PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
MSc Applied Sport Science

1	**Awarding institution/body**	**University of Worcester**
2	Teaching institution	University of Worcester
3	Programme accredited by	N/A
4	Final award	MSc
5	Programme title	Applied Sport Science
6	Pathways available	N/A
7	Mode and/or site of delivery	Blended / Distributed Learning (intensive teaching blocks and on-line delivery) University of Worcester
8	Mode of attendance	Full Time / Part Time FDL (Flexible Distributed Learning) course with mandatory attendance requirements of approximately 20 days per year
9	UCAS Code	Not applicable
10	Subject Benchmark Statement	Not applicable
11	Date of Preparation/Revision	April 2010 / October 2012 / August 2014 and October 2014 (regulations amended) July 2016 regulations amended (Section 20), minor updating throughout

12 Educational aims of the programme

The career opportunities available to sport & exercise scientists are expanding, and the expansion appears set to continue into the foreseeable future (BASES 2004). Many athletes consider the application of sport science an important component of everyday training and competition, and most governing bodies of sports recognise sports science as an integral part of their sports development and success. In order to apply for accreditation as an applied sport scientist, a related post-graduate qualification is required. Although completion of an MSc can never automatically lead onto accreditation as an applied practitioner, it can start the process provided that graduates are able to access and complete further additional athlete support work. Graduates wishing to progress their careers in the areas of teaching or research also require a post graduate qualification, and the content and placement opportunities available within this MSc can equip students for future employment in the HE / FE sector.

In their paper on the need for greater disciplinary balance in order to enhance the professional effectiveness of sport and exercise science graduates, Ives & Knudson (2007) demonstrate that graduates of many sport and exercise science programmes face competition with abundant other health professionals for many positions within the sport and exercise industry. In order to enhance the employability of sport & exercise science graduates, they should have a greater understanding of the integration of the various academic sub-disciplines into a holistic and systems view of human capabilities. This MSc course addresses this need through the use of a multi- and interdisciplinary approach to the subject as opposed to the traditional discipline based approach characteristic of many programmes delivered at other institutions within the UK.

The educational aims provide the over-arching structure to the course, together with also establishing its key philosophical underpinnings.

On completion of the course, students should be able to:

a. develop a systematic and in-depth understanding of knowledge and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights for the advanced study of

contemporary issues in applied sport science, in a stimulating, multi and interdisciplinary, student-centred learning environment;

b. develop a critical understanding of techniques and research methods applicable to their own applied research and advanced scholarship within the field of sport science;
c. develop originality in the application of theoretical principles and apply research skills to create further knowledge within the discipline of applied sport science;
d. utilise their advanced knowledge and understanding to deal with complex issues systematically and creatively, solve problems and communicate their conclusions clearly;
e. further develop their key and vocational relevant skills and independent learning ability required for continuing professional and personal development;
f. have the opportunity to engage in and experience international academic study and employment and further develop vocational skills required to meet the challenges of the global, knowledge-based economy.

It should also be noted that because these aims are the guiding statements structuring the course they can be both *explicitly* dealt with in modules, whilst in other instances they are more *implicitly* referred to.

13 Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge, understanding, skills, qualities and other relevant attributes. The following learning outcomes have been informed by the Masters Degree Characteristics - QAA guidance on writing Masters courses and the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and adapted according to the needs of this particular course.

The learning outcomes for the Applied Sport Science Masters programme are as follows:

On completion of the programme students should be able to:

Knowledge and understanding:	1. identify, analyse and critically reflect upon appropriate theory and contemporary issues in applied sport science; 2. appreciate and critically reflect upon current problems or contemporary insights in applied sport science; 3. identify, analyse and critically reflect upon a wide range of quantitative and/or qualitative methods applicable for applied research or advanced scholarship in applied sport science.	Learning and Teaching methods used to achieve these learning outcomes will include: Lectures, seminars, on-line directed reading and study tasks, group discussions and problem based learning activities.
Cognitive and intellectual skills:	4. demonstrate an in depth understanding and application of appropriate research methods; 5. design, implement and evaluate a personal research project in a contemporary area of applied sport science, demonstrating critical analysis of the research process, appropriate research methods and the analysis, interpretation and dissemination of data; 6. critically analyse and appreciate	Learning and Teaching methods used to achieve these learning outcomes will include: Lectures, seminars, on-line directed reading and study tasks, group discussions, problem based learning activities, independent research, practical laboratory and

	different perspectives, values and strategies of applied practitioners in the field and synthesise these with theory to deal with complex issues systematically and creatively and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences; 7. demonstrate self-direction and originality in identifying needs, analysing needs, formulating solutions and evaluating strategies within the context of applied sport science.	field based activities, work based learning.
Practical skills relevant to employment:	8. develop critical self-reflection and an independent autonomous approach to learning required for continuing professional and personal development as a reflective practitioner; 9. demonstrate critical self-assessment of key and vocational skills in the field of applied sport science; 10. demonstrate competency in key sport science assessment techniques	Learning and Teaching methods used to achieve these learning outcomes will include: Practical laboratory and field based activities, work based learning, student presentations and self-assessment of practical competencies.
Transferable/key skills:	11. demonstrate initiative and personal responsibility when working alone or with others on applied problems or tasks; 12. make decisions in complex applied situations using systematic and creative methods and communicate their conclusions clearly; 13. have the opportunity to appreciate and critically reflect upon foreign cultures and philosophies through study and/or employment abroad.	Learning and Teaching methods used to achieve these learning outcomes will include: Group work, problem based learning activities, work based learning.

The MSc programme aims to further develop students' independent learning ability and enable them to become effective, reflective practitioners. Consequently, the learning, teaching and assessment methods are designed to provide opportunities for the students to develop these qualities. The learning environment will include a full range of practical work, lectures, seminars, workshops, problem-based learning, online learning, project work and independent and group study tasks, with students gradually being required to take control of their learning in an independent manner throughout the course. Two of the taught modules (Limits to Human Performance and Enhancing Human Performance) will be delivered entirely through distance learning. All online learning will be delivered through extensive use of the Universities Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard). Student research skills will culminate with a Masters level, independent research project as their final assessment.

On completion of the MSc programme students should have demonstrated competency in a range of skills relating to knowledge and understanding, cognitive and intellectual skills and key skills and further, given the wide variety of modes of presentation of information required by employers today, the course aims to assess students abilities and skills in as

wide a range of these modes as possible whilst ensuring coherence with the module intended learning outcomes. As such, students are required to submit assessments including oral presentations, portfolios, research proposals, written reports, case studies, data handling assignments and research findings through the Dissertation. In addition, opportunities exist for students to undertake an interdisciplinary approach to their work and ensure a holistic analysis of the subject area being studied.

14 Assessment Strategy

The Learning and Teaching strategies used in the Applied Sport Science Masters course are in accordance with the UW Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and with the Institute response to that document. Hence the course is in line with the University learning paradigm which develops learning in terms of students working towards learning outcomes and the alignment of teaching and assessment to achieve those learning outcomes. Each module has identified and validated learning outcomes and the achievement of those outcomes is monitored through a robust system of quality management including internal mechanisms supported by External Examiners.

The learning environment will include a full range of practical work, lectures, seminars, workshops and independent and group study tasks, with students gradually required to take control of their learning in a more independent manner as they progress throughout their course. A feature of this course is the utilisation of a Problem Based Learning (PBL) approach to the delivery of a range of modules. This approach is utilised in order to emphasise the multi- and interdisciplinary nature of the course and enhance students' employability & career preparation through the development of a range of key transferable skills. A period of professional work based learning is included within the course whereby students are required to apply their knowledge and skills to a sport science environment setting. The course culminates with a Masters level Advanced Independent research project during the final year of study.

Furthermore, the course will operate within the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework (TCRF) for assessment, marking and re-assessment.

Assessments will test both students' theoretical knowledge and application of that knowledge to practical situations. Students will be required to demonstrate competency in both athlete assessment techniques and research methods prior to progressing to the Dissertation and work based learning modules.

Marking criteria are provided with all assignment briefs upon commencement of each module.

In addition to summative assessment tasks, a range of formative tasks (which will include online group discussions and tutorials) will provide the opportunity for students to receive feedback on their progress. Modules delivered primarily through distance learning will make frequent use of formative tasks given the reduced opportunity for face to face discussion of course content.

15 Programme structures and requirements

The course is available in full and part-time modes. The maximum registration period for full time study is three years and for part time study is 6 years.

The programme requires students to complete 180 credits (90 ECTS) at Level 7 in the TCRF.

The course comprises six individual modules, all of which are mandatory. Completion of MSPO4031, MSPO4032, MSPO4033 and MSPO4034 each result in the award of 20 credits (10 ECTS). MSPO4035 is a 'double' module resulting in the award of 40 credits (20 ECTS) while MSPO4030 is a 'triple' module resulting in the award of 60 credits (30 ECTS).

Students completing the course through part time study may take a minimum of one module in each academic year. Although there are no requirements with regards to the order in which MSPO4032, MSPO4033, and MSPO4034 are studied, it should be emphasised that completion of MSPO4031 is a prerequisite for registration on MSPO4030, and completion of MSPO4033 is a prerequisite for registration on MSPO4035. It is recommended that part time students discuss their options with the course leader when deciding on the combination of modules studied in each year.

All modules in the programme are mandatory.

MSc Applied Sport Science Award Map				
Module Code	**Module Title**	**Credits**	**Module Status**	**Prerequisites**
MSPO4031	Research Methods	20	Mandatory	None
MSPO4032	Limits to Human Performance	20	Mandatory	None
MSPO4033	Assessing Human Performance	20	Mandatory	None
MSPO4034	Enhancing Human Performance	20	Mandatory	None
MSPO4035	Professional Placement	40	Mandatory	Assessing Human Performance
MSPO4030	Dissertation	60	Mandatory	Research Methods

Attendance and Delivery
Students registered on distance learning modules (MSPO4032 and MSPO4034) will be required to complete and submit regular study tasks on a weekly basis. Two other modules (MSPO4031 and MSPO4033) require full attendance for intensive study weeks, and preparatory and follow up activities will be provided online. These intensive weeks will typically take place in November (MSPO4031) and January (MSPO4033).

16 QAA Academic Infrastructure

The Framework for HE Qualifications
The course has been developed with reference to the QAA FHEQ (Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, August 2008) ensuring that the qualification represents appropriately the level of achievement required for Masters courses. A full copy of the above document can be found by visiting the QAA website: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/
This award is located at level 7 of the FHEQ

The course takes into account the Masters Degree Characteristics - QAA guidance on writing Masters courses that specifies the key characteristics in relation to purpose, content, structure and delivery, teaching, learning and assessment methods and

relationship to further study or employment for Master's Degree programmes. It is further acknowledged that most "taught" Master's programmes will include some learning undertaken in a structured environment. Master's programmes, considered to be of the "professional/practice" type, often combine structured and independent learning methods alongside time spent in practice. As such, the MSc in Applied Sport Science uses Blended / Distance learning with mandatory intensive teaching blocks to comply with these characteristics.

QAA Quality Code

The Institute has responded to the QAA Quality Code by the development of two separate Placement Guides: one for students and one for employers, which respond to each of the precepts in the code.

The course team recognise that a significant proportion of students recruited to the course will be largely based in their country of residence. Therefore elements of the course and individual modules have been developed to incorporate a flexible/blended learning approach. Teaching materials and learning resources reflect and embrace the QAA Quality Code in relation to flexible and distributed learning.

17 Support for students

The Disability and Dyslexia Service within Student Services provides specialist support on a one to one basis. In addition, Student Services specifies appropriate arrangements that can be made for students with disabilities.

The following guidance and support structure is in place for students participating in this course:

- **Applied Sports Science** students experience a wide variety of support for their learning e.g. seminar group work, practical activities, tutorials, pre-module learning activities, Personal Academic Tutor support and the use of e-learning and access to computer and internet facilities e.g. Blackboard.
- An initial induction course
- Course Handbook (published on an annual basis).
- All students have a Personal Academic Tutor who guides the process of Personal Development Planning (PDP) and offers general support.
- Library induction and information skills packages.
- The Information Learning Service also provides training.
- Study skills provided within the subject and separately by Student Services.
- Opportunities to study abroad (optional).
- Students supported by Information learning Services (Library, IT, Media and Print).
- The University's Careers Service provides training opportunities for career planning.
- The University's International office offers support to overseas students
- The Language Centre provides English Language courses for International Students
- Online support

18 Admissions policy, criteria and procedures

The University aims to be accessible. It is committed to widening participation and encouraging diversity in the student population. The Institute of Sport and Exercise Science works closely with central student support services including the Admissions Office and the International Centre to support students from a variety of different backgrounds. We actively encourage and welcome people from the widest range of economic and cultural backgrounds and value the contribution of mature learners.

Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance 01905

855111

Our policy is to offer a place to any student that we deem to be capable of success and who is likely to substantially benefit from the programme. We support the University's mission statement of *increasing access, widening participation and assisting students to achieve their potential.*

Entry requirements
Students will normally have a 2:1 degree classification in either a sport or science (e.g. biology, physiology, psychology) discipline.
Students who hold a relevant degree classification of either 2:2 (or below), or, a non-related degree will be considered on a case by case basis and may be required to submit a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate experience of work within the field. Applicants should be able to demonstrate academic capability for study at this level and strong interest and commitment in the relevant disciplines.

In the event of students completing their period of Professional Placement in an environment where they may be working with children or vulnerable adults, they will be required to follow their home country procedures for Criminal Records Bureau enhanced disclosure checks and they must provide this evidence to University of Worcester staff prior to acceptance.

Any applicants whose first language is not English or who has not been educated wholly or mainly in the medium of English must reach a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 (or equivalent in an approved test in English) or otherwise demonstrate that they have an adequate command of both written and spoken English before starting the course.

Admissions procedures
Potential students should apply directly via the Registry at the University of Worcester. Given the potentially diverse backgrounds of applicants with a sport or science related degree qualifications, all will be interviewed in order to ascertain their suitability for the course. For overseas applicants a telephone interview will be required if they are unable to travel to the University of Worcester.

Recognition of Prior Learning
Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for recognition of prior learning. Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at
http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm

Additional costs associated with the course:
Additional costs associated with the course include flights, transfers, accommodation, meals and drinks. Any other additional costs will be detailed within your welcome letter.

Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on +44 (0) 1905 855111.

19 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

The Institute of Sport & Exercise Science operates a robust, organic and on-going system of quality management and enhancement that involves the following elements:

- The course leader will be appointed from within the Institute of Sport & Exercise Science.
- Annual Evaluation of the quality of the course.
- External Examiner reports
- Each module provides opportunities for student evaluation (mid module and end of module).
- Institute Quality Committee considers formal student feedback.
- Institute staff and student consultative committee considers generic student issues.
- University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee promotes learning and teaching across the institution.
- Post Exam Board module investigation (selected modules)
- Peer review of teaching by staff.
- A teacher accreditation course (Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education) for new staff, and Higher Education Academy membership.
- Institute of Sport & Exercise Science Learning Advisory Group.
- New Staff mentoring system.
- New staff observed by Head of Institute.
- Personal tutor system
- National Student Survey
- Student Induction Survey

20 Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Some modules have attendance requirements
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade, unless the failure was due to non-attendance.
- Reassessment items that are passed are graded at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the

module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.

- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map
PG Dip	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map
Masters (MSc)	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map

PG Cert and PG Dip awards are unclassified. The awards of Masters may be made with Pass, Merit or Distinction.

21 Indicators of quality and standards

Each course receives an annual external examiner's report and these reports serve as confirmation that academic standards are being upheld and appropriate actions are put in place to enhance student learning and raise student levels of achievement.

Final year undergraduate students report high levels of satisfaction with their courses through the National Student Survey (NSS).

22 Career Opportunities & Links with Employers

The Institute of Sport and Exercise Science has a designated Careers Coordinator who aids students with career planning, CV writing, interview skills and applying for jobs. There is a careers notice board where opportunities are regularly posted and more recently a Blackboard based careers board

Upon successful completion of the Masters Programme, there may be opportunities for students to gain first employment, promotion within their own organisation, gain international employment or move to a senior management position in other organisations. The Masters also provides a platform to other research/higher degrees in sport and promotion in other professional organisations. The completion of the Masters may also provide students with the ability to enhance their current working practices.

Input and feedback from practitioners working within the field of Applied Sport Science was sought to inform the design of this course. In order to reflect the growing need for practitioners who are able to integrate the various academic sub-disciplines into a holistic approach to their work, all taught modules emphasise the multi- and interdisciplinary nature of working with human performers, and students are encouraged to continue with this approach during their professional placement. As well as developing knowledge of underpinning theory, the course is also designed to develop the key competencies required for subsequent sport science employment, and the professional practice module required students to reflect upon their abilities and aptitudes with regards to the demands of the occupational sector. One further feature of the course as a whole, and the professional practice module in particular, is that it may provide the opportunity for students to begin the process of accumulating the portfolio of work that could contribute to a subsequent application for accreditation as an applied sport and exercise scientist. However, accreditation cannot be guaranteed and will be dependent on the completion of

further athlete support work upon graduation. Details of how individuals may apply for British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) accreditation can be found here: http://www.bases.org.uk/Accreditation/Accreditation
Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module study guide and course handbook.