

Sports and fitness

Sport and fitness is a rapidly expanding field, offering many opportunities for a wide range of careers, from playing or coaching in your chosen sport to managing sports centres or health clubs. The growing interest in sport and fitness is reflected in the increasing number of institutions that offer training in all aspects and combinations at all levels, from football combined with English language, sports centre management and nutrition to post-graduate qualifications in sports medicine, osteopathy and physiotherapy.

Checklist: Why study sport and fitness in the United Kingdom?

- The United Kingdom (UK) is a great sporting nation with a thriving and passionate sporting culture. You will have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of sports and to attend great sporting events (a Manchester United football match, a St. Andrew's golf tournament, the London Marathon)
- Studying in the UK will not only bring you academic or vocational achievement. You will also be surrounded by English speakers and will be able to improve your skills in the language - a big advantage enabling you to follow your career in many parts of the world.
- UK institutions, including more than seventy universities, offer a wide range of courses at technical and vocational level, as well as academic courses, postgraduate study and activity holidays.
- You can take short courses in virtually every aspect of sport or recreation management you can think of.
- Sport and fitness in the UK is a long established discipline, regulated by national and regional sports bodies and a wealth of professional bodies that grant qualifications in specialist fields.

1 What can I study?

You can do a wide variety of courses and qualifications, including:

- A-levels (Scottish Highers) in sports studies
- career based training courses leading to a range of vocational qualifications such as GNVQs, NVQs, SVQs, National Diplomas and Higher National Diplomas
- undergraduate degrees in physical education and sports studies; subjects covered range from sport psychology to sport coaching, sports therapy, and sport and leisure management
- specialised study in sports medicine for those with a medical or health care background



- practical qualifications (such as coaching, outdoor pursuits or grounds keeping) – or combine your chosen sport (football or tennis, for example) with English language learning
- professional qualifications in Leisure and Amenity Management or Sport and Recreation Management to manage leisure centres, health clubs and other related businesses
- summer schools dedicated to an activity or range of activities
- courses by distance learning.

Level of study	Examples of courses
Degrees, Higher National Diplomas, career-based qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Fitness Management • Leisure Management • Leisure Management and Tennis Studies • Leisure Studies • Outdoor Education • Outdoor Recreation • Physical Education • Sports Development and Coaching • Sports Injury • Sport and the Media • Sports Psychology • Sports Science • Sports Science with Professional Tennis Coaching • Sports Therapy
Postgraduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport development • Sport and exercise science • Sport and leisure management • Sport philosophy • Sport psychology • Sport sociology • Sports medicine [In sports medicine postgraduate courses are often run singly or jointly by specialist bodies, such as the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences, the British Association of Sports and Exercise Medicine, the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Sports Medicine and the Osteopathic Sports Care Association (see 'Where can I find more information?').]



Level of study	Examples of courses
Activity courses	The British Activity Holiday Association www.baha.org.uk/ includes details of activity holiday providers.
Short courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many short courses are run by professional bodies and by academic institutions. Look at www.educationuk.org or the web site of the appropriate professional body (see 'Where can I find more information?'). Courses for coaches or instructors in particular activities are usually run by sports national governing bodies, such as the British Canoe Union, the British Mountaineering Council and the Royal Yachting Association (see 'Where can I find more information?'). • Organisations like the Football Association run a range of courses for coaches and referees. Useful web sites to look at for information on coaching courses include: • www.sportscoachuk.org (sports coach UK), • www.thefa.com (The Football Association for England), • www.scottishfa.co.uk (The Scottish Football Association), • www.faw.org.uk (The Football Association of Wales), • www.irishfa.com (The Irish Football Association), • www.rfu.com (Rugby Football Union - England), • www.sru.org.uk (Scottish Rugby Union), • www.wru.co.uk (Welsh Rugby Union), • www.irishrugby.ie (Irish Rugby Union) and • www.ecb.co.uk (England and Wales Cricket Board).

Checklist: Choosing the right course

- First, seek advice on the recommended or usual path to your chosen career from the professional body in the country in which you want to work.
- Search for courses on www.educationuk.org
- Look carefully at the prospectus of your chosen institution – does it ask for academic standards you can reach, or a level of competence at a sport or activity?

2 Entrance

Do I need academic qualifications to study sport and fitness?

Degrees and diplomas demand the same academic qualifications as for other subjects. The level of academic achievement asked for will depend on the university or college you want to attend, and you should check on their websites. Practical courses run by sports bodies expect a certain level of competence at the activity, but will not demand academic qualifications. However, postgraduate courses run by professional bodies obviously demand qualification in a related subject.

Can I take part of my course in the United Kingdom?

The best way to investigate this is to look in your own country for institutions that have links with UK institutions and could arrange for you to do part of your studies in the UK.

3 How can I register as a professional?

You can take recognised professional qualifications in all fields – including coaching, leisure management, sports nutrition, coaching, and fitness and health. These are overseen by professional bodies, such as the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management and the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management (refer to ‘Where can I find more information?’).

Teaching physical education requires a first degree or a postgraduate certificate in physical education. However, health and fitness instructors can work with a National Vocational Qualification (Scottish Vocational Qualification).

Information on qualifications for different careers is on the Sport England website www.sportengland.org/courses/ and on the SportsScotland website www.sportscotland.org.uk/contents/youngpeople/careers.htm.

How can I achieve professional recognition in the United Kingdom and abroad?

UK qualifications in most disciplines are recognised all over the world. However, you should check with the governing body of the activity you want to pursue, in the country in which you want to work.

Checklist: Your next steps

- 1 Do some research with the professional body in the country in which you want to work – what qualifications are required to do the job there? Would you need a degree or a vocational qualification?
- 2 Look at the British Council website www.educationuk.org for the range of courses (including short courses) available.
- 3 Check admission criteria on the website of the institution you would like to attend.
- 4 If you want to gain work experience in the UK, look for a sandwich course (you will be allowed to do the placement without special immigration clearance).
- 5 Applications for first degree and Higher National Diploma courses should be made through UCAS. Other applications should be made direct to the institution or course provider. (For more information, refer to *Choosing your degree course and institution* and *Applications* in this series.)

4 Where can I find more information?

British Council Education information

Website www.educationuk.org

For further information, you can find details of your nearest office at www.britishcouncil.org/home-contact-worldwide.htm which includes links to all our country web pages and a worldwide address book giving contact details for all offices.

EducationUK Scotland

Website www.educationukscotland.org

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

(UCAS)

Rosehill

New Barn Lane

Cheltenham

Gloucestershire GL52 3LZ

Telephone +44 (0) 870 1122211

Fax +44 (0) 1242 544961

Email enquiries@ucas.ac.uk

Website www.ucas.com

The Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Sports Medicine (ACPSM)

Email tony@chmo.freeseve.co.uk

Website <http://viodesk.com/acpsm>

British Activity Holiday Association (BAHA)

22 Green Lane

Hersham

Walton-on-Thames KT12 5HD

Telephone/Fax +44 (0) 1932 252 994

Email info@baha.org.uk

Website www.baha.org.uk/

The Open University Business School

(course details in outdoor management)
PO Box 724
Milton Keynes MK7 6ZS
Telephone +44 (0) 1908 653 231
Fax +44 (0) 1908 655 072
Website www.open.ac.uk

Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management

ILAM House
Lower Basildon

The British Association of Sport and Exercise Medicine (BASEM)

Email BASEMinfo@aol.com
Website www.basem.co.uk

British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES)

Chelsea Close
Off Amberley Road
Armley
Leeds LS12 4HP
Telephone/Fax +44 (0) 113 289 1020
Email jbairstow@bases.org.uk
Website www.bases.org.uk

The Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom

Ling House
Building 25
London Road
Reading RG1 5AQ
Telephone +44 (0) 118 931 6240
Fax +44 (0) 118 931 6242
Email enquiries@pea.uk.com
Website www.pea.uk.com/

Womens Sport Foundation (WSF)

3rd Floor Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square Website
London WC1B 4SE
Telephone +44 (0) 20 7273 1740
Fax +44 (0) 20 7273 1981
Email info@wsf.org.uk
Website www.wsf.org.uk

Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR)

(Basic Expedition Training Award)
Francis House
Francis Street
London SW1P 1DE
Telephone +44 (0) 20 7854 8500
Fax +44 (0) 20 7854 8501
Email info@ccpr.org.uk
Website www.ccpr.org.uk

British Mountaineering Council

(courses for mountaineering instructors, mountain walking leaders and rock climbing, including abseiling)
177-179 Burton Road
West Didsbury
Telephone +44 (0) 870 010 4878
Fax +44 (0) 161 445 4500
Email office@thebmc.co.uk
Website www.thebmc.co.uk

British Orienteering Federation

(certificates for orienteering instructors and coaches)
Riversdale
Dale Road North
Matlock
Derbyshire DE4 2HX
Telephone +44 (0) 1629 734042
Fax +44 (0) 1629 733769
Email bof@britishorienteering.org.uk
Website www.britishorienteering.org.uk

SPRITO Directions

1 Newmarket Street
Clitheroe
Lancashire BB7 2JW
Telephone +44 (0) 12 0042 7232
Website www.sprito.org.uk

The Independent European Football Academy

Telephone +44 (0) 7952 943 344
Email info@footballcamps.co.uk

British Canoe Union (courses for canoe coaches)

Email info@bculifeguards.com
Website www.bculifeguards.com/

Footballculture.net

Website www.footballculture.net
(combines English language learning with football)

www.footballcamps.co.uk



Other useful resources

British Qualifications 34th ed. (Kogan Page, 2004, ISBN 0 7494 4138 0) – lists every recognised qualification on offer in the UK, by schools, colleges, universities, business schools, learned societies, trade and professional bodies and associations.

Occupations 2004 (DfES 2003, ISBN 0 8611 0864 7) Connexions compilation, an in-depth guide of over 600 career choices of all types from unskilled to professional work, also list prospects and qualification for each occupation.

NB. Please note these books may not be available at your local British Council office.

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information given here is correct and up to date, the British Council accepts no legal liability for its accuracy, currency or completeness.

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