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Teaming up

Shaikh Sultan, Al No'man and Nitin Anand, Head of Academic Support Service, Skyline University College sign the agreement under which Skyline will offer courses for travel industry professionals.

Tour operators in Sharjah cannot provide service without qualifications

Skyline University has signed up with SCTDA to offer courses for industry personnel

BY NADIA SALEEM
Staff Reporter

Dubai Tour operators and other members of the tourism industry in Sharjah will not be able to continue their services without a degree and licence in tourism by 2010, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority (SCTDA) officials said yesterday.

The tourism authority has come up with this regulation to assure industry employees have sufficient knowledge of Sharjah and portray the correct picture to tourists. While the dead-

line is set for 2010, officials said that it is tentative.

Skyline University has signed up with SCTDA to offer the courses for industry personnel. The first course will be offered on the June 14 and will cost Dh2,750.

Shaikh Sultan Bin Ahmad Al Qasimi, chairman of the SCTDA, said the new regulation would improve the quality of services in the emirate, which saw 1.5 million tourists last year. "We are looking to grow at a gradual pace, not too fast. We have connections with all the departments

To further boost the sector, the emirate is gearing up to increase hotel capacity, with 28 new hotel establishments soon.

in Sharjah, tour operators to find the perfect growth formula for us in the tourism sector."

In 2007, the tourism sector accounted for 11 per cent of Sharjah's gross do-

mestic product at Dh68.4 billion, contributing more than many other economic sectors.

To further boost the sector, the emirate is gearing up to increase hotel capacity, with 28 new hotel establishments soon to be added to the current 107, and is continuing to attract world-renowned hotel brands. Sharjah is planning to add over 5,000 new hotel rooms in the next two years, increasing the total number of hotel rooms to 12,000 by 2010. Mohammad Ali Al No'man, director-general of SCTDA said.