



HLST Olympics Special Interest Group

Launched 12 March 2009

The HLST Network has launched a Special Interest Group (SIG) to focus on the opportunities for curriculum development which the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games bring. Our courses already deliver graduates with a wide range of professional skills, knowledge and understanding essential for the success of such multifaceted international events, - and the learning experiences of our students will be enhanced if they can engage with contemporary ideas, information and issues associated with the planning and execution of the 2012 Games.

At the inaugural meeting of the SIG, HLST Director, Clive Robertson, pointed to the opportunities which the Games brought to raise the profile of the HLST subject grouping and to demonstrate their relevance in areas such as;

- Preparing elite athletes for world class performance.
- Providing the coaching and sports management capacity required to support growing participation in sport up to and as a legacy of the Games.
- Providing facilities and opportunities for active leisure up to and as a legacy of the Games.
- Understanding and effectively meeting the needs of tourists.
- Planning and managing travel and tourism associated with the Games;
- Providing high quality hospitality, facilities and service.

At the same time, it was important to encourage a critical awareness of the impact which the Games were already having and would have in the future – a balanced, informed, academic view of events.

Clive welcomed contributors to the inaugural meeting representing other organisations, initiatives and areas of activity which were complementary to the new SIG. It was essential that all who were interested in achieving a fitting legacy from the Games should work cooperatively, and thus harvest a greater good - for learners and for HE - that would be much greater than simply the sum of their various efforts.

Gareth Smith, Head of Podium, welcomed the launch of the SIG and looked forward to the mutual benefits that working together to capitalise on the opportunities for HE and FE which the 2012 Games would bring. PODIUM is the Further and Higher Education Unit for the 2012 Games with a nationwide remit to:

- Communicate both within the sectors and with outside agencies about the potential for universities and colleges to support the successful staging and delivery of the London 2012 Games and to help create a wide reaching and lasting legacy.
- Facilitate collaborative work and the sharing of best practice within the sectors (and their communities) in order to develop projects and events which maximise the benefits of hosting the 2012 Games.
- Work with institutions to use the 2012 Games as a catalyst to enhance existing activity and place the Further and Higher Education sectors in the global spotlight.

He reminded delegates of recent surveys which had demonstrated the enthusiasm for the Games amongst younger people, the 64% increase in international student recruitment which followed the 2000 Sydney Games, and the 83 FECs and HEIs which were included in the 2012 Pre-Games Training Camps Guide.

Prof Celia Brackenridge of Brunel University described plans for the International Convention on Science, Education and Medicine in Sport (ICSEMIS), to be held in Glasgow in 2012 and which had its origins in the Olympic Congresses of earlier Games, and for a Public Engagement programme which would stimulate a spirit of enquiry about sport-related sciences to inspire a learning legacy. There was a unique opportunity to build on the opportunity of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the pre-Olympic scientific convention (ICSEMIS) by linking these events to the knowledge economy. Our core business as leaders in sport-related sciences at UK universities, she believed, is knowledge discovery, development, and dissemination. She welcomed the opportunities for outreach and enhanced impact which working with the HLST Network and other partners in these initiatives would bring.

Terry Hood and Maynard Kirkpatrick from LinkBC, a network of 20 post-secondary tourism and hospitality programme providers across British Columbia, Canada, working together to promote best practice in tourism education and share research findings, tourism knowledge and resources. They described their work to harness opportunities for curriculum enhancement available through Vancouver's hosting of the 2010 Winter Games. They welcomed close collaboration between LinkBC and HLST to share experience, expertise and resources and to maximize the outcomes of work being undertaken on both sides of the Atlantic.

Brandon Crimes of the University of Hertfordshire, Convener of the new SIG, invited delegates to consider its future activities and goals. It was agreed that there should be further opportunities for exchanging experience, expertise and practice through workshops and conferences, both real and virtual - and involving all those with interest in harnessing the opportunities available from the Games for HE, particularly the different organization represented at the meeting. There was immediate need for facilitation of on-line communication between participants and with others who were unable to

attend the inaugural meeting but who had expressed interest. A website for the SIG was planned.

It was agreed that a plan of action for the coming year should be drafted for consultation and publication on the HLST website.



Gareth Smith, Podium



Celia Brackenridge, ICSEMIS



Brandon Crimes (SIG Convener), Terry Hood (LinkBC), Clive Robertson (HLST), Maynard Kirkpatrick (LinkBC)