Master's Degree for New Generation of Sport Directors

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A MASTER'S degree in Sport Directorship has been launched at Manchester Metropolitan University for business executives and former sports professionals.

The University has joined forces with Visionary Sports Investment (VSI) for the course, aimed at people who are looking to take the next step in the industry as Directors of Sport.

The degree - the first of its kind in the UK - is backed by an exclusive advisory board of sporting and business alumni drawn from the England and Wales Cricket Board, the Professional Footballers' Association and the Institute of Directors.

Former Manchester City and Everton manager Joe Royle, a director of VSI, launched the two-year, part-time degree at MMU's £75million Business School.

Leader, coach, manager

Steve Bainbridge, commercial academy director at the Business School, said: “Until now, the dynamic multi-faceted role of the Director of Sport hasn't been catered for with a specific qualification.

“Graduates from the programme will form part of an elite group with sport industry experience enabling them to be recruited to senior leadership positions in sport.”

The programme, which begins in September, is aimed at sports industry professionals. Unique to this qualification is the key role played by neuroscience in delivering excellence in leadership, personal development, innovation, and governance.

Developing an understanding of neuroscience in the context of personal and organisational development will dramatically improve the performance of the Sporting Director as a leader, coach and manager of people.

'Benchmark qualification'

The course is on a part-time basis with most candidates studying alongside their full-time jobs. There is a requirement to attend the University for some taught elements of the course. There are five units in total studied over two years, with each unit being taught at the Business School in three, two-day blocks of teaching.

Former England international Joe Royle said: “I passionately believe it will aid the development of the sports industry and fill a skills gap in the market which is becoming more and more vital.

“Sport has developed significantly in the last few years with experts predicting the global industry is set to be worth more than £85 billion by 2015. In 1995, I won the FA Cup with Everton with just seven back-room staff. Teams now have up to 50 staff working across a number of departments, so the role of the Sporting Director in managing talent and teams is absolutely invaluable.”

VSI Director Tony Faulkner added: “This will be the benchmark qualification for sports organisations seeking to recruit Sporting Directors. The role is currently not well defined and the course delivers absolute clarity on the skills and capabilities required for the function.”

For more information and to sign up, log on to www.sportingdirectorship.com.

Manchester Metropolitan University is a leading university for the professions and a powerful driver of the North West economy.

The University educates and trains large numbers of the region's legal and business professionals, scientists, engineers, teachers, health workers and creative professionals. It enjoys an excellent reputation for teaching and applied research and is a recognised innovator in partnership working with its local communities. The University is currently investing almost £300 million in its estate and facilities.

Gareth Hollyman
Press Officer

Media:



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Scan Me:

+44 (0)161 247 3406
07748 111 322
g.hollyman@mmu.ac.uk

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