For Immediate Release

UK Team strikes gold in Japan -
4 medals and 9 medallions of excellence won
at WorldSkills 2007

Following a tough season for world championship sports events, the UK can be justifiably proud of a national team whose achievements can be truly celebrated. It was announced today, Wednesday 21st November, that the UK WorldSkills team, made up of 22 highly talented young people, has won a fantastic four medals and nine medallions of excellence at WorldSkills 2007, the biggest skills based competition in the world. This year’s team score results placed the UK 11th in the world overall, and fourth in Europe, improving the UK’s position in the team league table by one place from 2005.

WorldSkills is a gruelling four day event, held every two years, in which 49 nations compete in skills such as engineering, landscape gardening, graphic design, hairdressing and beauty therapy and which this year saw over 200,000 spectators turn out in support. The UK team competed hard in 21 skill categories and has achieved the following:

- Gold – won by Gary Tuddenham (22) in the cabinet making event
- Silver – won by Harry Smith, (22) in the graphic design event
- Bronze – won by Simon Noble, (21) in the autobody repair event
- Bronze – won by Jonathan Lloyd (21), in the car painting event
- Medallion of Excellence – won by Stuart Greer (20), in the welding event
- Medallion of Excellence – won by Jonathan Bourne (21), in the bricklaying event
- Medallion of Excellence – won by Ben Ingersent (21), in the joinery event
Medallion of Excellence – won by Natalie Stanyer (21), in the floristry event
Medallion of Excellence – won by Donna Leach (22), in the hairdressing event
Medallion of Excellence – won by Jade Kidd (19), in the beauty therapy event
Medallion of Excellence – won by Will Torrent (21), in the confectionery event
Medallion of Excellence – won by Keith Chapman & Tim Lancaster (both 21), in the landscape gardening event
Medallion of Excellence – won by Andrew Critchlow (21), in the IT PC & Network event

John Denham, Secretary of State said: “WorldSkills is about raising the status and the standards of vocational education. What this years’ team has done epitomises that. Forty-nine nations competed highlighting how essential these skills are globally. For our team to have achieved such great results proves we have skills in this country at world class levels. This team is helping to break down the snobbery around skills training - there is nothing second best about good skills-based careers.”

“Throughout their training and the competition the team showed magnificent pride in their work. I hope that young people seeing what has been achieved in Japan will feel inspired to take up skills they can excel at professionally. I want many more to rise to the challenge themselves for the next competition in Canada in 2009 and again in 2011 when London will be hosting WorldSkills - and when we can show we can be the best!”

David Lammy, Minister for Skills said: “I have met each and every one of these young people and can testify to their hard work and achievement. Their skills are the very best of British. Each team member is entitled to be very proud of what they have achieved.”

Chris Humphries, Chairman of UK Skills and newly appointed chief executive of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills said: “Skills matter to UK businesses and the UK economy, and WorldSkills provides the ultimate benchmark of a nation’s young people, and the education and training we provide them. These 22 young UK competitors rose to the challenges presented by the WorldSkills competitions and confirmed that they are indeed true champions – up there with the best in the world.
To them all, to our medal and medallion winners, and to their teachers and trainers, UK Skills offer our heartiest congratulations!

Simon Bartley, Chief Executive of UK Skills, who coordinates the UK participation in WorldSkills, said “The team has worked so hard from the day that they were selected all the way through to the end of the competition to ensure they were the best they could be, so the results they have achieved are absolutely deserved. The results are really great and we are very proud of the whole team. They have ensured that the UK is well on its way to being World class by 2020.”

Rob Wye, Director, Learning and Skills Council commented ”The UK results in the WorldSkills competition reflect the improvements and excellence being delivered through the Further Education system. The hard work and ambitions of the individuals who have achieved medals is to be congratulated. We hope these great achievements inspire other individuals to develop their talents and skills - for personal and professional gain."

The team will now spend time in Shanghai for a de-brief and review on how the competition went before returning home to the UK. Preparation will then start to secure a new team to take part in WorldSkills 2009 and WorldSkills 2011, when London will host the event.

The UK WorldSkills team is managed by UK Skills working in partnership with the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, the Scottish Executive, the Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland, the Welsh Assembly Government and key partners from education, government and industry.

Supporters of the 2007 team include; City & Guilds, the Learning and Skills Council, the Quality Improvement Agency, Honda, L’Oréal Professionnel, Snickers Workwear and Brathay.

To find out more about the team’s success or to learn more about how you can take part in the next competition visit www.worldskillsuk.org.

- Ends -

Photography of the WorldSkills team is attached. Images and quotes from individual competitors are available on request.
NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. About WorldSkills
The WorldSkills Competition is the biggest skills competition in the world and is held every two years in one of its member countries. Its sets world class standards in over 40 skill categories ranging from cabinet making to web design.

Over four days of tough competition, young people drawn from 49 member nations test themselves against tough international standards. The ultimate prizes are gold, silver and bronze medals. Medallions of Excellence are also awarded to those young people who achieve or exceed the World Class score of 500 points out of a maximum of 600 across the four days of competition.

Locations of previous and future WorldSkills competitions and the UK results for these:

- 2003: St. Gallen, Switzerland (where the UK finished in 15th place)
- 2005: Helsinki, Finland (where the UK finished in 12th place)
- 2007: Shizuoka, Japan (where the UK has now finished in 11th place)
- 2009: Calgary, Canada
- 2011: London, UK

For more in depth information as to the UK’s position within the competition, please contact Vikki Light – vikki.light@ukskills.org.uk.

2. About UK Skills
UK Skills is a not-for-profit organisation which champions skills and learning for work through competitions and awards. The organisation was established in 1990 with the primary purpose of raising skill levels in the UK through skills competitions and managing the UK team which competes in the WorldSkills Competition. In recent years we have widened the scope of our operations to include management of the National Training Awards and organising of other skills related events.

3. UK Skills would like to thank the following organisations in supporting the UK team for the 39th WorldSkills Competition:

City & Guilds is the expert and leading authority in vocational education and training - both in the UK and beyond. In operation for the last 130 years, City & Guilds is the UK’s leading awarding body for work-related qualifications. Twenty million people in the UK have City & Guilds qualifications, and the organisation awards a further 1.5 million qualifications to learners every year. City & Guilds also enables people to develop essential leadership and management skills through its Institute of Leadership and Management, which is the largest provider of management qualifications in Europe.
City & Guilds creates prosperity from skills for individuals, business and nations within and beyond the workplace.

City & Guilds

“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.”

Learning and Skills Council

The Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) facilitates and champions excellence and innovation in the further education system by accelerating improvement in performance, building the system’s capacity for self-improvement and helping it respond to strategic reforms.

Quality Improvement Agency

“Honda’s commitment to personal development is exemplified by its benchmark training centre, The Honda Institute, venue for a series of UK Skills training and preparation events for WorldSkills 2007, Shizuoka.”

Honda

At L’Oréal Professionnel we are passionate in our belief that the promotion of excellence is a fundamental key to success within the hairdressing profession. Our whole education strategy is encapsulated under the banner Dream, Excel, Succeed…Together and we are proud to be the exclusive sponsor of the UK’s hairdressing competitor training programme for WorldSkills Japan 2007.

L’Oréal Professionnel

The WorldSkills 2007 UK team casual uniforms are provided by Snickers Workwear.

“Working closely with Competitors and WorldSkills Training Managers, Brathay has used its expertise in people development and experiential learning to enhance the 2007 UK WorldSkills training and preparation programme.”

Brathay

Vikki Light
Acting Deputy Director of Communications
+44(0)20 7612 9260
www.ukskills.org.uk

WorldSkills London 2011 - be a part of it. www.worldskillslondon2011.com

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ukskills 5 Portland Place, London W1B 1PW | T: +44 (0)20 7580 1011 | F: +44 (0)20
7612 9277 | E: ukskills@ukskills.org.uk | W: www.ukskills.org.uk

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