ordination of plans to reflect use of the site after the Games as well as links to education provision within the region were explored as well as that of the 'health and wellbeing' legacy that the games offer.

A discussion followed as to how the sites would maximise these benefits given that the sports are not deemed as major participation sports.

Sharing Experiences

The workshop provided the opportunity for colleagues to hear what type of activities are being developed within the curriculum at Hertfordshire, and future Olympics related courses and activities that are being developed, both internally and externally.

Colleagues also had the opportunity to outline the themes and topics they are developing in their own institutions and how they envisage developing these topics further. There was discussion of materials, reports, plans, articles and the like, which are available for development or re-purposing to become relevant and useful learning resources.

Various cross discipline opportunities that the Olympics provide were discussed and it was felt this can be a positive benefit for the student experience within subject areas.

Future Directions for the Olympics SIG

The future direction for the Olympics SIG was discussed and it was agreed that objectives for the group for the coming year should be agreed and a Steering Group established. A website for the SIG would also be established.

In discussion, it was agreed that a number of short case studies could be shared with colleagues and made available in the early part of the 2009/10 academic year.

Brandon Crimes, SIG convenor, provided a brief update of LinkBC and the 'e-legacies' project related to the Canadian 2010 Winter Olympics. 'Discussion starters' were being prepared and the types of topics the project team were intending to address were outlined. Guidelines for writing the discussion starters were also available. Through its memorandum of understanding with LinkBC, the HLST Network and its Olympics SIG would have access to these materials and would hope to extend and develop the range of materials available up to the 2012 Games.

Another activity that could be undertaken would be a survey of what colleagues are currently teaching and researching in HE and FE related to the Olympics. This could be a good way of building a network of contacts and resources that could be disseminated over time and this could be an activity the HLST Network might be prepared to undertake.

An annotated bibliography of materials related to the Olympics and Paralympics was also suggested.

Formation of a Steering Group

It was agreed that to move forward quickly with the development of the Olympics SIG it was necessary to establish a small Steering Group. The following delegates agreed to join:

1. Spencer Harris – Senior Lecturer Sports, University of Hertfordshire (joint role)
2. Dr Elesa Argent – Senior Lecturer Sports Studies, University of Hertfordshire (joint role)
3. Donna de Hann – Senior Lecturer, Sport Management, University of Worcester

Further members of the steering group are welcome. If you are interested in contributing to the work of the HLST Olympics Special Interest Group in this way, please contact Brandon Crimes at B.crimes@herts.ac.uk or on 01707 285451, or Clive Robertson at clive.robertson@brookes.ac.uk

First Steering Group Meeting

The first meeting of the Steering Group will be on **10 September**. A light lunch will be available from 12.00 and the meeting will start at 13.00.

Contact hlst@brookes.ac.uk