Skills Minister, Lord Young has today announced the expansion of the National Skills Academy network, with the approval for an eleventh skills academy. The National Skills Academy for Materials, Production and Supply is the latest addition to the national network of employer-led centres of excellence, and aims to address the process and manufacturing industry’s complex skills issues.

Although the process and manufacturing industry invests an average of £1,150 per annum on training each employee, up to a third of industry employers still recognise a vital need for improved skills. The National Skills Academy estimates there will be a minimum requirement for 80,000 people over the next 10 years, which includes 30,000 skilled operatives, 15,000 managers and 15,000 technical staff. The skills academy believes this target can be achieved by investing heavily in skills training, qualifications and changing the overall public perception of the manufacturing sector.

The new skills academy will maximise access to its products and services through the development of a web-based portal, offering access to the widest possible range of skills academy information, products and services. The scope of its training will include building products, glass, coatings, extractive and mineral processing, printing, paper, furniture, furnishings & Interiors, whitewares and ceramics sectors.

Leading employers supporting the skills academy include: Polestar UK Print Ltd, News Printers, Statex Colour Print, Heidelberg UK, Crown Paints, Sonneborn and Rieck, Ardagh glass, Autowindscreens and Safestyle UK. Employers will be engaged in every aspect of the skills academy including articulating the present and future skills needs of the sector, providing facilities and support for the establishment of Employer Learning Centres, supporting the development of products and services, forming the Board to drive the skills academy, and engaging in Regional Training Clusters.

Lord Young said:

"I am delighted to announce the approval of the National Skills Academy for Materials, Production and Supply. In the current economic climate when businesses are struggling it is especially important for employers to invest in skills and training. The National Skills Academy Network is led by employers and enables them to focus on developing the key skills needed in each industry to help drive it forward.”
Jaine Clarke, Director of Communications at the LSC said:

"The network is part of a skills revolution to put employers in the driving seat and give them the resources needed to shape training for their industry. The NSA for Materials, Production and Supply presented a well considered and robust business plan that demonstrated a strong and enthusiastic commitment from employers and key stakeholders. The LSC is delighted to be able to fully approve their proposal and we are confident that it will raise the demand for skills from employers in the sector and make a real and valuable contribution to the industry."

National Skills Academies have been created to solve potentially acute skills shortages in their respective sectors, enabling employers, Government and other stakeholders to design more effective solutions to training needs. There are now eleven approved skills academies in sectors as diverse as construction, food and drink manufacturing, creative & cultural, retail and nuclear, with a further five in business planning. The growth represents a major progress towards the Government’s target of having a skills academy in every major sector of the economy.

- Ends -

NOTES TO EDITORS
National Skills Academy network

The National Skills Academy network

National Skills Academies lead the way in the development of industry specific training the really delivers against business objectives. Each National Skills Academy puts employers at the heart of skills training for their sector: they influence the curriculum to ensure it reflects employers’ needs; get involved in the skills academy’s management; set standards; and influence strategic direction.

The National Skills Academy network was initiated by the Government to address the need for a world class workforce with better skills than ever before. It is managed by the Learning and Skills Council working in partnership with the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, the Skills for Business Network and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.

Media Enquiries please contact:

Natasha Groocock, LSC National Office Press Manager, 02476 82 3640
natasha.groocock@lsc.gov.uk

San Jutla, LSC National Press Officer, 02476 82 5793 san.jutla2@lsc.gov.uk