

21st February 2013

Young hopefuls battle it out to represent the UK at global skills contest

A group of young hopefuls will be competing for a place in WorldSkills Team UK, by taking part in a selection competition held at the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford. Taking place between Tuesday 26th and Thursday 28th February, five finalists will be competing in the Aircraft Maintenance category, hoping to secure their spot representing the UK at the international WorldSkills finals being held in Leipzig, Germany.

WorldSkills is the largest international skills competition in the world. Held every two years in cities around the globe, the competition sees around 1000 young people aged 18 to 23, come together to compete for medals in more than 40 different skills including; Electrical Installation, Welding, Web Design, Cooking, Landscape Gardening and Aircraft Maintenance.

Nearly one hundred of the UK's most talented apprentices, employees and learners have spent the last nine months training as part of Squad UK. Now they will battle it out against their peers, over four days of competition, to secure a place in the 40-strong Team that will represent the UK at WorldSkills Leipzig, Germany from 2nd to 7th July 2013.

Once named in Team UK, the competitors will carry on training intensively before heading to WorldSkills in the summer. Team UK will be hoping to build on the success of the last WorldSkills Competition, held in London in 2011, where they won five Gold, two Silver, six Bronze medals and 12 Medallions for Excellence in front of an audience of 200,000 which included Prime Minister David Cameron.

Jaine Bolton, Chief Operating Officer, National Apprentice Service and UK Official Delegate to WorldSkills International said:

"I wish every Squad UK member the best of luck as they compete to secure a place in Team UK. By taking part in international competitions, the UK is able to showcase the high levels of performance that can be achieved by individuals and organisations through high quality further education, skills training and Apprenticeships. This provides the inspiration for young people and adults to be ambitious in their pursuit of skills to the highest level."

Members of the public are invited to come along and watch the finalists as they compete against each other during next week's UK finals for the Aircraft Maintenance category. The finals will take place in the Museum's Hangar 1 surrounded by the aircraft and exhibits on display at the Museum.

Team UK Selection Competitions will take place in venues throughout the UK. For a full list please visit www.worldskillsuk.org. Team UK will be announced at the end of March.

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Notes to Editors:

About Squad and Team UK for WorldSkills Leipzig 2013

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) manages the UK's entry into the WorldSkills Competition under the name of WorldSkills UK.

The members of Squad UK for WorldSkills Leipzig 2013 were be chosen from amongst the UK's most talented apprentices, employees and learners aged 18 – 23, after three day selection events which took place during summer 2012. The competitors that took part in the Squad UK selection events were invited to compete after excelling in the WorldSkills UK National Competitions or other industry events.

Members of Squad UK for WorldSkills Leipzig 2013 will undergo a specialised training programme, supported by a dedicated Training Manager in each skill. They will compete for a place in Team UK by taking part in further selection events which will be held throughout the UK in March 2013.

The UK is currently ranked fifth in the WorldSkills ranking ahead of France, Germany and China after Team UK secured five Gold, two Silver and six Bronze medals at WorldSkills London 2011. This was the UK's best ever result in the 62 year history of WorldSkills.

WorldSkills Leipzig takes place from 2 – 7 July 2013.

The National Apprenticeship Service would like to thank the following:

- Employers and Training Providers of Squad UK
- Training Managers and their supporting employers
- Performance Development Tutors and their supporting employers
- All the organisations that have provided venues, tools and materials free of charge
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For more information visit www.worldskillsuk.org

- Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Open daily from 10am
- FREE admission
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact
- Michelle Morgans on 01902 376212 or michelle.morgans@rafmuseum.org
- RAF Museum Cosford images & logo available at:
<http://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/research/media-vault.aspx>