PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE IN SPORT, EXERCISE AND HEALTH SCIENCE

Medway
The new Professional Doctorate in Sport, Exercise and Health Science, offered by Kent’s Centre for Sports Studies, is a specialist programme designed for experienced sport, exercise and health science practitioners who would like to undertake research that is relevant and applied to their area of professional practice.

Through a combination of individually tutored modules and your own research, you develop your academic and professional knowledge and acquire a range of advanced research skills. The professional doctorate programme culminates with the submission of your doctoral thesis or portfolio on a topic that advances your area of professional knowledge or practice.

Dynamic department

The Centre for Sports Studies is a dynamic, fast-growing and successful department which is establishing Kent as one of the leading institutions in the UK for the study of sport. Drawing on the expertise of its staff, many of whom are at the forefront of their fields, the Centre offers a variety of specialist programmes and conducts a range of research and consultancy activities. It also benefits from excellent links with a range of key people and organisations in the sport, exercise and health fields.

Cutting-edge research

Full-time academic staff in the Centre for Sports Studies are involved in exciting research projects. In addition, the Centre works with organisations such as Rugby Football Union, British Cycling, the English Institute of Sport, UK Anti-Doping and UK Sport as well as local authority and health bodies. The Centre’s research areas are diverse, but focus around the key themes of sports science, therapy and exercise for health. Particular specialisms within the Centre include: sports training and endurance performance, injury and rehabilitation, mental fatigue, sports nutrition and participation in sport and exercise. As the Centre for Sports Studies continues to grow, we are attracting new researchers, so please contact us or visit our website for the latest information.

First-class sports facilities

The Centre for Sports Studies has excellent purpose-built facilities on campus, including sports science laboratories, teaching and student clinics, and a rehabilitation gymnasium. The Centre also has facilities at Medway Park, the Medway region’s newly built centre of sporting excellence. Medway Park is an approved pre-Olympic training camp venue for 16 Olympic sports and eight Paralympic sports. It is specified to the highest standards in order to support athletes at training camps and to facilitate world-leading research.

The Centre’s new facilities here include a sports therapy clinic, sports science laboratory, rehabilitation gym, event management room, a heat and altitude environmental chamber, and a blood chemistry laboratory.
The Medway campus is quick and easy to reach from central London. The high-speed train from Ebbsfleet International in Medway takes 17 minutes from London St Pancras and stops at Stratford International, site of the 2012 London Olympic Games. Travel to London from the nearby stations of Gillingham and Chatham takes about 45 minutes.

Excellent study resources
The general resources on campus are first class. The £8 million Drill Hall Library has over 90,000 items including books, journals and electronic information. As a student, you have access to a range of support services such as IT support, library support, and public PCs and printers. There is wireless internet access throughout these areas and the Library has recently introduced a new café, a social learning zone and four techno booths. The Library also runs a netbook and laptop computer loan scheme. The Centre for Sports Studies recently increased its library resources by investing an extra £50,000 in new books.

Accessible location
The Centre for Sports Studies is located at our award-winning Medway campus near Chatham Historic Dockyard which was built at the start of the 20th century. The campus has several cafés, a student pub and the Essentials shop, which also has a mini off-licence. Five minutes’ walk from campus, the Dockside retail outlet offers a wide range of shops and restaurants. Nearby is the town of Rochester with its historic castle and stunning Cathedral, which is one of the venues for Kent’s degree congregations.

The programme confers doctoral level status on its successful candidates. This is normally regarded as a higher status than most other professional accreditations. Staff involved in the course are experienced in Accreditation of Prior Experiential and Certificated Learning (APECL) and would be happy to work with external accrediting bodies to determine if further accreditation is possible for specific professionals.

“…It allows you to focus on your own profession and make a valuable contribution to its development and practice.”

Professor Louis Passfield
Director of the Centre for Sports Studies
Nigel Mitchell has a clinical and sport career spanning 20 years and is currently Head of Nutrition at British Cycling and Team Sky. He is studying for the Professional Doctorate in Sport, Exercise and Health Science at Kent.

How did you begin your professional career?

From a young age, I developed an interest in sport and nutrition. But at the time, there were very few job opportunities in this area. At this point, I decided to study for a degree in the area of dietetics, which ultimately trains you to work in a clinical setting as a nutritionist.

I really enjoyed the clinical work during my studies and went on to work full-time in the NHS, which was a fantastic experience – it gave me the opportunity to develop a much better understanding of how food and nutrients work both within the pathological body and the healthy body, and enabled me to apply this within a sporting context.

After a period of working as a research dietician in palliative care where I also received academic training in research, I took up a lectureship in sports nutrition at Sheffield Hallam University. While working there, I was able to develop consultancy work for a variety of different sports, including organisations such as British Cycling, which in turn increased my sports profile.

What are you doing now?

I’m now Head of Nutrition at British Cycling and Team Sky, one of the world’s largest professional cycling teams. This role covers all aspects of food, nutrition and diet so that we are able to create the best nutritional environment for the athletes in order to enhance their performance to a world-class level. My job involves working directly with the riders, providing individual support. I also develop and lead innovation and research on nutritional projects for the organisation.

However, I continue to recognise the importance of clinical practice and, in addition to my role at British Cycling, I provide an ongoing dietetic service to a local practitioner which helps maintain my clinical skills.

Why did you decide to undertake the Professional Doctorate programme?

I’ve always believed in the value of lifelong learning – as a practitioner, it’s important to analyse and reflect upon your own practice and the environment within which you work. This can help you to work more effectively in the future. The Professional Doctorate at Kent provides an excellent opportunity to accomplish this.

The beauty of the programme is that you can tailor it to your own needs to help you get to where you want to be professionally. A practitioner with 20 years experience will obviously have very different needs and expectations compared with a professional with five years experience. For example, if you are a practitioner who does not have a great deal of formal research experience, the Professional Doctorate allows you to gain a solid understanding of the research process and provides an opportunity to work within academia.

My situation is quite unusual in that I already have a wide portfolio of research projects and publications under my belt, so I have chosen to take a more reflective approach. It’s a good way of integrating my existing professional and academic knowledge and will enable me to apply this knowledge to my future work. For me, it’s a very personal experience.

I would encourage experienced professionals working in the sport, exercise and health science arena to take this programme – it’s a fantastic opportunity to make a significant original contribution to knowledge in their own field at an advanced level while also gaining an internationally recognised Doctorate qualification.
The Professional Doctorate is divided into two parts; these parts comprise of taught or tutored modules, which must be passed before completing a doctoral thesis or portfolio.

Programme attendance is up to six years part-time and the complete doctorate award is achieved by obtaining the equivalent of 540 credits. The modular element of the course is worth 180 credits and the doctoral thesis is notionally worth 360 credits.

Course content
The modular element of the programme consists of two compulsory 60-credit modules: Research Methods and Enquiring into Professional Practice. The remaining 60 credits are optional and can be chosen from the postgraduate modules co-ordinated by the Centre for Sports Studies and the Centre for Professional Practice at Kent. Candidates with extensive professional experience may wish to be considered for exemption from one or more of the optional modules by Accreditation of Prior Experiential and Certified Learning (APECL).

Research Methods
The aim of this compulsory module is to enable you to engage critically at an advanced level with issues in research methods. The topics covered include:

- Philosophy of scientific enquiry, including epistemology and ontology
- Research paradigms and methods of scientific enquiry
- Issues in data collection and data analysis such as validity, reliability, accuracy, statistical power and statistical errors
- Parametric and non-parametric statistics
- Research ethics
- Scientific writing for journal publication.

The module is taught either in the classroom or by flexible tutorial mode that is suited to a distance learning approach. In the tutorial format, you can arrange regular tutorial contact with your nominated supervisor to fit around your own professional schedule.

Assessment is in the form of an extended research project proposal for your doctoral thesis.

Enquiring into Professional Practice
This compulsory module enables you to acquire specialist knowledge in relation to your chosen area of professional practice to a standard sufficient to allow you to make an original contribution to knowledge or to advance practice.

The module is designed to support the development of your professional capabilities by encouraging you to draw connections between your experience and the professional context in which you work.

On completion, you will have developed a spirit of academic inquiry towards your professional practice. This means that you will be applying new and existing theories to your own professional practice.

At the end of this module, you will have developed the capability to make a contribution to the development of the professional context in which you work and have produced a reflective document identifying your own development needs.

Doctoral thesis
As part of the assessment process, you must submit a substantial thesis of approximately 40,000 to 50,000 words. The purpose of the doctoral thesis is to show how the period of study has led to new knowledge, insight or practice related to your profession. The thesis and the work presented should be produced to a standard which is consistent with that meriting publication in a professional or scientific journal.

Assessment
The Professional Doctorate is examined by the thesis and an oral examination (viva voce). The viva is normally conducted with two examiners, of which at least one is external to the University of Kent.
RESEARCH AREAS

The Centre for Sports Studies has a thriving research culture which provides excellent opportunities for postgraduate study. The breadth of expertise within the Centre enables us to provide research supervision on a number of specialisms within sports science, sports therapy and exercise for health.

Staff research interests

Kyra de Coninck: Lecturer
Connective tissue properties and repair; the study of anatomy and function of fascia, myofascial pain and the application of myofascial techniques in sports rehabilitation; in vivo imaging of lumbodorsal fascia using real-time ultrasound; myofascial contractility and its role in lower back pain.

Dr Glen Davison: Lecturer
Sports nutrition and nutrition for health.

Andy Galbraith: Senior Technician
Critical velocity; performance prediction in running.

Lucy Hale: Lecturer
Nutritional ergogenics for sports performance.

Karen Hambly: Senior Lecturer
Articular cartilage injury, repair and rehabilitation including postoperative guidelines; biomechanical loading responses; prevention; optimising rehabilitation; outcome evaluation; return to sport and exercise activities; ongoing research projects linked to the International Cartilage Repair Society and Sport Injury and Rehabilitation Committee.

Dr James Hopker: Lecturer
Physiological assessment of competitive cyclists; the effect of training (and training status) on efficiency in well-trained cyclists; evaluation of training; energetics of road racing and time-trial performance; respiratory muscle training; physiological assessment and evaluation of running performance.

Dr Simon Jobson: Research Fellow
Cycling performance/physiology; cycling efficiency; modelling athletic performance; training science; body mass (allometric) scaling.

Sadie Jones: Lecturer in Sports Therapy
Hamstring injury in Rugby Union; injury prevention strategies; cartilage repair; lower limb injuries and rehabilitation.
Professor Samuele Marcora: Director of Research
The effects of mental fatigue on human performance, in particular, the psychobiology and physiology of perceived exertion and endurance exercise performance, exercise rehabilitation and fatigue in clinical populations, cachexia and body composition in patients with chronic diseases, and applied sports physiology.

Dr Lex Mauger: Lecturer
Anticipatory regulation of intense exercise and systems of central control.

Steve Meadows: Lecturer
Physical activity; exercise for older adults; exercise/physical activity in cardiac rehabilitation; exercise efficiency.

Carla Meijen: Lecturer
Challenge and threat states in athletes; perceptions of injury and athletic identity.

Dr Athanasios (Sakis) Pappous: Senior Lecturer, Director of Graduate Studies
Factors affecting participation in sport and exercise, especially involving minority or disability groups; sports media analysis, particularly on how disabled sport is presented in the newspaper press.

Professor Louis Passfield: Director of the Centre for Sports Studies
High performance sport; endurance physiology and sports nutrition; mathematical modelling of training; cycling performance.

To browse the profiles of staff in the Centre for Sports Studies in full, please visit www.kent.ac.uk/sports-studies
www.kent.ac.uk/sports-studies

STAFF PROFILE

Professor Louis Passfield is Director of the Centre for Sports Studies at Kent.

How did you begin your career in sports sciences?
As a competitive cyclist, I was keen to enhance my own performance but found that if I was going to work at the highest level it was going to be as a scientist rather than as an athlete. I therefore embarked on a career as a sports scientist in high performance sport within a university environment, providing sport science to British Cycling elite cyclists in the UK. At the same time, I also undertook a research degree.

I was later seconded back to British Cycling full-time to oversee their sports science research and provision in the run-up to the Beijing Olympics. In 2007, I took up my post at Kent with the aim of developing a similar focus on excellence in the Centre for Sports Studies and to enable a programme of research to be established.

What attracted you to working at Kent?
What really appealed to me about Kent was the University’s eagerness to capitalise on the London 2012 Olympic Games in terms of proximity to the venues and the opportunity to get involved. When I arrived here, the University had already agreed to partner with Medway Council and contribute to the funding of Medway Park, a newly built centre of regional sporting excellence and an approved pre-Olympic training camp. Kent has dedicated space on-site, which represents a tremendous expansion of our facilities beyond the University campus.

What opportunities has Medway Park provided for the Centre for Sports Studies?
Due to our location, we are able to operate a sports injury clinic from the Centre, which directly benefits the local community. At the same time, our students can gain hands-on practical experience working in a professional environment as part of their studies.

In 2010, Medway Park hosted the Modern Pentathlon World Cup and the Centre ran a clinic alongside the event. This was a fantastic opportunity for our students to provide sports science and sports therapy support to Olympic and world champion athletes within a high performance environment.

What’s been the highlight so far?
Seeing how the Centre has developed over the past couple of years. Our student numbers have tripled since 2007 and we have developed an excellent reputation for the quality of our teaching. In fact, sports studies courses at Kent are now ranked 5th out of 52 universities in the UK for graduate employability.

But I think research has been the area of most rapid and impressive development. All full-time staff are now research-active or a leader in their field. We’ve also recruited some excellent additional expert staff, for example, the Centre now has three members of staff with Olympic-level experience.

What is the rationale for the Professional Doctorate programme?
Sport can be a volatile business so it’s important for practised professionals to have a way of formally documenting the first-class experiences they are accumulating.

The Professional Doctorate aims to enable professionals to pull these experiences together so that they can reflect on them in a coherent way while also working towards a qualification that acknowledges the advanced level at which they are working. This allows you to focus on your own profession and make a valuable contribution to its development.

The Centre benefits from the useful links we form with the sports and health professions – it means we can keep up-to-date with the issues professionals face on a daily basis and helps us to focus our research activities accordingly so that we can make a real difference in our work.
APPLYING TO KENT

Entry requirements
You must be an experienced sport, exercise and health practitioner.
You will be required to write a brief proposal and will be invited for
an informal interview with the programme director and your
potential supervisor.

Making an application
It is strongly recommended that you contact the Centre for Sports
Studies in the first instance so that you have an opportunity to discuss
your study plans with the programme director.

There is no fixed closing date
for applications although we
recommend you make your formal
application as early as possible and
at least three months before your
intended start date. You can apply
for the Professional Doctorate
programme online via our website
at www.kent.ac.uk/courses/
postgrad/apply. If you do not have
access to the web, please contact
Information, Recruitment and
Admissions at the address on the
opposite page to request a paper
application form.

English language
The University requires all non-
native speakers of English to reach
a minimum standard of proficiency
in written and spoken English before
beginning a postgraduate degree. Only English language tests taken
up to a maximum of two years prior
to the date of registration will be
accepted for admission to the University.

Tuition fees
For the most up-to-date information
on tuition fees, see www.kent.ac.uk/
finance-student/fees

Further information
For further information, please
visit www.kent.ac.uk/sports-studies

For more specific enquiries,
please contact:

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Medway Building,
University of Kent,
Chatham Maritime, Chatham,
Kent ME4 4AG, UK
T: +44 (0)1634 888858
E: sportsstudies@kent.ac.uk

Admissions enquiries
T: +44 (0)1227 827272
E: information@kent.ac.uk

Images courtesy of Simon Jarratt,
British Cycling, istockphoto.

Terms and conditions: the University
reserves the right to make variations to the
content and delivery of courses and other
services, or to discontinue courses and
other services, if such action is reasonably
considered to be necessary. If the
University discontinues any course, it will
endeavour to provide a suitable alternative.
To register for a programme of study, all
students must agree to abide by the
University Regulations (available online at:
www.kent.ac.uk/regulations).

Data protection: for administrative,
academic and health and safety reasons,
the University needs to process information
about its students. Full registration as a
student of the University is subject to your
consent to process such information.
Kent: the UK’s European university

Kent is known as the UK’s European university. Our main campus in Canterbury is situated in the UK city closest to the European continent and we have an award-winning campus at Medway, with high-speed rail links to London and Europe nearby.

We have a diverse, cosmopolitan population with 125 nationalities represented. We also have strong links with universities in Europe, and from Kent, you are just over two hours away from Paris and Brussels by train.

World-leading research

Kent’s excellent performance in the Government’s most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) confirmed our position as one of the UK’s leading universities. Kent staff were found to be engaged in research of international and world-class standing.

A global outlook

Kent has a great international reputation, attracting academic staff and students from around the world. Our academic schools are engaged in collaborative research with universities worldwide and we offer a range of opportunities to study abroad and an approach that is truly global.

Strong academic community

At Kent, our postgraduate students are part of a thriving intellectual community that includes staff and students from all our locations. In addition to lectures, seminars and one-to-one supervisions, our students benefit from a rich and stimulating research culture.

The Graduate School

As a postgraduate student, you also have the support of the Graduate School, which promotes your academic interests, co-ordinates transferable skills training and facilitates cross-disciplinary interaction and social networking.

Funding

Kent provides a variety of financial support opportunities for postgraduate students. These range from research studentships, location-specific funding, sport and music scholarships, and funding specifically for overseas fee-paying students. For further information, see www.kent.ac.uk/scholarships/postgraduate

Enhanced career prospects

At Kent, we want you to be in a good position to face the demands of a tough economic environment. During your studies, you acquire a high level of academic knowledge and specialist practical skills. We also help you to develop key transferable skills that are essential within the competitive world of work.

Location

Medway

Faculty

Faculty of Social Sciences

Department

• Centre for Sports Studies

Further information

Centre for Sports Studies, Medway Building, University of Kent, Chatham Maritime, Chatham, Kent ME4 4AG, UK
T: +44 (0)1634 888858
E: sportsstudies@kent.ac.uk

Applications

Online at www.kent.ac.uk/courses/postgrad/apply

How to apply

For information about applying to Kent, or to order a copy of the Graduate Prospectus, please contact:

The Information, Recruitment and Admissions Office, The Registry, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NZ, UK
T: +44 (0)1227 827272
F: +44 (0)1227 827077
E: information@kent.ac.uk

The University also holds Open Days and postgraduate recruitment events throughout the year. Please see www.kent.ac.uk/opendays
COME AND VISIT US

We hold Open Days and postgraduate events throughout the year.
For more information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/opendays