

Participating and performing: sport and higher education in the UK



Universities UK



Sport in higher education

Sport is a key UK business sector

In 2000 in England sport generated £9.8bn of value-added and provided nearly two per cent of employment⁴ [Cambridge Econometrics, 2003]; this is larger than the motor industry or furniture and half as big again as agriculture

There are now more higher education students...

In 2001/02 there were 2,086,100 students at UK higher education institutions

96,000 students take part in British Universities Sports Association (BUSA) competitions

46,000 students participate in inter-university team sports and 50,000 participate in individual national championships

...and more sports courses...

at UCAS institutions in 2003 there were:

1,510 degrees in sport

1,190 degrees in sports sciences

439 degrees in sport studies

...with more students...

13,014 acceptances onto sport and sport-related courses in 2003

...developing research in sports science and leisure studies...

with funding of £3.2m in total, including £0.6m from industry and £1.1m from charities in the UK, higher education institutions are the largest producers of research into and advice on sports development⁵

...providing major access for the public

there are over 26m visits a year to HEIs sports facilities in England and 3.3m visits to HEIs sports facilities in Scotland

Acknowledgements

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Information for this publication has been drawn from audits of sports facilities at English and Scottish HEIs funded by Sport England and sportscotland respectively. The Sport England audit was compiled via direct responses from institutions¹, the sportscotland audit was organised through the Scottish Universities Physical Education Association and its 13 affiliated institutions^{2,3}. Frequent references are made to these data; Scottish data is generally in brackets. Information has also been drawn from case studies supplied by HEIs throughout the UK and gathered through the University and College Sport (UCS) network.

front cover

Athletes compete in the women's 100-metre hurdles qualifying round at the 21st World University Games in Beijing, 2001

©Corbis



Foreword



'I am pleased to be able to contribute to this publication on higher education and sport. It is timely that both this publication and the audits undertaken by Sport England and by colleagues in sportsotland have appeared as sport becomes increasingly important.

In realising the ambitious agenda for sport set out in *Game Plan* in 2002 the Government recognised the role that higher education institutions could play. I am pleased to see in this publication that higher education institutions are already working to meet that agenda and in many cases reaching out further to engage with their communities through sport in imaginative ways and to provide top-class facilities to enable elite athletes to develop and perform at the highest levels.

I look forward to higher education institutions and sports bodies building on the firm foundations of partnership detailed in this publication so that all parts of society are able to access sport at appropriate levels with all the health, societal and recreational benefits that sport brings.'

Rt Hon Richard Caborn MP
Minister for Sport



'Sport England welcomes this report from Universities UK. The findings build on our own national study and demonstrate that higher education institutions across the country make a very important contribution to sport. This contribution is not just through the fantastic opportunities they offer students and staff but also through those they extend to a wide cross-section of people in their local communities and to top-level competitors in this country. More exciting, however, is the prospect that this review raises of higher education institutions playing an even greater role – one that may see them becoming the co-ordinating hubs of provision in their local communities – maximising the synergy they can bring between education, volunteering, participation and competitive success. Sport England looks forward to building even stronger working relationships with higher education to realise the potential they offer for people to start, stay and succeed in sport.'

Patrick Carter
Chair
Sport England



'Universities are key institutions in the UK providing high quality education for increasing numbers of people, undertaking world-class research and engaging with business, industry and their communities. This publication together with the recent audits of sports provision in higher education institutions in England and Scotland demonstrates the extent of universities' involvement in sport in the UK.

Both higher education and sport have many important roles to perform in society and it is appropriate that this publication is being launched in the European Year of Education Through Sport. The role of sport ranges from world-class excellence to community access and healthy living. *Participating and Performing* provides a snapshot of how sport and higher education are engaging successfully to meet the aims of both higher education and sport. Universities UK hopes this will encourage further partnerships between higher education and sport at national, regional and local level for the benefit of higher education, sport and the country as a whole.'

Professor Ivor Crewe
President
Universities UK

Sport and higher education

Sport has been a part of the higher education (HE) experience for both students and staff in higher education institutions (HEIs) for most of the last century. For many years sport was purely recreational or associated with training physical education teachers. Recreational participation by students and staff still forms an important part of sport in higher education but increasingly sport is playing many more roles.

From the 1970s, the application to sport of knowledge and theories from medicine, physiology, psychology, biomechanics, sociology and management has led to the development of a number of courses in sport and sports science at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Sports graduates make a wide range of career choices including working in government and local authorities and increasingly in sports administration and coaching, and in commercial fitness and sport.

Further specialisation is occurring in higher education in response to developments in the sports industry and elite sports practice, with courses in sports development, sports engineering, sports journalism and sports law, for example. In the recent Research Assessment Exercise and in Teaching Quality Assessments, sports research has been rated highly and sports courses noted for their multi-disciplinary, flexible and coherent nature together with their impressive links to industry and the sports professions.^{6,7}



Emeka Uechuku (Loughborough University) – bronze in the discus, at the World University Games in 2003
[Loughborough University](#)

Traditionally, many elite athletes were selected from the ranks of the top amateur clubs in each sport, but high performance sport is increasingly associated with higher education. The advent in the 1990s of sports scholarships to help students with the costs of training and support services has been reinforced by the Government's decision to locate the regional hubs of the Institute of Sport in all four parts of the UK at higher education campuses and £150m has been invested in these hubs. This has pushed further the rising standards of competition in the British Universities Sports Association (BUSA) championships. In 1996 Sir Roger Bannister predicted that by 2010 a third of the UK's world class athletes would come from higher education institutions; this has already happened.⁸

There has also been high-level interest in the role of sport. The Government's strategy for sport, outlined in *A Sporting Future for All*⁹ focused on increasing participation in sport and physical activity for all and was followed in 2001 by *The Government's Plan for Sport*¹⁰. In implementing this strategy the Government focused on further and higher education, leading to *The Role of Further and Higher Education in Delivering the Government's Plan for Sport*¹¹, jointly published by DfES/DCMS in 2002. In the same year, the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit and DCMS produced *Game Plan*¹², a paper outlining a strategy for delivering the Government's sport and physical activity objectives. The White Paper, *The Future of Higher Education*¹³, published by the DfES in 2003, noted the critical role that HEIs play in their communities and indicated Government support for institutions in the development of their community roles.

Within this Government strategy, HEIs are seen as supporting elite sports with more sports science services and research; engaging with their local communities through sport, both for recreation and improving performance; plus promoting sport for health in an increasingly sedentary, obese and ageing population. *Game Plan* also highlighted that sport can play a role in promoting lifelong learning; in building more inclusive and cohesive communities; in reducing youth crime; and in generating jobs and sustainable environments.

Sport is now a key element in national, regional and community strategies, Health Improvement Plans and many other public policy implementation and evaluation schemes. Sport in higher education reflects this spectrum of activities. The range and nature of sport in higher education institutions is now light-years away from the simple facilities, rudimentary training and dietary regimes that supported Roger Bannister when he ran the first 4-minute mile as a medical student at the University of Oxford's Iffley Road running track in 1954.

'My own training, very short by today's standard, was longer than this [an hour a day]. I had no particular food, indeed, by today's standards, not the right food, and probably not enough of it. The truth was that, for the last year of my running, I cooked for myself in a basement flat a stew that was nurtured through the week. There were few trainers, masseurs and, mercifully, no drugs.¹⁴

Sport for students and staff

More than two million students and more than 350,000 staff study and work at HEIs in the UK and have access to the extensive range of sporting facilities provided by their institutions. The audit of HEIs in England revealed that three out of four offered sports-related courses; requiring laboratories, sports development, sports science and medical facilities, as well as sports facilities.

HEIs provide good sports facilities compared to much local provision and students and athletics' unions support a wide range of clubs. In fact, full-time students have the highest adult participation rate in sport, at 76 per cent¹⁵.



The University of Hertfordshire's Sports Village
University of Hertfordshire

Partnership in providing facilities

Sugden Sports Centre

In Manchester, the Sugden Sports Centre was built jointly in 1997 by UMIST and Manchester Metropolitan University. It is held in a trust but managed by a commercial contractor. In 2004 the University of Manchester will become a third partner in this facility. The Centre has a sports hall, six squash courts, a fitness centre and outdoor sports courts.

Manchester Aquatics Centre

In 2000, the University of Manchester, UMIST and Manchester Metropolitan University in partnership with Manchester City Council built the Manchester Aquatics Centre consisting of two 50m swimming pools, a diving pool and a leisure pool together with fitness facilities. The Manchester Aquatics Centre provides a significant level of community access.

The Manchester Aquatics Centre was used for the swimming events at the 2002 Commonwealth Games held in Manchester.

According to the recent audits in England, 40 per cent of HEIs had appointed a Director of Sport. In England, 43 per cent of institutions had a strategy for sport and 69 per cent had such a strategy in Scotland. The latter was not just a status symbol; it systematically made a difference to the profile of sport, its credibility with external funders and users and the scale and quality of provision. For three out of five institutions in England sport had increased in importance in the last year. In Scotland, sport had increased in importance for three out of four institutions in the last five years.

The average annual revenue funding/income in English HEIs for sports facilities and programmes (non-academic) was £0.75m per institution (in Scotland £0.66m) or £2.85 per user. Average expenditure per student was £44 a year. One in nine institutions had less than £0.25m annual funding/income and one in ten more than £1.25m.

Provision of sports facilities in many HEIs is on more than one site, two-thirds have sports facilities at more than one location. At HEIs in England there are 41 swimming pools including three 50m pools, 139 sports halls, 65 sand- and 12 water-based artificial turf pitches.

Revenue funding for sport in HEIs	England	Scotland
Total	£73m	£9.4m
from the HEIs	£34m	£3.8m
from operating facilities, courses	£38m	£5.5m
from external sources	£1m	£0.1m

Figures from:
Sport England Audit of Sports Provision in the Higher Education Sector 2004 and sportsotland Audit of Sports Provision in the Higher Education Sector in Scotland 2003

(It should be noted that the Sport England figures are partial and are averages. They do not include full estates costs for maintenance and repair, nor depreciation nor all the costs of the Athletic Union operation and subsidy from the HEIs. These figures are likely to be around two-thirds of the full costs as suggested by explicit financial models such as the Transparency Review of Costing.)

Sports facilities in English HEIs

% of institutions with these facilities

Indoor

94% sports hall(s)
 91% fitness suite(s)
 71% squash courts, free weights rooms, dance studios
 40% swimming pool
 25% martial arts room
 23% climbing walls
 17% gymnasium
 9% tennis centre
 5% snooker room
 3% golf course, rowing tank
 3% climbing walls

Outdoor

91% grass pitches (winter)
 74% grass pitches (summer)
 76% tennis courts
 65% sand-based artificial pitches
 28% hard multi-use games areas
 23% track and field
 13% water-based artificial pitches
 11% watersports/boathouse
 6% golf courses, netball courts
 4% swimming pools, archery, fencing salle, rifle range, outdoor activity centres

Figures from:
 Sport England Audit of Sports Provision
 in the Higher Education Sector 2004



Coaching young footballers
 at the University of Hertfordshire
[University of Hertfordshire](#)

Hosting regional and national sports organisations

- The University of Brighton's Sports Development Unit hosts Sport England staff, the Sussex Sports Partnership, administration for the Sussex Sports Board, the South East Regional Training Unit for Sport, and regional branches of the Amateur Swimming Association, and the Triathlon Association; a regional one-stop shop for sports administration and governance.
- The University of Stirling is host to the operations base of the Scottish Institute of Sport, the Central Scotland Institute of Sport, the Commonwealth Games Council of Scotland, Scottish Swimming and the Golf Foundation for Scotland, while five national coaches work from the offices of the Department of Sports Studies.
- The University of Ulster hosts the new Sports Institute for Northern Ireland that provides specialist services for over sixty of Northern Ireland's elite performers in a range of sports.

In England, half the revenue funding for sport came from operating facilities and services (59 per cent in Scotland), half from internal grants from the HEI and Student/Athletic Unions (41 per cent in Scotland); only two per cent (one per cent in Scotland) came from external sources such as Sport England/sportscotland and national governing bodies of sport. External funding was higher at institutions such as the University of Bath and Loughborough University with branches of the English Institute of Sport on campus.

- 90 per cent of income was from sports facility usage, the remainder from refreshments, equipment hire/sale and sponsorship.
- The number of users of HEIs sports facilities in England averaged 263,250 a year per institution; two-thirds of users were students and staff.
- In Scotland institutions received an average of 7,368 visits per week to their sports facilities.
- Sports facility provision requires on average 39 (33 in Scotland) staff (the equivalent of 21 full-time staff) a quarter of whom are students.
- On average, 11.5 sessional coaches and three sports development officers were employed by each HEI.
- 62 per cent of English institutions planned investment in new sports facilities and sports development over the next year and another 17 per cent in the near future, a quarter of institutions planned to invest £5m or more in their sports facilities.

Investing in sport

Hertfordshire Sports Village

The University of Hertfordshire has recently completed a £120m development of a new campus in Hatfield. This campus includes the new £15m Hertfordshire Sports Village opened in August 2003, which was built using Private Finance Initiative funding. The new facilities include a 25m pool, 100-station fitness centre with sports injury clinic, an aerobics studio, 12 badminton court sports hall, two squash courts, 12m climbing wall with bouldering cave, four net cricket/multipurpose halls, three floodlit artificial turf pitches and three new grass pitches and one rugby pitch.

Sportspark, Norwich

This £17.6m facility, built next to the University of East Anglia's athletics track and artificial turf pitch, provides a wide range of activities for 1.5m visitors, four-fifths from the community. The Sportspark includes a 50m swimming pool, indoor arena, fitness centre, squash courts, climbing wall, dance studio and martial arts room.

Wales National Pool, Swansea

The new 50m Wales National Pool was financed by Sportlot's largest-ever grant of £8m towards a cost of £10.5m, the remainder being provided by the University of Wales, Swansea and Swansea City Council. The Assistant Director of Culture and Recreation at the Council explained, '[Neither the University nor ourselves could afford to fund the development individually, but together we could find the money](#)'.

Further partnerships between the University and Council will see the construction of an eight-lane athletics track, an indoor athletics training area and two artificial turf hockey pitches.



Student sport

Participating in sport regularly at university is likely to engender lifelong participation. In wider society, 19 per cent fewer adult women play sport than men, but 53 per cent of the student population are women, and they form the majority of users of HEIs sports facilities; especially in aerobics, yoga and fitness activities.

- Two in five students have taken out a membership for their HEIs facilities.
- The extent of provision of sporting opportunities by student/athletic unions is significant, there is an average of 35 (40 in Scotland) sports clubs at HEIs and one in five had more than 50 clubs. HEIs provide substantial support for these activities through reduced costs for facility hire, coaching, subsidised transport and physiotherapy/sports science support.
- 83 per cent of English HEIs run yoga/Pilates/tai chi courses, 63 per cent recreational salsa/dance and 59 per cent general active lifestyle programmes.

Sporting infrastructure at the Foundation for Sport

All non-academic sport at the University of Birmingham is delivered through the Foundation for Sport. It supports sport and physical recreation needs at all levels, from the absolute beginner to world-class performer and provides extensively for the community and local clubs in Birmingham.

- Provision of high performance training venues for national squads, including athletics, fencing, triathlon, hockey, gymnastics and squash.
- Sports science support for all levels of athlete, from professional to recreational. External clients include UK Athletics, Birmingham City FC, the Women's Football Association and local athletes such as Aisha Hansen and Mark Lewis-Francis. The services are accredited by the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences and the National Sports Medicine Institute and the services available include nutritional, physiological and psychological aspects of sports performance. Laboratory demonstrations and educational seminars are also offered to local schools.
- Provision of high class training and competition facilities to local clubs such as Edgbaston and Bourneville hockey clubs, Moseley and Harborne rugby clubs, Birmingham Flames Gymnastics Club and Birmingham/Rowheath Athletics Club.
- Provision of facilities and coaching for schools (including swimming, athletics, basketball and playing fields provision for a local primary school).
- A comprehensive programme of around 140 taught classes for students, staff and community members (in fitness, dance, holistic and sporting activities), mainly at beginner/improver levels.
- Talent development courses for children during school holidays.
- An established swimming club, for members of the community with disabilities.
- Tailored work experience programmes for local 15/16 year olds.
- The University's Priestley Centre in the Lake District provides a range of opportunities for students and others to access outdoor activities, from activity packages for academic courses to team-building programmes for a range of groups including commercial clients.

BUSA championships

The British Universities Sports Association (BUSA) championships are the largest student sport operation in Europe. BUSA organises:

- 46,000 students in team sports (15 for men: notably in soccer, rugby union and squash; 16 for women: notably in netball, hockey and football; and four mixed: notably riding and golf).
- Team events in nine individual championships, including tenpin bowling, karate and canoe polo.
- 50,000 students in 53 individual sports from archery to windsurfing including canoeing, diving, skiing, and triathlon.

Intramural/hall of residence sports competitions provide sporting opportunities for even more students. At Loughborough University 14 sports are played between 14 halls over two semesters. At the University of Sheffield the most popular intramural activity is six-a-side soccer and 180 teams compete regularly in this competition.



The most popular intramural sports in England and Scotland

	%
5-a-side soccer	81 (-)
rugby union	37 (23)
11-a-side soccer	58 (70)
hockey	35 (-)
badminton	53 (15)
squash	35 (15)
basketball	49 (30)
cricket	35 (15)
netball	41 (8)
volleyball	32 (30)

Figures from:
Sport England Audit of Sports Provision in the Higher Education Sector 2004 and
sportscotland Audit of Sports Provision in the Higher Education Sector in Scotland 2003



opposite
British international swimmer Vicki Cook, using the pool at the University of Hertfordshire's Sports Village
[University of Hertfordshire](#)

top
The University of Exeter lift the trophy at the BUSA rugby final at Twickenham in 2001
[BUSA](#)

above
Saracen's rugby player Ryan Pearcey using the facilities at the University of Hertfordshire's Sports Village
[University of Hertfordshire](#)

Open to all

There are two strong drivers behind the investment of public funding in sports partnerships with HEIs. One is to support the development of elite athletes and the other is to open up opportunities for all groups in the community. Each institution is differently placed to serve one or both purposes. Estimates suggest that around one in three visitors to HEIs sports facilities in England is an external user. HEIs sports facilities are open for public use for an estimated 71 per cent of the time they are open. Such facilities are well-placed to offer opportunities to the public through access to their facilities and programmes targeted at particular sections of the community.



Participants at an event for schools organised by London South Bank University Sports Ambassadors from the elite table tennis squad
[London South Bank University](#)

Raising levels of participation in sport

In *Game Plan*, it is reported that only 32 per cent of adults in England take enough moderate exercise (30 minutes five times a week) to sustain good health, compared to 57 per cent of Australians and 70 per cent of Finns. The Government's target is to reach the Finnish level by 2020; a very ambitious aim. Through the sports facilities and programmes they offer, HEIs have a unique opportunity to encourage or continue healthy attitudes and lifestyles in a significant proportion of the UK population at a key time in their lives. With the moves to further increase participation in higher education this opportunity will become even more important.

Access for the community

- HEIs sports facilities in England are available for public use 71 per cent of the time they are open; 91 per cent of Scottish HEIs offer pay-as-you-go access to the public
- Providing community access and encouraging community involvement requires complex and wide ranging partnerships with local authorities, clubs, colleges and schools.
- Public access to HEIs sports facilities is high, and in England membership schemes offer the public access to all facilities at 44 per cent of HEIs, to fitness/weights suites in 52 per cent, to squash courts in 25 per cent, to swimming pools in 19 per cent and to tennis courts in 15 per cent.
- In Scotland three-quarters of institutions offer membership to members of the community
- 74 per cent of HEIs in England offer concessions to community users of their sports facilities.

Reaching out: sports partnerships

% of institutions in partnerships with:	Scotland	England	main intentions of partnerships	
			strategic development	elite
local sports clubs (amateur and professional)	62	88	62	54
sports governing bodies	62	74	43	58
local authorities	77	69	63	44
other FE/HE institutions	46	63	53	27
other schools	54	58	47	31
specialist sports colleges	n/a	42	40	17

Figures from:
Sport England Audit of Sports Provision in the Higher Education Sector 2004 and
sportsotland Audit of Sports Provision in the Higher Education Sector in Scotland 2003

right and far right

Participants in the Northern Ireland Youth Games organised by Queen's University, Belfast, the Sports Council for Northern Ireland and Belfast City Council
[Queen's University, Belfast](#)



Starting young – primary age soccer

University of Hertfordshire students who qualify as coaches put their skills to good use in curricular and out-of-school soccer sessions in 15 primary schools; a Head Teacher's assessment is: '...he [the University's Sports Development Officer] is working with the children in something they enjoy, taking their football skills outside of the school and trying to involve them not only after school but also in holiday camps. He comes into assemblies and gives talks on the importance of teamwork, so it's really about developing them as people through sport'.

The best players from the camps are invited to come to specialised training sessions, twice a week, at the new sports village in Hatfield. These young players will be linked with a professional club and its youth academy to further develop their skills.

To help the local school league, the Sports Development Officer runs free coaching and managerial courses for older children.

Easington District Summer School

In a pilot supported by Easington Education Action Zone, Dalton Park, the University of Durham and East Durham and Houghall Community College, Durham students coached and mentored primary and secondary school children over two weeks on a multi sports camp.

'It has been amazing watching the change in the kids at the end of the week, sport has really helped them grow in confidence.'

Laura Gator
elite rower and
University of Durham mentor

'I liked rowing... as it was dangerous. I think I am a good rower and this is a sport I am going to get involved with.'

Graham Wilson
Deneside Primary

Working with young people

In secondary school 75 per cent of students take part in sport regularly. In and out of school 77 per cent of 17–19 year olds take part in at least one sport or physical activity once a month or more often and 26 per cent of children take part in sport outside school in sports clubs.

Game Plan notes that participation in sport falls dramatically after children leave school. The Sport England and sportscotland audits uncovered initiatives being run by HEIs to combat this fall:

- Children in the community are a key focus for HEIs, with many institutions offering courses for children, mainly in the form of summer vacation general recreation and training schemes as well as taster courses including sports they may not have access to at school.
- The Youth Sports Trust based on the Loughborough University campus co-ordinates nationwide TOPs (Training Opportunities Programmes) to train teachers, parents, and community coaches and the Institute of Youth Sport also based at Loughborough underpins that work with research and evaluation.



Sports Ambassadors in Southwark

Fifteen students, including five elite performers, from London South Bank University, delivered 450 hours of coaching to 300 children in nine schools, a further education college, a club and three local community groups through the Sports Ambassadors Scheme. Comments from those involved included:

'The scheme improved sporting performance and interest in sport.'

Richard Lansiquot
Head of PE and Year 9
Sacred Heart School

'Contributed to improved behaviour and pupil performance.'

Jo Sangster
PE teacher
Lilian Baylis School

'Pupils are now more disciplined.'

Vernon Neve-Dunn
Southwark Tigers club manager

Sport Leeds

At the University of Leeds sport has been used in the University's community programmes. Student volunteers are able to gain recognised sports coaching awards through Sport Leeds, the University's physical education service, enabling them to assist with the running of out of school sports clubs across the city.

'...we have students coming out of our ears! It's wonderful! We have students running after school clubs...'

Headteacher
Little London Community
Primary School

Youth Games

Queen's University Belfast is a key partner in the annual Northern Ireland Youth Games organised by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland together with Belfast City Council and a commercial sponsor. Each year there is a programme of athlete identification and focused coaching leading to the participation of over 2,500 young people from across Northern Ireland in the Youth Games in May. The Games take place at Queen's outdoor and indoor sports sites and Belfast City Council venues. This strong partnership aims to provide opportunities for young people to develop their sporting ability and is firmly established in Northern Ireland's sporting calendar.

Working with disadvantaged groups

The UK has the largest poverty gap in Northern and Western Europe, with 25 per cent of adults and 30 per cent of children poor by EU thresholds, what Collins¹⁶ called 'the core of social exclusion'. The Policy Action Team's tenth report¹⁷ set out the case for sport and the arts being an integral part of the Government's policies to combat social exclusion and deprivation and *Game Plan* also noted the contribution that sport could make in this area.

It is difficult to evaluate the impact of sport within the wide range of multi-activity, multi-agency measures used to combat social exclusion but the value of sport in developing transferable skills, building self-esteem and providing personal and career opportunities is recognised. HEIs are engaging in this area of activity and a number of institutions offer concessionary fees and targeted programmes for disadvantaged groups. However, given the scale of the problem and its links to widening participation in higher education, there is scope for more activity in this area, particularly in partnership with other relevant bodies such as social and justice services, health and youth organisations.

Working with older people

Game Plan noted that participation in sport continues to drop with age, yet the health benefits from exercise and allied savings in NHS costs increase significantly above the age of 40.

In England over a third of institutions (91 per cent in Scotland) offer access programmes to older people in the community. Many also offer taster courses providing older people with the opportunity to try activities they were not able to access when they were younger.

Reaching out to the COMMUNITY

In 2001 the University of Southampton obtained £400,000 from the Active Community Fund for three posts. The Community Sport Volunteer Development Officer, Becky Dance, has built up the commUNlty scheme whereby 105 students have gained level one and two qualifications to coach in the local community.

The scheme has seen many sports clubs established, one of them being the Northside boxing club for 90 8–26 year-olds. A neighbourhood renewal officer commented 'I have never seen so much interaction between young rivals on the estate who are now playing and having fun with each other; previously they would have been causing nuisance to residents'.

In promoting the CommUNlty rugby scheme for 50 young people, many on acceptable behavioural contracts with probation services; the city's rugby development officer and police remarked that this scheme offered a number of young people an opportunity to develop life skills as well as rugby skills.

Keeping active

- Many HEIs provide access to their sports facilities and targeted programmes for senior citizens in their communities. The University of Brighton runs a club for the over-55s, (ToFFS).

'The club is a magnificent opportunity to keep fit and meet with others.'

Norman Temple
ToFFS club member

- The University of East Anglia attracts four out of five of its 1.5m visitors a year from the community. This includes 200 over 50s a week coming for a FILL (Fitness in Later Life) programme including indoor cricket, badminton, bowls and speed walking.

Working for health

The benefits of physical activity on health are clear. Regular exercise can help to reduce the risk of heart disease, strokes and obesity; problems that are a significant cost to health services in the UK. Many higher education institutions run participation programmes for students, staff and the community with associated health messages. In England general active lifestyles programmes are provided by 59 per cent of institutions; more specifically, 15 per cent offer healthy heart programmes; and 11 per cent weight management programmes.



Over 60s exercise class at the University of Bristol's new Centre for Sport, Exercise and Health
University of Bristol

Healthy hearts in Dundee

The University of Dundee's Institute of Sport and Exercise has been delivering a cardiac rehabilitation exercise class for members of the community since 1999. Entry to the programme is by referral from Ninewells Hospital and the programme now accommodates 150 participants each week. Participants are also provided with access to other university facilities including the swimming pool, gym and sports halls.

'The class is very important because it brings people together who have the same conditions.'

Jack Beattie
Participant

'Without the class I wouldn't exercise.'

David Kydd
Participant

'The partnership that we have with the Institute of Sport and Exercise means we can work together for the local community ... to deliver accessible and supportive opportunities that are crucial to motivating the clients and encouraging exercise adherence.'

Jennifer McArtney
Ninewells Hospital Cardiac
Rehabilitation Services

Community exercise in Bristol

At its new £5m Centre for Sport, Exercise and Health, the University of Bristol offers 35 exercise classes a week, serving, amongst others:

- Healthy Hearts for rehabilitating cardiac patients
- Over 60s
- Start to Exercise (for people referred by their GPs)

The Centre provides support and guidance to all and draws on a multidisciplinary team of physiotherapists, podiatrist, massage therapists, osteopath and orthopaedic surgeons.

The University's sports facilities are used by over 30 sports clubs and schools. Bristol Year of Sport was launched at the University in 2004. This initiative aims to increase participation in sport and a range of activities are planned throughout 2004 to raise awareness about sport in Bristol and encourage healthier lifestyles. The University is a member of the Bristol Sports Partnership, which includes public and private bodies and is managing the Year of Sport.

Sport is also included in the student community action programme with a number of students receiving the community sports leader award and other coaching awards, enabling them to work on sports projects across the city.



Working with women

Game Plan recorded that women are 19 per cent less likely to take part in sport and physical activity than men. This would seem to be an area of community access where HEIs may need to focus more effort, as the English audit found:

- Only a quarter of English HEIs offer specific participation programmes to women and girls in the community.
- In contrast, female students' participation in soccer, rugby and cricket is leading the growth of these sports for women in the wider community.

Student Sportswoman of the Year

This award demonstrates the high level at which many students compete during their time in higher education. Many of those shortlisted have achieved Commonwealth, British and World awards.

Rebecca Cooke from the University of Glasgow was awarded the title of Sunday Times Student Sportswoman of the Year in 2003, her achievements include – Commonwealth double gold, British Swimming Championships treble gold, World Swimming Championships bronze and World Student Swimming Championships triple gold and bronze.

Sport for girls in Portsmouth

Girls living in deprived parts of inner city Portsmouth lack opportunities for sport and exercise. With support from the City Council, the University of Portsmouth and Hampshire Football Association, volunteers were trained in level two coaching awards in football and delivered after-school sessions for girls culminating in a tournament.

'We love playing football, and play whenever we can. This is great!'
Lacey (8) and Natasha (9)

'The volunteers have committed a lot of time... working in partnership with the University has allowed us to fill gaps in our sports provision, and we have certainly benefited from the use of the University facilities.'

Tom Lloyd
Portsmouth City Council
Sports Development Officer

Working with volunteers

Just over £27 million was allocated under the Higher Education Active Community Fund (HEACF) to English HEIs until August 2004 with a target to create 14,000 new opportunities for volunteering by 2004 and develop links between HEIs and their communities. A number of institutions have made imaginative use of the funds available for the development of volunteers in higher education in the field of sport. Universities are quite often a key development place for the nation's sporting volunteers.

A recent Sport England volunteering survey¹⁸ identified that on average per university there are 47 voluntary sports clubs with 157 volunteers devoting a total of 12,824 hours per annum. The HEACF fund is seeking to maximise the impact this significant human resource can have on the development of sport in the local communities of each university.

Volunteers are being placed in schools and community organisations providing coaching sessions for young people, support at events and tournaments and adding value to existing sporting programmes. This programme also provides excellent personal development opportunities for the students.



opposite
'UP for Sport' participants
in a girl's football initiative
at the University of Portsmouth
[University of Portsmouth](#)

left
Coaching youngsters
at the University of Durham
[University of Durham](#)

Working with ethnic minorities

Game Plan highlighted that ethnic minority participation in sport is six per cent lower overall than the national average. Higher education student intakes are increasingly multi-cultural and international, and race has been a relatively low profile issue in student life generally and in sport. Consequently programmes aiming to offer sports opportunities to people from ethnic minorities have not been a high priority for institutions. The audits record that 15 per cent of English and nine per cent of Scottish higher education institutions offered targeted participation programmes for ethnic minority groups in the community.

Working with people with disabilities

The 1995 Disability Discrimination Act now applies with full force to HEIs and their sports facilities. The English audit discovered that:

- Most outdoor sports sites, four out of five swimming pools, seven out of ten fitness suites and half of free weights rooms, dance studios and squash courts in English HEIs provided access to those with disabilities.
- A number of HEIs offered courses for people with disabilities.

The English Federation of Disability Sport is based at the Alsager campus of Manchester Metropolitan University from where it runs national, regional and issue-based initiatives.



Kirsten Lawton (University of Surrey) ranked No 1 in the world with Claire Wright from UWIC in Synchronised Trampolineing
[Steve Herritage:](#)
University of Surrey

Access to sport at 'Marjons'

The College of St Mark and St John in Plymouth, 'Marjons' has developed several inclusive programmes for people with disabilities:

- Health Opportunities for Learning Disabled (HOLD) boccia and fitness for people in residential care, funded by the City Council and Health Action Zone.
- £1.3m investment in refurbishing its fitness centre to ensure it is accessible to people with disabilities, funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the English Federation of Disability Sport.
- In 2003 Marjons hosted the first Devon Disability Games for 200 children including boccia, football, and laser games sponsored by Devon Sport Partnership, Plymouth City Council, Plymouth Argyle and Exeter City professional football clubs, and the School Sport Co-ordinator. A larger event is planned for 2004.
- Swimming lessons for people with disabilities.
- Rebound Therapy for people with autism.

Working with the sports industry

Sport is now big business as well as a major public service function and a huge non-profit sector comprising a quarter of all volunteering. Many HEIs in England are developing links with the 45 English county sports partnerships (involving municipal sports development, local education authorities and individual schools), national and regional governing bodies of sport.

The commercial aspects of sport continue to grow, and sport is part of HEIs' impact on their regions.^{19, 20, 21}



Runners from the University of Durham Sporting Club using University sports facilities
[University of Durham](#)

Serving all aspects of sport²²

Loughborough University has the largest academic sports department in the UK with over 40 staff and three research institutes; its Sports Development Centre employs 85 permanent staff with a similar number of casual staff and hosts nine national governing bodies. The campus is also the base for the East Midlands branch of sports coach UK, the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management and the Youth Sport Trust.

In 2002 the University received a Queen's Anniversary Prize in recognition of its role as a key institution in sports development in the UK and its leading role in sports research and education in the world. Aspects of these roles include:

- Having a number of top coaches and administrators in UK, overseas and international governing bodies of sport.
- Providing world class facilities with the English Institute of Sport for athletics, badminton, basketball (including hosting the professional Leicester Riders team), cricket, gymnastics, hockey, netball, swimming and tennis (indoors and out).
- Having nearly 200 past and present national and international representatives in 22 individual and team sports including:
 - in athletics – Steve Backley, Sebastian Coe, Tanni Grey-Thompson, Paula Radcliffe, Chris Rawlinson;
 - in badminton – Donna Kellogg;
 - in rugby union – Fran Cotton, Gerald Davies, Clive Woodward;
 - in swimming – James Gibson.
- Providing basic research, for example, for the Wellcome and British Heart Foundations (in physiology, fitness and physical activity); Sport England, local authorities, LEAs and schools, and the Youth Sport Trust (on sports management, youth sport and sports development in general), the International Olympic Committee and Smith Kline Beecham (in nutrition).
- Developing spin-off businesses from the Sports Technology Research Group in the engineering faculty including Progressive Sports Technologies Ltd with a partnership with Reebok to develop a reconfigurable deck for fitness workouts.

High performance

Game Plan set targets for British and English teams and individuals to sustain world rankings within the top five, particularly in more popular sports. For their long-term development, local athletes need a pathway to the next level of performance and then on to regional and national levels. HEIs are in a key position to provide these pathways and one model developed at the University of Durham has brought together facilities and support services for the benefit of a number of sports.

The English audit revealed that many HEIs were working with national governing bodies for sport in a range of sports including the Rugby Football Union, the Amateur Swimming Association, the Amateur Athletics Association, the Golf Foundation/English Golf Union, the English Hockey Association, the English Netball Association and also the British Olympic Association. A quarter of HEIs worked with sports coach UK, several being regional centres for its training programme.

Partners for sporting pathways

Developing out of an established sports association, Durham Sporting Club brings together education, the city, and the clubs of athletics, cricket, fencing, hockey, rowing, rugby and swimming, all sharing mutual resources.

The Minister for Sport, Richard Caborn, commented: 'I was impressed by the ...club's emphasis on sport at all levels right through from the grass roots to the highest degrees of excellence, and with the range and commitment of the local partnership'.

Excellence at UWIC

The University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC) has an Academy of Athletics which coaches 130 children aged 8–16 in its junior section, as well as seniors from its own 120-strong club and the national squad including Olympians such as Darren Campbell, Katharine Merry and Christian Malcolm.

'It is a world class facility for teaching and coaching athletics, a true centre of sporting excellence.'

Lynn Davies
President of UK Athletics

'The UWIC Academy is creating a high performance ethos, helping to identify and nurture talented athletes, and will play a key role in raising the standards in Wales and across all parts of the UK.'

David Moorcroft
Chief Executive of UK Athletics

'The wonderful facilities have enabled me to compete at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester and the World Championships in Paris. I will continue to use them to help me in my build up to Athens. I am also improving my coaching expertise by working with the children in the Junior Academy.'

Gable Garenamotse
undergraduate and Masters student, and Commonwealth Games silver medallist

In Scotland partnerships have been established between HEIs and national governing bodies, area institutes of sport, the Scottish Institute of Sport and sportscotland.

BUSA has a series of Sports Management Groups working with national governing bodies in various sports. In 2001/2 BUSA received contributions exceeding £160,000 from NGBs to support the domestic and representative programmes for students in 22 sports.

At the Commonwealth Games in 2002, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Tessa Jowell, announced that from 2004 a £3 million per annum scholarship and bursary fund would be available to support talented athletes aged between 16 and 25 in a range of sports. The Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS) is currently being finalised before its launch in April 2004. A number of HEIs are involved in TASS through the networks of regional consortia that will deliver the scheme across England.



Rugby teams from St Mary's College and Brunel University compete in the BUSA rugby final at Twickenham in 2002
BUSA

UK students' success in 2001/03

The UK has sent large squads and returned with a number of medals from recent World University Games and World University Championships as demonstrated below.

World University Games Beijing 2001

21 competitors from 14 HEIs in four sports – four gold, two silver and four bronze medals

World University Championships 2002

27 competitors from 22 HEIs in nine sports – three gold, four silver and seven bronze medals

World University Games Daegu 2003

17 competitors from nine HEIs in four sports – eight gold, three silver and six bronze medals

Developing future athletes

Bournemouth University in partnership with local education authorities in Poole and Bournemouth has established a talent development camp for local 11-13 year olds. The camp included coaching sessions in a number of sports but also a focus on team building and communication skills together with short seminars on nutrition, goal setting and career opportunities. Members of the Great Britain Sailing squad who were training for the Olympics near Poole met the participants and shared their experiences of balancing the commitments required by high level sport with other aspects of life.

Since the camp the participants have been tracked and monitored by the Junior Athlete Support Scheme (JASS) at the University and have had access to services including fitness testing and mentoring. One of the participants commented: 'I had a great time. I was worried about being able to do some of the sports but the coaches were excellent and I learned new skills from different sports that I never thought I could do!'

Regional partnerships for excellence

The England and Wales Cricket Board in consultation with BUSA and relevant universities has set up six University Centres of Cricket Excellence (UCCE) in England and Wales. These UCCE's are based at the following institutions:

- University of Bradford, University of Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan University, Bradford College
- University of Durham
- Cardiff University, University of Wales, Swansea, University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
- Loughborough University
- University of Cambridge, Anglia Polytechnic University
- University of Oxford, Oxford Brookes University

- Sport science and medicine services are vital in supporting elite performers. These services are available in two-thirds of English and Scottish HEIs to students and staff. These services are also often available to elite performers outside the university. Many physiologists, psychologists, and biomechanicians working in HEIs are accredited by the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences.
- 70 per cent of English HEIs (77 per cent of Scottish HEIs) now offer sports scholarships and/or bursaries, two-thirds for elite students and one-third for world class athletes. These ranged in value from £340 to £1,653 in 2000-01 and on average were offered to 20 students. 206 sports scholarships were awarded in Scotland in 2002-03 and the University of Stirling alone has awarded £500,000 to 150 athletes over the last 20 years.
- HEIs also offer help in kind to their students through free sports science support (59 per cent) lifestyle support (47 per cent) and free sports facility use and reduced accommodation charges (22 per cent).

Acclimatising athletes

The acclimation chamber at the University of Hertfordshire is unique: the size of a squash court, it allows groups to work together at temperatures from -40°C to +40°C, and was used to prepare the UK netball squad for the 2003 World championships in the Caribbean.

Nurturing professional clubs

Numerous HEIs have links with professional clubs. Some links aim to provide educational opportunities for the young players in the professional clubs' own academies, eg Arsenal Ladies and Saracens' RFC link with the University of Hertfordshire, London Irish RFC with St Mary's College, Heart of Midlothian and Heriot-Watt University.

In other cases strong university teams provide a nursery for clubs – Loughborough University and Leicester Tigers RFC and Leicestershire County Cricket Club.

Heriot-Watt University has hosted the Scottish Centre for Squash since 1995 and now has 18 players in its Academy and 60 in the High Performance Programme. The Scottish National Hockey Academy is based at the University of Edinburgh.

Elite sport at a small institution

St Mary's College, Twickenham is aiming to build on the strengths of its rugby and athletics, rather than seeking to emulate larger institutions. Its Director of Sport said 'it is simply not possible, nor probably desirable, for St Mary's to work towards the same sporting objectives. Last year, St Mary's finished 21st in the overall BUSA championships, a considerable achievement for any institution, let alone one with only 2,500 students'.

Widening access to higher education through sport

The Government has set a target of 50 per cent of people between 18–30 experiencing higher education by 2010, the current participation rate in England is 43 per cent. There is increasing emphasis on ensuring young people's aspirations are raised throughout their schooling, so they think higher education is an option for them and that information is provided on the benefits that higher education can offer them.

Sport can play a role in the widening participation process in a number of ways; it can be a magnet for many prospective higher education students and is particularly attractive to groups currently under-represented in higher education. Through providing community access to HEIs' sports facilities and the provision of community targeted programmes, HEIs are breaking down barriers. Summer schools, other outreach activities and youth sport events that utilise HEIs sports facilities bring people into HEIs and provide a flavour of what higher education can offer.

Widening access in Glamorgan

The University of Glamorgan has a partnership between its Centres for Lifelong Learning and Sport, Health and Exercise to encourage access to higher education through several routes:

- First Campus focuses on children with ability but no family background in higher education. Several thousand Year Six pupils visited the University campus and were funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales to use the sports centre and receive tuition in specialised activities like climbing.
- Partnership Learning through University School (PLUS) provides regular access to the University's sports facilities for a local secondary school and Trefforest Primary School, whose Head, Lynne Williams commented: 'It is an invaluable resource on our doorstep and provides the pupils with a marvellous opportunity to participate in a range of sporting activities'.
- Glamorgan Sports Camp started in 2002 for over 900 8–14 year olds from 65 local schools. Participation was subsidised by a grant from the Centre for Lifelong Learning. During the camp staff from professional clubs including Cardiff City Football Club, Celtic Warriors regional rugby team and Glamorgan County Cricket Club assisted the university staff.

Conclusion



Future champions at the World University Games. (Centre, Rebecca Cooke, University of Glasgow, Sunday Times Student Sportswoman of the Year 2003 and winner of three gold medals at the World University Games in Daegu, South Korea, adding to her two gold medals from the 2002 Commonwealth Games)

[BUSA](#)

Higher education and sport are sectors that are increasingly playing a number of roles in society. HEIs are providing high quality education, undertaking world-class research and engaging with business, industry and their communities.

Sport is part of the work/life balance, it promotes health and well-being, it nurtures and supports talent to raise levels of human performance, it is an important sector of the economy providing employment and wealth throughout the UK, it is part of local, regional and national identities and above all it provides enjoyment and achievement. This report provides an overview of sport within the context of higher education and highlights how sport in higher education is contributing to the wider role of sport in society.

The national sports bodies in the UK all share similar objectives to encourage and increase participation in sport while supporting and raising the standards of excellence in sport. The role that HEIs are performing in working with the sports councils, national governing bodies, sports clubs, schools and health providers is crucial to the achievement of these objectives. The resources for sport provided by higher education are significant, and should be clearly recognised and utilised when national regional and local sports initiatives are planned.

By working together in partnership to increase participation and raise performance, this report demonstrates that both sport and higher education can benefit.

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Key organisations

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www.ucsport.net
- British Universities Sports Association
www.busa.org.uk
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www.culture.gov.uk



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