



**Sport**  
For college, for life.

Competition  
Review:  
recommendations  
and implementation

April 2015





## The brief to Sport Structures

- Make recommendations regarding the scale, scope and level of competitions that AoC Sport should directly provide and regulate
- Identify best practice from other sectors and countries
- Explore how the direct provision of competitions relates to the competition frameworks of NGBs
- Recommend a financial model to include external financial streams, commercial opportunities and a charging policy





## Phase 1 of the project

- Desk-based research, email and telephone conversations with AoC Sport staff, colleges, chairs of Regional Operations Groups and NGBs
- Staff and student survey
- 9 regional workshops attended by 130 people, including 12 NGBs
- Production of a SWOT analysis and suggested solutions





## Phase 2 of the project

- Consolidation of SWOT analysis and suggested solutions through:
  - On-line questionnaire (over 60 responses)
  - Meetings with key groups of AoC Sport staff
  - Meeting with 11 NGBs
- Resulted in the final report (phase 3).





## Headline issues

1. Should we permit non-FE entrants?
2. What are the criteria for a sport to be included in AoC Sport competitions?
3. The development of a reward system
4. Inflexibility of the current competitive system
5. The role of Regional Operations Groups in determining competition structure
6. Engagement with NGBs in the Championships
7. Too much paper-based administration.





## Principles of the recommendations

- Quality competition at any level will lead to an increase in participation, higher levels of competition and a better student experience
- AoC Sport should provide appropriate competition for students relevant to NGBs, the needs of students and colleges
- AoC Sport competition should be based on educational ethos and values.





## Recommendation 1: Principles of entry

- 1.1 Colleges, schools and training providers should be eligible to enter league competition but only FE and Sixth Form Colleges are eligible for the cup and national championships
- 1.2 For entry into competitions, non-FE organisations' entry fees should be increased, over time, to match FE colleges. Entry fees to individual competitions shall be the same for all entrants
- 1.3 Greater emphasis should be placed on seeking an equitable balance in competition between male and female participation and further opportunities for disabled people to take part in competition should be put in place.





## Response to Recommendation 1.1

- 1.1 We will allow non-FE entrants in to leagues and cups as they help to create viable, quality competitions. There may be regional differences which will be covered in recommendation 5
- 1.1 All current non-FE entrants will be permitted to enter in 2015-16 but all new entries will go through an approval process.
- 1.1 From 2016 Regional Operations Groups will approve all non-FE entrants annually based on the achievement of set criteria.







## Response to Recommendations 1.2 & 1.3

- 1.2 The joining fee for non-FE will increase incrementally over time to become more in line with current college costs. For 2015 the fee will increase from £400 to £650. Entry fee for cups will be £50 for non-FE; £5 for FE.
- 1.3 Achieving an equitable balance will be part of the sport by sport plans.





## Recommendation 2: Defining & categorising sports

- 2.1 NGBs should apply to AoC Sport against criteria to be part of the AoC Sport competition programme
- 2.2 AoC Sport should work with NGBs to develop a pathway of activity and plan where appropriate how the sport grows into the higher categories if it wishes to
- 2.3 AoC Sport should further promote the delivery of sport competition in different formats at intra and county level with support from County Sports Partnerships.





## Response to Recommendation 2

- 2.1 We will work more closely with NGBs to seek involvement in our competitions whilst maintaining the students' interests at the heart of all our decisions
- 2.2 We recognise the need to work more closely with the NGBs but also recognise that the FE pathway may not always be the same as an NGB pathway.
- 2.3 We are working with all partners to develop a range of competitive opportunities at all levels.





## Recommendation 3: Reward system

3.1 AoC Sport should implement a points-based recognition system to reward colleges for commitment to participation, to entering and completing competition as well as winning competition. This should be tested in 2015-16 and implemented fully in 2016-17.





## Response to Recommendation 3

We will test the idea more comprehensively and trial various methods over the course of 2015-16, with a view to a more detailed recommendation being developed for approval in 2016.

This could include entries to competitions, completion of fixtures, success in competitions, delivery of participation events, volunteering, officiating.

Some have suggested we introduce a gold, silver and bronze recognition system.





## Recommendation 4: Leagues and cups

- 4.1 AoC Sport should implement a system where the top performing college teams are engaged in a premiership league system in partnership with the NGB. Leagues below this should be regionally based with promotion and relegation
- 4.2 AoC Sport cup competitions should be structured more regionally and in line with NGB guidelines
- 4.3 AoC Sport should develop code of conduct for teams based on ethical educational and sporting principles.





## Recommendation 4: Leagues and cups

- 4.4 AoC Sport should apply a number of changes for the 2015-16 season for start days, size of leagues, facility standards and regionally based cup draws
- 4.5 Cup competitions should be developed in conjunction with NGBs and should be in a suitable format to the level of completion needed.





## Response to Recommendation 4

4.1 Football competitions will remain the broadly same for 2015-16:

Premier League (category 1) £400

Category 2 (£200)

Category 3 (£50)

Category 4 – Development festivals

Category 5 – Participation festivals, Team 19

(Partner leagues – separate from the category structure)

4.1 In basketball, netball and rugby there will be a premier league (£100) and leagues (£60).

4.1 In hockey there will be leagues £(60).







## Response to Recommendation 4 (cont)

- 4.1 Regional Operations Groups will determine league structures. This could lead to sub regions, promotion and relegation, separate non-FE leagues.
- 4.2 The early rounds of cup competitions will be localised. Entry fee will be £5 per team.
- 4.3 An updated version of the current code of conduct will be put in place before the start of next season.
- 4.4 Clarification of the rules is on-going: player registration, conditions of play and consistency between competitions.
- 4.5 We will work with NGBs on competition formats.





## Recommendation 5: Regional Operations Groups

- 5.1 AoC Sport should agree terms of reference for regional operations groups
- 5.2 AoC Sport should develop a framework for assessment of teams against the code of conduct identified in recommendation 7
- 5.3 Following the initial organisation of leagues in early summer, AoC Sport regions should hold fixture planning days in September to ensure teams are entered into the most appropriate league competition





## Response to Recommendation 5

- 5.1 The terms of reference should set out the decision-making authority around non-FE entrants. We recognise that college staff are volunteers and would not want the recommendations to be misinterpreted that we are asking them to do more work.
- 5.2 In setting a clear code of conduct it will enable member colleges to control non-FE entrants by:-
- ensuring they meet our criteria for initial entry
  - refusing entry if the AoC sport code of conduct is not upheld
  - placing non-FE entrants in separate leagues if it is felt to be in the interests of the FE members





## Response to Recommendation 5 (continued)

5.3 Though some minor amendments to leagues can be made in September, it is too late to make major changes. League scheduling will be done earlier in the year:

- On line entries will be received in May
- Regional Operations Officers will formulate provisional leagues
- Leagues will be confirmed at the Regional Operations Group meetings
- Fixtures will be produced within 1 week of the Regional meeting
- Withdrawals can be made until early September.





## Recommendation 6: National & Regional Championships

- 6.1 AoC Sport should develop a year round events and championships plan in conjunction with NGBs submitting competition plans as per recommendation 3
- 6.2 AoC Sport should review the nature of the National Championships in light of NGB formats and implement in 2015-6
- 6.3 For 2015-6 National Championships the format should stay broadly the same with the removal of Golf, Cross-Country, Swimming and Squash





## Recommendation 6 (continued)

- 6.4 Reformatting of Table Tennis, Tennis, Hockey and Trampolining should be carried out for the 2015-6 championships
- 6.5 Regional Championships should reflect the National Championship format particularly in football.
- 6.6 All teams and individuals at the national championships should be from the winning college at regional level unless a selection process is agreed at the Operational Advisory Group meeting by June in advance of forthcoming year's championships.





## Recommendation 6 (continued)

- 6.7 AoC Sport should implement the sport by sport plans for the 2016-17 Championships
- 6.8 In 2016-7 the Championships should have at least two events; one for team sports and others for racquet sports. In addition national events in particular sports planned on an annual calendar in line with recommendations 6.1
- 6.9 AoC Sport should seek expressions of interest and carry out a broader tender process to determine suitable venues for national and regional championships





## Response to Recommendation 6

- 6.1 We will be working with NGBs on the scheduling of our events.
- 6.2-6.4 No decision will be made on these recommendations before the evaluation of 2015 event, consultation with the NGBs and the host city tender process.
- 6.5 The format of football differs from the regional to national championships. This will be reviewed.
- 6.6 The Regional Operations Groups can decide upon this recommendation







## Response to Recommendation 6 (continued)

- 6.7 We recognise that we need to work more closely with NGBs in developing our competition structure and ensuring that our rules are consistent
- 6.8 No immediate decision will be made on this recommendation
- 6.9 A tender process has already been created for the 2016 Championships





## Recommendation 7: Representative teams

- 7.1 AoC Sport should not have international or regional representative teams unless within a governing body framework
- 7.2 Invitations to compete in international tournaments should be passed to the best college team in that sport





## Response to Recommendation 7

- 7.1 Colleges value the international teams but not the additional costs of having a player selected.
- 7.1 Negotiations are taking place with sponsors over financial support for the football teams.
- 7.1 Further discussions need to take place before making a decision on other sports.
- 7.2 Is not a preferred option.





## Recommendation 8: registration, fixtures & results

8.1 AoC Sport should over the next two years develop online booking, registration and results services available for on mobile and tablet.





## Response to Recommendation 8

- We are working with Events Force to develop an on line entry form which will be available by 27 April
- We will use the same system to create entry forms for membership as well as Regional and National Championships
- Several NGBs are developing player registration systems which we need to monitor
- We will need to review the functionality of Fixtures Live to ensure that it meets the needs of the membership.





## Conclusion

- The Competition Review has enabled us to gather valuable feedback from the membership and develop a 'fit for purpose' competition structure
- There are a number of 'quick wins'
- Some recommendations may take longer to implement and may require us to think and work in a different way
- AoC staff are fully committed to using the Competition Review to improve the quality of the competitions
- This is a huge step forward – thank you everyone for contributing.

