Date: 15 February 2018

Manchester Metropolitan University

New scholarships aim to drive more women in top sports jobs



A ground-breaking scholarship programme aimed at boosting the number of women in top UK sports jobs has been extended to a second year by Manchester Metropolitan University following dozens of applications to the scheme in 2017.

Manchester Metropolitan University Business School is to continue its £9,000 Women in Sports Leadership scholarship, which will this year see two scholarships offered to women from a sports or sport-related business background applying for a place on the university's acclaimed Master of Sport Directorship (MSD) course.

Manchester Metropolitan University's Dr Sara Ward, programme director for the MSD course, said: "There is a palpable momentum for change now, and the new rules upping female representation on the boards of national sports bodies will be pivotal in ensuring that we go beyond the 30% threshold of female board members that IS required. As we see more women in sports leadership roles, the aim is that diversity will become integral to sports organisations, rather than an afterthought."

The MSD equips its graduates for sporting director and other sports leadership roles and has attracted some high profile names including Manchester City Women and England goalkeeper Karen Bardsley, and veteran Liverpool midfielder Becky Easton.

The scholarships provide much reduced fees for two female MSD students and were launched in 2017 in response to a survey by the Women in Sport organisation, which found that the number of women in top jobs at UK sporting bodies was falling.

Under UK Sport and Sport England's Code for Sports Governance, which came into effect in April last year, national sports bodies must now ensure that their boards are made up of at least 30% women in order to receive public funding. The Women in Sport organisation, which campaigns for gender equality in sport, has called for a further push to promote equal representation of women on national sports bodies.

Dr Ward added: "The Women in Sports Leadership scholarship was a success last year. We welcomed seven new female students on to the MSD course and we have already seen a rise in the number of applications from women for the new course which kicks off in September. By encouraging women to upskill for the sports director role we will help more professional sportswomen equip themselves for those vital leadership roles, and encourage others to do the same."

The scholarships are open to any woman who meets the MSD criteria and consist of a first prize of £6,000 and second prize of £3,000 off the course fees. Applicants should send a CV and a 250-word outline of why they should be considered for the scholarship to donna.ward@mmu.ac.uk, telephone 0161 247 6078, by 27 April. Winners will be announced in May.

For more information on the Masters of Sport Directorship course at Manchester Metropolitan University go to www.mmu.ac.uk/master-of-sport-directorship/