I’M A CELEBRITY… GET ME A (SECOND) CAREER!
A – Z listers gain new skills in order to secure their future

Date of issue 20.12.07
Publication number 489
Embargo until 21.12.07 00:01

London, 21 December: The Learning and Skills Council can reveal that an increasing number of celebrities are actively seeking new skills and launching second careers in a bid to safeguard against the ever-present threat of diminishing celebrity status. Celebrities including Helena Christensen, Joss Stone, Wayne Rooney and Mischa Barton are all keeping their options open by acquiring new skills to secure their futures in an ever-fickle celebrity world where fame may only last 15 minutes.

This celebrity trend for pursuing new skills and interests is set to inspire the wider public to start the New Year off on a positive note, taking control of their futures by looking at what new skills they could learn.

Topping the list of celebrity second careers is Catering & Hospitality, with numerous celebrities including Robbie Williams, Jay-Z and Jennifer Lopez opening restaurants or training as chefs, such as former EastEnders star Sid Owen and Sam Branson, son of Richard Branson, who opted out of a career in the Virgin empire and instead trained as a chef at Le Cordon Bleu. Would-be chefs looking to follow in these star-studded footsteps can find a range of catering courses at their nearest college.
At number two on the list of most popular celebrity second career choices is in the world of Fashion and Beauty, with numerous stars dipping their toe into fashion design, including Kate Moss (Topshop) and Lily Allen (New Look). Wannabe Lily Allens can brush up on their own fashion knowledge by taking a course in fashion or accessory design at their local college.

Helena Christensen is a real skills chameleon: a world famous supermodel, she has since trained as a professional fashion photographer and, most recently, has launched her own clothing range. The new paths that these and other celebrities are currently pursuing prove how learning a new skill can keep career options open – and you may be able to get free funding for your A-list career!

More and more Hollywood A-list actors are favouring a move behind-the-scenes, with stars including Drew Barrymore, Brad Pitt and George Clooney all involved with Film Production – the third most popular choice for celebrities pursuing a second career. Celebrities are also growing frustrated with how unfulfilling fame can be, as highlighted by Joss Stone’s dramatic plans to leave show business altogether to train in midwifery. The star has said that she is afraid that she will “sit on [her] deathbed and say ‘I was just a singer’”.

Furthermore, a new crowd of celebrity figures are actually going back to college to brush up on their basic skills in preparation for their future careers. Only this year, Wayne Rooney went back to school to achieve his Maths GCSE qualification, whilst the already hugely successful actress Mischa Barton opted to enrol at RADA last summer to make sure she is at the top of her game.

There are lots of great courses and learning options available for those that want to get a star-studded career of their own. There has never been a better time to learn new, or build on existing, skills in this country and you may be eligible for
free learning. For information on different courses and details of funding options visit http://www.lsc.gov.uk

-Ends-

For further information, contact:
Kate Lupton, Hill & Knowlton: 020 7413 3769; kate.lupton@hillandknowlton.com
Alison Hope, Hill & Knowlton: 020 7413 3756; alison.hope@hillandknowlton.com

Notes to editors:

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. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.