

## Course Specification

Course Summary Information		
1	<b>Course Title</b>	Professional Doctorate in Sport Post-nominal: DSport
2	<b>Course Code</b>	PR0197
3	<b>Awarding Institution</b>	Birmingham City University
4	<b>Teaching Institution(s)</b> (if different from point 3)	
5	<b>Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation</b> (if applicable)	<i>Not applicable</i>

6	Course Description
	<p>The Professional Doctorate in Sport (DSport) is a part-time multidisciplinary programme leading to a doctoral award. It integrates part-time doctoral level study with continuing professional practice, which compliments those who want to study at doctoral level whilst continuing their professional commitments. This course will enable you to advance your skills, knowledge, and practice through research engagement. You will be an experienced professional in a sport related area seeking to develop your research capacity, transform practice, and make a direct contribution to knowledge in your professional environment.</p> <p>You will benefit from being able to work within, and study alongside, a multidisciplinary team of experienced researchers and practitioners. The course draws on the considerable expertise and reputation in sports aligned professions development, education, and practice-focused research in our Faculty of Health, Education, and Life Sciences (HELS). The course is suitable for professions (including educators) from diverse backgrounds including, but not limited to sport and exercise science, sports coaching and physical education, sport and exercise nutrition, sports therapy, and other allied sports professions.</p> <p><b>Overview of the Course</b></p> <p>There is a period of structured and supportive learning activity and assessment in the first two years ('Module Stage'), followed by the conduct of an independent doctoral inquiry and the production of a research thesis in the 'Thesis Stage' (third year and beyond).</p> <p>Course delivery in the Module Stage is designed to meet the learning needs of practitioners through a blended learning approach. This includes study blocks (typically 2-3 days up to twice a year), supported by online learning activities and resources. The DSport modules support the development of knowledge and skills for doctoral level professional practice, including knowledge mobilisation, evidence-informed approaches, and research inquiry.</p> <p>You will explore contexts for sports practice, such as knowledge mobilisation and co-creation professional disciplines and identities, research methods and methodology, and evidence appraisal and literature review. You will conduct a pilot inquiry on an element of your research topic. Through your work in the modules and with the support of a Personal Tutor, you will generate and refine a plan for your research thesis.</p> <p>In the Thesis Stage (year 3 onwards), you will have a team of doctoral supervisors, at least one of whom will have expertise in your field of practice. They will support you to carry out a piece of original, independent research that will generate new knowledge for practice, and to produce a thesis. The aim of this thesis is to not only help develop your practice, but also create publishable research for the wider community in your field.</p>

### Key Features

- Benefit from being part of a wider doctoral and researcher community in our Faculty, with a strong focus on practice-relevant research and knowledge implementation
- Carry out significant independent research whilst remaining in your practice area
- Expand your critical understanding of policy and practice in a multi-professional learning community
- Advance your appreciation of research techniques and methodologies with a focus on relevance for investigating your own area of practice
- Generate new knowledge, or make novel applications of knowledge for your specialist field of study, that can have a positive impact on your professional practice and workplace
- Develop confidence in presenting and defending your research within your area of practice.

### Structure and Duration

This is a flexible programme. You will typically study over five years, but may complete within four, or take up to a maximum of seven years (if required).

#### Year 1

- Critical Perspectives in Sport 1: Using a Knowledge Mobilization Approach
- PGCert Research Practice

#### Year 2

- Critical Perspectives in Sport 2: Adopting Evidence-Informed Approaches
- Pilot Inquiry (Sport)

#### Years 3-5

- Thesis (50,000 words)

### Time Commitment

We recognise that many of our students are in demanding full-time roles. As such, the Professional Doctorate in Sport is designed to be flexible and supportive in order to accommodate these demands. The purpose of the course is to also compliment your existing work commitments. On average, you will need to be able to commit approximately 15-18 hours per week to your studies throughout the duration of the programme. You will need to schedule this into your own work-life balance, although we will support you to maximise your time through block teaching days and evening sessions. We will also offer flexible tutorial slots to suit your needs.

7 Course Awards			
7a	Name of Final Award	Level	Credits Awarded
	Doctorate in Sport (Post-nominal: DSport)	8	<i>Not applicable</i>
	PGCert Research Practice	7	60
7b Exit Awards and Credits Awarded			
	N/A	7	

8 Variation from the University Regulations	
	PGCert Research Practice – approved variation (pass both elements of assessment).

9 Delivery Patterns			
Mode(s) of Study	Location(s) of Study	Duration of Study	Code(s)
Part-time Blended Learning	City South Campus The Alexander Stadium	4-7 years (as per BCU Research Degree Regulations on duration of doctoral degrees)	PR0197

10 Entry Requirements	
<b>Home:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor's degree (second class or higher).</li> <li>• Normally, a master's degree or evidence of achievement at postgraduate level in a relevant area.</li> <li>• Candidates must have a practice-based role within a sport aligned area. Candidates should normally have at least 1 years' experience within their practice field.</li> </ul>
<b>EU:</b>	IELTS 7 (with no less than 6.5 in each component)
<b>International:</b>	IELTS 7 (with no less than 6.5 in each component)

11 Course Aims	
	<p>The Professional Doctorate in Sport (DSport) aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable you to understand and utilise the knowledge mobilization process in the context of sport;</li> <li>• Recognise the different disciplinary approaches and lines of communication that impact upon performance as well as professional and personal development;</li> <li>• Supports you to engage in advanced scholarship by evaluating research, theories, and guiding frameworks to facilitate evidence-informed professional practice in sports and aligned areas</li> <li>• Offer a deep and broad range of research methodologies and approaches appropriate for generation and implementation of new knowledge for sports aligned professions practice</li> <li>• Promote and support self-directed study towards completion of a significant independent research project that will generate original knowledge</li> <li>• Develops your capacity and competencies in disseminating research to specialist and scholarly and non-specialist audiences to generate impact.</li> </ul>

12 Course Learning Outcomes	
<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>	
1	Critically and creatively engage with a substantial body of practice-based knowledge using contextual, methodological, and practical perspectives.

<b>2</b>	Explore the relationship between knowledge creation and applied practice to develop novel insights on the potential for making and influencing positive change in an area of sport practice.
<b>3</b>	Generate and/or implement new knowledge through original research and advanced scholarship, with reference to applicable techniques for carrying out research and academic inquiry at an advanced level.
<b>4</b>	Critically reflect upon practice as a researcher and recognise the key stakeholders and broader community/disciplines in which your research will impact upon.
<b>Skills and Other Attributes</b>	
<b>5</b>	Systematically search for, manage, evaluate, and interpret an ever-increasing volume of evidence in a specialist area.
<b>6</b>	Conceptualise, design, and implement an independent project for the generation and/or implementation of new practice-based knowledge.
<b>7</b>	Present knowledge that is at the forefront of the area of professional practice or discipline, of a quality that is worthy of publication for the wider scholarly community.
<b>8</b>	Communicate academic principles, concepts, research problems, and outcomes effectively to professional colleagues and the wider public to impact on practice and /or policy.
<b>9</b>	Develop informed judgement on and formulate innovative solutions for complex problems in a specialist field.
<b>10</b>	Exercise professional standards in research and research integrity, with consideration for ethical, legal, and health and safety aspects.

<b>13</b>	<b>Level Learning Outcomes</b>
	Not differentiated, except for the PGCert Research Practice (RES7003). This is a Level 7 award that is incorporated into the module stage of this course, with all other teaching and learning awarded at Level 8. The PGCert Research Practice is a separate, previously validated award with its own approved learning outcomes (see the PGCert Course Specification).

<b>14</b>	<b>Course Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy</b>
	<p><b>Teaching, Learning, and Support</b></p> <p>In the Module Stage (years 1 and 2), you will learn through a blended approach, whereby some blocks of teaching (typically 2-3 days at the start of a module) are supported with learning activities (both scheduled and directed) via the virtual learning environment. Teaching in blocks will take various forms, such as short lectures, seminar discussions, and workshops. Further learning activities will include guided reading, video lectures, discussion forums, and journals/blogging, as well as scheduled activities, such as tutorials, action learning groups, writing sets, and content sharing/peer review.</p> <p>The course has a strong ethos of inter-disciplinary and multi-professional learning and reflection, and you will be asked to explore and share applications of the material to your own professional practice as part of the learning experience. This will support you to critically reflect, to robustly contextualise your practice experiences and assumptions, and to formulate directions for further investigation. Peer learning is also an important thread, through the use of action learning and writing sets.</p> <p>During the Module Stage, you will have a designated Personal Tutor who is familiar with your area of practice. You will meet your tutor regularly through the year to discuss your learning strategies and approaches, progress with assessments, and any challenges. Generally, your tutor will also be appointed as one of your supervisors at the Thesis Stage, to provide continuity of experience.</p>

At the start of the Thesis Stage (year 3 onwards), a supervision team will be formally appointed to support you through this independent research stage all the way through to completion. A supervision team consists of two (sometimes three) academic staff acting as doctoral supervisors. The team will be appointed with consideration to their subject and methodological expertise and experience of doctoral supervision. At least one supervisor will be familiar with your specific field of practice. Supervisors provide assistance, advice, and feedback on the processes of doctoral level research, analysis, and writing. You should expect to meet your supervisors (virtually or face-to-face) regularly throughout the Thesis Stage of the doctorate (typically once per month).

More specifically, the supervisory team plays an important role on the programme in providing you with:

- Guidance on the nature and methodology of applied research.
- Opportunity to meet on a regular basis at appropriate times.
- Supervision support combined with formative assessment of research and reflective work.
- Assistance in identifying your own learning needs.
- Constructive criticism of your work within a reasonable time.
- Support in preparing for the progress reviews in the thesis stage; and for thesis submission.
- Feedback if your work is below the acceptable standard for the award and an explanation of the strategies and steps needed to support your progress.

Throughout the course (both Module and Thesis Stages), you are strongly encouraged to engage with doctoral researcher development activities offered by HELS Doc Skills Hub and the wider Doctoral Research College. These are offered to the whole doctoral researcher community, including:

- Methodology workshops;
- Research skills 'pop-up' sessions;
- Academic writing support;
- Seminars for presenting your work and scholarship sessions on issues such as constructing a thesis;
- Preparing for viva;
- Writing for publication;
- Career development.

You will also be part of the wider research community in the Faculty, led by our research Centre for Life and Sport Sciences [C-LaSS](#). We recommend you join at least one of the centre's [research clusters](#), which provide a forum for discussing, progressing, and presenting research through meetings and events. The University hosts an annual research conference that incorporates the work of our doctoral researchers, at which you will be encouraged to present your work. These ongoing activities support your learning and development as a researcher and provide you with a scholarly network, as well as providing a continued sense of belonging to a community, which is particularly important for independent doctoral researchers. You will also be supported to identify and participate in external research and professional networks in your discipline area, such as presenting at conferences.

Your learning is supported by BCU Library and Learning Resources and specialist librarians. Most of reading for the Module Stage is accessible online. The library provides digital access to a wealth of evidence, including via scholarly databases.

### **Assessment strategy**

During the Module Stage, assessments take place through 'coursework' (e.g., essay, research proposal, research report) and 'in-person' (e.g., presentation, poster, and viva). The assessment strategy supports core components of doctoral researcher development, including advanced

level academic writing, communication to non-specialist audiences, and research planning. Assessment formats are authentic to the development of both your research skills and reflect the independent doctoral research project itself.

All the modules offer opportunity for formative feedback from tutors and/or peers while you work towards summative assessment, including through individual or group tutorials. You will receive detailed written feedback and feedforward on all your summative assessments to aid the further development of your academic skills, research focus, and project plans. In this way, assessment through the Module Stage will serve as groundwork for your doctoral research in the Thesis Stage.

During the Thesis Stage, your work with supervisors provides regular formative assessment opportunities through review and discussion of your plans, thesis writing, and critical thinking. You should work with your supervisory team to agree expectations around submission and review of your work (frequency, timeframes), and the type of feedback required. These expectations and requirements may change as you move through different phases of research and thesis writing. Doctoral research is inherently independent, and you should be willing to take responsibility for the experience and make personal judgements about the direction of your work. However, the ethos of the programme strongly emphasises the role of interaction through regular supervision to ensure the development and progress of your work.

In the Thesis Stage, there are formal review points/milestones where your progress will be assessed:

- You will present your work to a Progression Assessment Panel (PAP), which is formed of experienced researchers outside of your supervision team to ensure the work you are engaged in has doctoral scope (normally during year 3).
- Annual/interim reviews to monitor your progress towards completion.
- Additional reviews as required (e.g., 'risk' monitoring and final stage review).

Your progression through these milestones is reviewed and confirmed by Faculty Research Degrees and Environment Committee.

In the final stages of completing your doctorate, you will be offered two formative review opportunities involving academics from outside your supervision team. When you have a final draft prior to submission, you are offered a Critical Reader who will provide independent comments on your whole thesis to support final editing and preparation for examination. Once you have submitted your 50,000-word thesis for examination, you will be offered a 'mock viva', which is an opportunity to practice presenting and defending your thesis.

The final examination involves preliminary assessment of the 50,000-word thesis by the examining team, followed by defence of the thesis in an oral (viva voce) examination. This will be conducted in adherence with BCU's Research Degree Regulations. As a Doctorate in an area of Professional Practice, your degree is governed by BCU's Research Degree Regulations. In the Module Stage, we adhere to principles set out in BCU's Academic Regulations, which govern taught courses in relation to assessment cycles and attempts.

Some aspects of your course, such as schedules and reading lists may change every year. Other aspects, such as changes to the title of the course, its learning outcomes, and assessment strategy, require formal approval by the University before they can be altered. If any major changes to your course are proposed while you are studying, you will be consulted and given an opportunity to comment. If any changes are formally agreed, you will be informed.



<b>15a</b>	<b>Level 7:</b>	
	<b>To complete this course, you must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 60 credits):</b>	
	<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Name</b>
	RES7003	PGCert Research Practice
		<b>Credit Value</b>
		60
	Completion of this module leads to award: PGCert Research Practice. The PGCert (incorporating RES7003) is a separately validated award of BCU.	
	<b>Level 8:</b>	
	<b>To complete this course, you must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (not credit bearing as Level 8/research modules):</b>	
	<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Name</b>
	TBC 8xxx	Critical Perspectives in Sport 1: Using a Knowledge Mobilization Approach
	TBC 8xxx	Critical Perspectives in Sport 2: Adopting Evidence-Informed Approaches
	TBC 8xxx	Pilot Inquiry (Sport)
		<b>Credit Value</b>
		N/A
		N/A
		N/A
	<b>To complete this course, you must also successfully complete:</b>	
	N/A	N/A
	Research Thesis (50,000-word thesis and viva)	

<b>15b</b>	<b>Structure Diagram</b>
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The course is offered on a part-time basis only:

**Year 1**

<b>SEMESTER ONE</b>	<b>SEMESTER TWO</b>	<b>SEMESTER THREE</b>
Core Critical Perspectives in Sport 1: Using a Knowledge Mobilization Approach (Level 8)	Core RES7003 PGCert Research Practice (60 credits Level 7)* <small>*Successful completion leads to award: PGCert Research Practice</small>	

Module stage

**Year 2**

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO	SEMESTER THREE
Core Critical Perspectives in Sport 2: Adopting Evidence-Informed Approaches (Level 8)	Core Pilot Inquiry (Sport) (Level 8)	

Thesis stage

**Years 3-5**

Research Thesis (50,000-word thesis and viva)
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<b>16</b>	<b>Overall Student Workload and Balance of Assessment</b>
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Overall student *workload* consists of class contact hours, independent learning, and assessment activity, with each credit taken equating to a total study time of around 10-hours. While actual contact hours may depend on the optional modules selected, the following information gives an indication of how much time students will need to allocate to different activities at each level of the course.

- *Scheduled Learning* includes lectures, practical classes and workshops, contact time specified in timetable.
- *Directed Learning* includes professional practice, work-based learning, external visits, on-line activity, Graduate+, peer learning.
- *Private Study* includes preparation for exams.

The *balance of assessment* by mode of assessment (e.g., coursework, exam, and in-person) depends to some extent on the optional modules chosen by students. The approximate percentage of the course assessed by coursework, exam, and in-person is shown below.

### Year 1 (Module Stage; Level 7 and Level 8)

#### Workload

**10% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity\***

*\*Scheduled hours in year 1 include those allocated on PG Cert Research Practice (PT1229) course specification. This is an already existing approved course which is a required component of all doctoral degrees of the University.*

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	38 in-person activities 30 researcher development provision/research events
Directed Learning	22
Private Study	810
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>900</b>

#### Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	50%
Exam	0%
In-Person	50%

### Year 2 (Module Stage; Level 8)

#### Workload

**7% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity**

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	42
Directed Learning	24
Private Study	834
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>900</b>

#### Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	37.5%
Exam	0%
In-Person	62.5%

**Years 3+ (Thesis Stage; Level 8)****Workload**

100% private study (independent research & thesis development, supported by supervision)

**Assessment**

<b>Assessment Mode</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
In-Person (viva voce examination of the 50,000-word thesis)	100%