

Graduate Employability in the Sport and Recreation Industry: An analysis of the transition from Higher Education to the workplace.

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Appendix 1

Report of Graduate Recruitment and Development in the Sport and Recreation Industry

UK HIGHER EDUCATION
STANDING CONFERENCE
ON LEISURE, RECREATION
AND SPORT

SPRITO


**GRADUATE RECRUITMENT AND
DEVELOPMENT IN THE SPORT
AND RECREATION INDUSTRY**

FINAL REPORT

MARCH 1998

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**A PROJECT SUPPORTED BY
THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT**

GRADUATE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE SPORT AND RECREATION INDUSTRY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The sport and recreation industry is a significant employment sector within the UK, with an estimated 400,000 people in paid employment in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Many of these jobs are in multi-functional facilities and employers often demand practical, operational skills in the majority of their staff. Four main sub-sectors were identified for the purposes of this project: sport and leisure; outdoor activities; playwork; and health and fitness.
2. Sport and recreation is one of the fastest expanding and most popular disciplines in Higher Education (HE), with 150 degrees operating in 68 higher education institutions (HEIs). The relationship between education and work was stressed by the 1987 White Paper regarding enterprise in Higher Education. This suggested that undergraduates should develop competencies and aptitudes that are relevant to the work place, particular through personal transferable skills.
3. Key issues highlighted in previous investigations included the lack of a recognised entry level for graduates into the industry, the perception by employers that graduates did not have 'immediately applicable job related management skills', and unrealistic expectations by graduates about their level of entry.
4. This project was undertaken by the National Training Organisation for Sport, Recreation and Allied Occupations, SPRITO, and the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport (SCLRS). It was supported by the Department for Education and Employment Higher Education Project Fund.
5. The aims of the project were to:-
 - match the skills gained through education by graduates with those demanded by employers, particularly small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs);
 - provide greater immediate return for the employer and better employment prospects for the graduate.
6. The project was divided into two phases:
 - first a research phase, from April to November 1996, during which research was undertaken in the form of a questionnaire survey of 584 1996 final year sport and recreation undergraduates; a questionnaire survey of 251 sport and recreation graduates from 1993, 1994 and 1995; a postal survey of 517 sport and recreation related employers; and structured interviews with 53 sport and recreation employers; the results of which were disseminated and feedback obtained in a national workshop to direct the nature of the materials to be used for the second phase;
 - second a piloting phase, from December 1996 to December 1997, during which materials to assist the recruitment and induction of graduates in sport

and recreation SMEs were designed and piloted on 200 employers, 500 students in five HEIs and staff in the same HEIs. The pilot materials consisted of leaflets for students and employers, and sets of guidance notes for employers, HEI staff, and students. This piloting was monitored using questionnaires administered to students and staff in the five HEIs, focus group interviews with students and staff, and face to face and telephone interviews with employers.

7. The project concentrated attention on recruitment as the primary issue for the interface between HEIs and employers. This focus raised implications for induction and development of graduates at the workplace, but these warrant separate work-based investigation.
8. The SPRITO - SCLRS partnership has been effective and symbiotic, not simply for conducting a project which communicated with both employers and HEIs, but also for planning a continuing initiative to supersede this project.
9. HE Careers Services represent a major 'missing link' in the processes explored and tested in this project. This consideration is explicitly recognised in the project recommendations.
10. This project undoubtedly highlights issues, problems and actions which are relevant to a wider set of employers and HEIs than those active in sport and recreation. Networking, however, has not yet been effective in identifying the extent or specifics of this broader relevance.
11. For employers the main project conclusions are:
 - a diverse industry, with four main sub-sectors: sport and leisure; outdoor activities; playwork; and health and fitness;
 - a low level of interest in graduate employment;
 - short termism in employer practices - recruiting for immediate attributes, ineffective utilisation of graduate skills, high turnover for graduates in first jobs;
 - employers are looking for technical/professional qualifications and relevant experience from graduates, as well as a degree.
 - very low response to both leaflet and guidance notes, but favourable response when questioned about the latter.
12. For graduates the main project conclusions are:
 - they generally have a good employment record;
 - 55% (including teaching) 36% (excluding teaching) find jobs in the sport and recreation industry, the rest finding jobs in a variety of other industries;
 - graduates possess transferable, generic skills;
 - they acknowledge the need for more than just a degree, i.e. technical qualifications and experience.

18. For HEIs the main recommendations from the project are:
- encourage integration of personal skills development in formal course assessment;
 - use devices less reliant on HEI staff to deliver a continuous initiative throughout the degree to promote awareness of industry requirements, e.g. ex-students, employers, Internet, promotional video, Careers Service;
 - raise profile of graduate recruitment and development issues nationally, through SCLRS dissemination and promotion;
 - SCLRS to encourage forums locally/regionally/nationally for employers, students and staff to discuss the considerations raised by the guidance notes.
 - improve the presentation and content of the guidance notes, disseminate to all relevant HEIs and put on the Internet;
19. In the short term DfEE project funds for dissemination will be used not only to disseminate the project results through relevant media, but also to redesign the guidance notes and print sufficient for the distribution to a broader population of employers and HEI students and staff..
20. In the longer term SPRITO and SCLRS are committed to a continuing partnership to extend the momentum of this project, by securing development funding for the updating and improvement of the guidance materials, and seeking opportunities for the further publication and dissemination of guidance materials.

13. For students the main project conclusions are:
- a general lack of interest in career development and job search, reflected in the latter being left very late, often until after having been awarded the degree;
 - poor at job search/application skills - not seen as a high priority;
 - 79% are considering the sport and recreation industry for employment (significantly higher than achieve jobs in the industry) but many are over-ambitious about their level of entry into the job market;
 - possess transferable, generic skills, but poor at promoting these;
 - often acquire technical/professional qualifications and practical experience;
 - poor perceptions of HE career services;
 - unresponsive to pilot leaflets but favourable response to pilot guidance notes for those who have seen them.
14. For HEI staff the main project conclusions are:
- their foremost responsibility is seen as providing transferable, generic skills; educating for a career not just the first job;
 - good at providing extracurricular opportunities for technical/professional qualifications, but poor at providing opportunities for job search/applications skills development;
 - good response to the message in the pilot guidance notes, but mixed response to the presentation of these notes.
15. To address the weaknesses identified in the conclusions, it is necessary to incentivise change. For employers money is a powerful incentive. For both students and HEI staff, formal course assessment of desirable components is a major incentive.
16. For employers the main recommendations from the project are:
- instigate a national promotion, using opinion-leading employers, industry press and events, to promote the potential of graduate recruits.
 - continue to distribute a direct response mechanism, e.g. a promotional leaflet, and add further details to the guidance notes and disseminate both to target markets with a higher likelihood of being interested in the material;
 - explore the concept of Graduate Apprenticeships and seek funding to support them;
17. For students the main recommendations from the project are:
- poster and a promotional video to be used as introductory information.
 - redesign and represent guidance notes and provide access at every relevant HEI, promoted by HE Careers Services, and via the Internet;
 - SPRITO to investigate with member institutions of SCLRS the possibility of making its Personal Record of Industry Achievement available to students.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This project was undertaken by the National Training Organisation for Sport, Recreation and Allied Occupations, SPRITO, and the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport (SCLRS), which is a representative organisation for HEIs active in the field of study. The project was supported by the Department for Education and Employment's Higher Education Project Fund.

The aims of the project were to:-

- match the skills gained through education by graduates with those demanded by employers, particularly small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs);
- provide greater immediate return for the employer and better employment prospects for the graduate by:
 - improving the immediate employability of graduates;
 - ensuring graduates' skills and knowledge are more clearly identified and relating both to the short and long term needs of employers;
 - meeting the need for an induction and development programme with an accelerated learning curve for the graduate employee.

The project was divided into two distinct phases:

- first a research phase, from April to November 1996, during which research was undertaken, disseminated and feedback obtained;
- second a piloting phase, from December 1996 to December 1997, during which mediums to assist the recruitment and induction of graduates in sport and recreation SMEs were designed and piloted on employers, students and higher education institutions (HEI) staff and monitored to evaluate their effectiveness.

The objectives of the research phase of the project were:

- to study the perceptions and expectations of current undergraduate students about the sport and recreation industry and the nature of employment, particularly in relation to SMEs;
- to study the experiences of graduates currently employed in the sport and recreation industry, to establish the extent to which their skills have proved relevant to, and have been utilised in, their employment;
- to identify the recruitment policy and practice of employers within the sport and recreation industry with regard to graduates;
- to study employers' perceptions of graduates' skills and their relevance to the workplace, with particular reference to:-
 - immediately employable skills, future employable skills and the speed at which these are acquired;
 - difficulty and expense of access to, and suitability of, the graduate labour market;
 - the employers' perceptions of graduates with sport and recreation related degrees and those with generic degrees and unrelated specialisms.

- to disseminate widely the results of the study to employers and HEIs within the sector, to consult with them about the implications and to jointly review current recruitment practice and relevance of Higher Education (HE) provision

The objectives of the piloting phase of the project were:

- to develop and pilot a recruitment mechanism to enable employers and graduates to match skills needs against skills offered;
- to develop and pilot induction packages tailored to employer needs to ensure immediate value from the graduate employed and utilisation of the additional skills brought;
- to disseminate widely the results of these pilot projects and to review and revise them in consultation with the Partner Organisations (SPRITO & SCLRS).
- to provide positive action points for the Partner Organisations to continue the partnership beyond the life of the project in order to ensure its sustainability.

In achieving the first of these second phase objectives, piloting recruitment materials, students and HEI staff were the main targets, alongside employers. In order to fully monitor the success of these pilot materials, it was also necessary to explore the motivations of these groups and the primary constraints they faced in assimilating the materials and putting their advice into practice. Thus an important implicit objective, which might have been made explicit in the specification of the project at the outset, was to investigate the attitudes of students, HEI staff and employers to the ideas put forward in the recruitment materials.

In practice the recruitment and induction objectives of the piloting phase collapsed into one mechanism and the primary focus of this mechanism was recruitment. This was because of three main reasons. First, it became apparent from the research phase and the advice of employers that the transition from recruitment to induction was a continuum, such that any improvement in recruitment would impact favourably on induction practices - e.g. matching of skills gained by graduates with skills expected by employers, identification by employers of generic skills and potential of graduates.

Second, any concerns by students and HEIs were likely to be at the front end of this continuum, i.e. recruitment, and it was therefore beyond their interest to pilot induction mechanisms. Induction is more specific to employers and should benefit automatically from the better employer knowledge of graduates promoted by the recruitment materials.

Third, it was not possible in the time frame of the project either to follow through the students to whom pilot recruitment materials had been provided, and test discrete induction materials when they were in their first jobs; or, as an alternative, separate exercise, to identify sport and recreation graduates as they acquired their first positions in the industry and test discrete induction materials with them. To test an induction package requires a more longitudinal investigation of graduate staff development.

1.2 RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Industry

The sport and recreation industry is a significant employment sector within the UK, directly employing an estimated 400,000, plus a huge army of volunteers in excess of 2,000,000. In 1991 the industry generated £8.86 billion in the economy and is a vibrant and steadily expanding sector (Henley Centre, 1992).

Employment covers the public, private and voluntary sectors with examples of work places as follows:

- leisure/sports centres (e.g. swimming pools, tennis centres, snooker, ten-pin bowling centres)
- stadia and arena (e.g. ice rinks, athletics, cricket and football stadia), outdoor activity centres, playing fields, sports clubs, health and fitness centres children's play and activity schemes.

Many of these facilities are multi-functional and provide for a range of broader leisure activities, significantly enhancing the tourism value of their locality.

Job roles within the industry include:

- senior management and strategic posts
 - business development and administrative posts
 - managerial and supervisory posts
 - coaches, teachers and instructors
- operational staff, groundstaff, lifeguards.

Employers have a demand for practical, operational skills in the majority of their staff. Many job roles demand significant technical knowledge in areas such as water technology, ventilation, air conditioning and plant. Furthermore there are a range of key support services that are fundamental to operation: e.g. catering, cleaning and security.

In addition, a large number of those working in the industry are involved in the development and education field. These include those concerned with physical education, development training in the outdoors, the personal and social development of individuals, and community development schemes targeted at both specific communities and sections of those communities.

Industry Related Higher Education

Sport and recreation is one of the fastest expanding and most popular disciplines in Higher Education (HE) currently. In the last 10 years the undergraduate field has grown rapidly from a few sports science and sports studies degrees to the current position of 150 degrees operating in 68 HEIs (Sports Council (1996). The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) (1996) state that there were 5,232 undergraduate students in sport, leisure and physical education related courses in 1994/95. Together sports studies/management/science lie fourth out of 157 subjects in the league table of

popularity in terms of ratio of applications to places, with over 22 applications for every place. Postgraduate programmes have also developed with 79 courses in 30 institutions.

Changes In Higher Education

Over the last 10 years there have been major changes in HE including the removal of the binary divide which allowed polytechnics to gain university status and the move towards linking education more closely to work. The relationship between education and work was stressed by the 1987 White Paper regarding enterprise in Higher Education. This suggested that undergraduates should develop competencies and aptitudes that are relevant to the work place, particular through personal transferable skills. This approach is now very much reflected within HE sport and recreation courses with many offering work placements and the development of vocationally related courses.

Graduate Recruitment in the Sport and Recreation Industry

Two key studies have been undertaken into graduate employment. Coalter and Potter (1990) undertook a survey of 1985 graduates from sport and leisure courses, and in 1991 a review of sport, recreation and leisure degree courses was undertaken by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA). Coalter and Potter (1990) found that of the 1985 graduates 79% gained their first post-graduation job in sport, recreation or leisure and after 4 years 61% were still in this sector. They discovered that 40% of those were employed in the public sector, 25% in the commercial sector and approximately 14% entered teaching.

The report from the CNAA contained more specific information on 1984 and 1985 sport and recreation graduates, 35% entered recreation and 17% entered health and fitness employment. In terms of entrance level, 37% were at shop floor level and 31% in junior management. After 4 years they found that 42% of the graduates had reached middle management and 11% senior management. This supports the CNAA comment that once graduates had gained employment they made rapid career progression.

The key issue that the CNAA highlighted was that there was no recognised entry level for graduates, which they believed was due to a lack of understanding by employers of the nature of the degrees, and the perception by employers that graduates did not have "immediately applicable job related management skills". The CNAA also found that employers believed that graduates had unrealistic expectations about their level of entry therefore employers felt that graduates were soon dissatisfied with their jobs.

In relation to self development Coalter and Potter (1990) found that 55% of graduates obtained practical, vocational qualifications after leaving HE; these were mainly sports governing body awards and first aid qualifications. However, the CNAA report noted that employers believed that graduates did not necessarily possess the same level of coaching awards held by entrants who had lower level academic qualifications.

Ten years on from both surveys, little further national research has been carried out to investigate how graduate sport and recreation employment has developed. However

recent figures available from HESA (1996) indicate first destinations of 1995 physical education graduates (which includes sports studies/science, leisure studies and leisure management) in the six months after graduation. Of the 297 graduates contacted 23% entered community, social and personal service areas of employment, 22% education, 13% retail, 9.4% property and 8.4% public administration. It is difficult to relate these figures directly to sport and recreation employment as it is not given as a specific category of employment but the figures do give an indication of the sectors entered.

2.0 PHASE ONE RESEARCH METHODS

The primary data gathering consisted of : a questionnaire survey of 1996 final year sport and recreation undergraduates; a questionnaire survey of sport and recreation graduates of 1993, 1994 and 1995; a postal survey of sport and recreation related employers; and structured interviews with a sample of sport and recreation employers.

2.1 QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION AND PILOT STUDY

Draft questionnaires were constructed and revised after undertaking pilot studies. In the case of the undergraduate questionnaire 30 students from the second year of an undergraduate degree course in sport and recreation were used and for the graduate questionnaire ten sport and recreation graduates from higher education institutions (HEIs) were used. Overall the questionnaires were redrafted 4 times before implementation. Appendix 1 provides the final research questionnaires for students and graduates.

Undergraduate questionnaire

1,586 questionnaires were sent to students from 19 providers of sport and recreation Higher Education (HE) courses (see Appendix 2). The survey period was between April and May 1996. Where possible the survey was administered by representatives of HEIs within lectures. In the case of three institutions a postal survey was used due to the students having completed their courses. Overall 584 questionnaires were returned, a response rate of 37%. Reminders were not possible in the majority of non-response cases because administration was conducted by the institutions and individual responses were not recorded.

Graduate questionnaire

1,490 questionnaires were sent to graduates from ten HEIs providing courses in sport and recreation (see Appendix 2). The survey period was between May and August 1996. A postal survey was used with either the project officer sending questionnaires directly to graduates, or institutions administering the questionnaire through their central administration offices such as Registry, Careers and Alumni. Overall 251 questionnaires were returned, a response rate of approximately 17%. As with the undergraduate survey, reminders were not possible for the same reasons. It is not possible to identify any possible sources of sample bias in the response, but it is suggested that the low response was probably to a large extent caused by administrative constraints in HEIs, such as out-of-date, graduate addresses in central records.

Industry questionnaire

A postal survey of 1,000 employers within sport, recreation and related fields was undertaken asking them to list the numbers and job roles of graduates within their employment. This was an industry employment census being conducted by SPRITO, to which one question was added for the benefit of the current project. 517 employers responded to this survey, of which 270 employed graduates. Some of the research was within local authorities in England and was undertaken in consultation with the Local Government Management Board (LGMB). A list of employers who responded is shown in Appendix 3.

2.2 INDUSTRY INTERVIEWS

A 10% sample of the employers who responded to the questionnaire were selected for a structured interview on their experiences and perceptions of graduates in the workplace, and their current recruitment, induction and development practices. Fifty three interviews have been completed and the industry research section of the report is based upon the findings of the survey and interviews. A copy of the interview structure used can be seen in Appendix 4.

3.0 PHASE ONE RESEARCH RESULTS

3.1 UNDERGRADUATES

Sample Structure

The sample structure indicates that the questionnaires returned were broadly representative of the undergraduate sport and physical recreation student population.

This is supported by the range of 19 institutions that were used and the types of courses that were represented within those institutions. The courses were broken down into two categories according to the modules the students undertook, as course name often did not reflect the nature of the actual course undertaken. This indicated that 77% of the sample were following predominately sport related courses and 23% were undertaking leisure courses, however these leisure courses did have elements of sport. Sports courses and leisure courses with sports elements were specifically targeted in order to meet the objectives of examining employment in the sport and recreation industry.

The age range was mainly towards the younger end of the spectrum, 46% were in the age range 20 to 21, i.e. came to HE straight from school, and 40% in the range 22 to 25, i.e. had taken a year out or had a period in work before entering HE. Finally 12% were 26 - 35 and 3% were older than 35. In terms of sex, 46% of the sample were female and 54% male.

A number of students had work experience: 44% of all students were working whilst undertaking their course, three quarters of these were employed in the service industry. 41% of those working were in sport related areas. These varied from pool lifeguard and centre assistant through to coach and fitness instructor. Nearly half of the students surveyed had undertaken work placements as part of their course.

Skills Gained

The students identified a range of 93 different skills and attributes that they felt they had developed during their degree. The reason for the wide range was that students' perceptions were being sought therefore open ended questions were used. This meant that the students were not prompted in their answer and it also helped to indicate their level of awareness, if skills had been stated along with tick boxes this may have made the students realise these were the types of answers that were expected. Table 1 indicates the main skills and attributes that were identified. The findings have been disaggregated into those students who undertook work placement and those who did not, as this seemed to have had an effect on the skills the students believed they had gained.

Table 1. Skills and Attributes Gained from Degree Courses.

Skill/attribute	% of those students with work experience	% of those students without work experience
Communication	54.7	44.2
Computing	44.2	37.5
Presentation	28.1	31.9
Organisation	27.3	18.3
Writing Skills	25.9	19.3
Time Management	23.4	24.3
Social Interaction	22.3	15.9
Teamwork	20.9	19.3
Self Confidence	20.5	18.3
Research	20.1	24.6
Coaching	16.9	11.6
Managerial	15.8	5.3
Sport Specific	15.1	12.3
Analytical	13.7	10.6
Subject Specific Skills	9.7	11.6
Leadership	8.3	4.3
Fitness Assessment	1.4	8.0
Independent Work	6.8	5.3

It is important to note that the skills and attributes that the students have identified are only their perceptions of the skills they have. Without direct measurement it is difficult to specify exactly whether or not they possess them. Furthermore, the students may have other skills that they have not explicitly identified but are not aware of. However, this information is important as it does show students' perceptions and their levels of awareness of the skills that they have. These are possibly the skills and knowledge that they identify when they complete application forms and attend interviews.

Table 1 suggests that those students who have undertaken work experience are aware of a greater number of skills than those without work experience. The relationship was found to be statistically significant using Chi Square ($p < 0.05$) in the case of communication, organisation, coaching, leadership and managerial skills. The more specific area of management skills may be explained by the fact that those students who have done work experience are more likely to have undertaken sport and leisure management courses therefore management is studied specifically. This is also true of fitness assessment, the only skill that significantly more non-work experience students chose. However, the other skills highlighted could be termed as transferable across all sport and leisure HE courses. It would seem that those students with work experience are more aware of transferable skills. These results do not appear to be a reflection of course type, when skills identified were compared for 'pure academic' courses and 'vocational' courses there was less of a difference in skills identified than when work experience and non work experience students were compared.

Future Expectations

In relation to the areas of work that the students wish to enter, 79% were considering sport and recreation. The main types of jobs they were considering were teaching (35%), sports development (29%), leisure management (27%), coaching (21%), fitness instructing (16%) and marketing (8%). These results were reflected in the type of organisation the students intended to work for. In this question the students could rank as many organisations as they wished from the 10 listed in Table 2. In order to produce meaningful results the top three ranks were included for each student. The results are disaggregated by students who wanted to enter sport jobs and those who did not.

Table 2: Employer Type.

	Sport Related Jobs (%)	Non Sport Related (%)
Type of Employer	(% of responses in top three ranked employers)	
Local Authority	50.4	34.1
Educational Organisation	49.1	36.6
Medium Commercial Business	38.4	29.3
Large Commercial Business	37.5	39.0
Small Commercial Business	29.5	26.1
Self Employed	21.5	16.3
Emergency Services	19.3	20.3
Armed Forces	10.5	15.5

Table 2 shows that local authorities and educational organisations are the most common types of organisations that the students expected to enter if they intended to enter sport related employment. However, the commercial sector was also fairly well represented. The main reason for selecting a local authority, for people both wanting sport and non sports jobs, appears to be that the specific career that they aspire to is within that type of organisation. For example 76% of those who want to be sports development officers chose local authorities. Common reasons for choosing medium and large commercial organisation were job security, job opportunities and promotion opportunities. This was similar for small commercial organisations, apart from the fact that the number who identified security as a reason was slightly lower.

In terms of expectation of entrance level, Table 3 indicates that students who wished to access a job in sport had higher expectations of the level at which they would enter compared to those who wanted to enter other areas of employment. One reason could be that they feel their course relates to sport therefore they have more specific knowledge and skills for that sector than if they wished to enter any other. Another reason may be that they have studied the management of sport and recreation industries and therefore expect to enter at that level.

Table 3: Entrance Level Expectations.

Entrance Level	Sport	Non Sport
	Percentage of Relevant Responses	
Shop Floor	17.1	28.8
Trainee Manager	33.0	26.3
Junior Manager	22.7	10.2
Middle Manager	6.3	4.2
Senior Manager	3.3	3.4
Teacher	13.8	21.2
Other	3.8	56.1

Table 4 shows the students' perceptions of the main skills and attributes that are required for the jobs they specified. This is broken down by those who have undertaken work experience and those who have not and also by those who wish to undertake sports jobs and those who do not.

Table 4: Perceptions of Skills and Attributes Required by Employers.

Skills and Attributes.	Work Experience	Non Work Experience.	Sport Job	Non Sport Job
Communication	48.9	45.2	48.5	42.3
Organisation	23.0	17.3	19.7	21.1
Social Interaction	22.7	22.6	24.8	15.4
Computing	13.7	10.6	10.3	12.2
Leadership	12.9	9.3	12.3	6.4
Managerial	11.5	8.3	10.1	7.3
Teamwork	11.5	10.6	11.2	10.6
Time Management	10.1	5.0	8.1	4.1
Self Confidence	5.4	7.0	5.7	8.1
Writing Skills	5.4	3.3	4.1	4.1
Sport Specific	4.7	8.3	7.5	3.3
Presentation	3.6	11	4.1	4.1

As with the identification of the skills gained from courses, slightly more of those with work experience identified transferable skills. The only statistically significant relationships using Chi Square was that significantly more ($p < 0.05$) work experience students identified computing, management and time management as skills that employers' required. Significantly more ($p < 0.05$) of students without work experience chose sport specific and presentation skills as being required by employers. The lack of many large differences between those with and those without work experience suggest that those with work experience do not have a significantly better understanding of employer's needs, in terms of skills, than those who have not undertaken work experience.

In terms of students' who wished to enter sport related employment significantly more ($p < 0.05$) suggested that there is a greater need for skills such as social interaction, leadership and, obviously, sports skills. The first two skills mentioned reflect the fact

that the sports industry is part of the service sector where 'people' skills are considered important.

The students were also asked to identify the knowledge that they felt employers would require in the jobs the students specified. Table 5 shows this in relation to those who have undertaken work experience and those who have not; and those who wish to undertake jobs in sport and those who do not.

Table 5: Perceptions of Knowledge Required by Employers.

Knowledge	Work Experience	Non Work experience	Sport	Non Sport
Industry Knowledge	37.1	25.2	30.9	30.9
Subject Theories	19.4	31.9	18.2	25.2
Management Theory	14.4	9.3	12.5	8.9
Practical Sport	12.9	16.3	18.2	1.6
National Curriculum	9.7	5.0	6.1	11.4
Finance	6.8	3.0	5.7	2.4
Children	6.1	5.6	5.0	8.9
Teaching Methods	5.4	6.6	7.0	2.4
Training & Coaching	5.0	8.6	8.8	0
Anatomy & Physiology	4.3	16.6	12.3	5.7

Significantly more ($p < 0.05$) of those who have undertaken work experience suggest that knowledge of the industry and finance is important compared to those who have not gained work experience. It may be that after undertaking placement these students recognise the need for specific knowledge of the area of work and that theoretical subject knowledge is less important to employers. This is further supported in that significantly more ($p < 0.05$) non-work experience students identified that knowledge of subject theories would be required by employers. Significantly more non-work experience students also identified the requirement for knowledge of physiology which reflects the fact that most non-work-experience courses are 'pure academic' sports science courses.

As expected, those who have chosen sport as an area of employment are significantly ($p < 0.05$) more likely to feel that employers would want specific sporting knowledge such as individual sports, coaching and anatomy and physiology. It is surprising that the subject theory that is studied is mentioned more by those who do not wish to go into the sports industry than those who do, as it might have been expected that the theory gained may not relate to other industries. This finding may indicate that subject theories are seen by students to be generic or transferable in nature and relevance.

The students were also asked to indicate how appropriate to their future employment they felt that the knowledge and skills gained within the degree course were. The findings are shown in Table 6.

In terms of appropriate knowledge 45% of students who had chosen sports related jobs felt that the courses provided all or most of the knowledge that they would need in employment. As expected this figure was lower in the non-sport people. However over half suggested that they had only gained some of the knowledge required. Findings on the appropriateness of skills acquired during HE courses were fairly similar to the findings for knowledge for students aspiring to employment in sport and recreation. For non sport approximately 34% felt that they had gained all or most of the appropriate skills, 8% more than for knowledge, perhaps suggesting that they see those skills as more transferable than the knowledge.

It might be considered alarming that nearly 4% of students aspiring to employment in sport and recreation felt that they had acquired no skills appropriate to such employment. However when these 4% are analysed further approximately a third wish to enter teaching and the others wish to enter specialist areas such as outdoor pursuits, and physical training instruction in the police and army. Therefore, they may need more specific practical teaching or instructing skills than their course could give.

Table 6: Appropriateness of Knowledge & Skills Gained to Future Employment.

	Appropriate Knowledge		Appropriate Skills	
	Sport	Non Sport	Sport	Non Sport
All	4.8	5.9	5.7	6.8
Most	40.1	20.3	41	27.4
Some	53.3	60.2	49.3	57.3
None	1.4	12.7	3.8	6.8

The students were also asked what skills and knowledge they felt that they needed to develop further. The main skills that they identified were experience (particularly by those without work experience), communication and social interaction. A further check on this was undertaken by comparing the skills the students said that they had with those they said employers needed. This supported the students' identification of the need to develop communication and social interaction skills.

The comparison of the skills the students said they had with the skills they perceived employers wanted produced interesting information about the skills students do not perceive as important. This is indicated by the skills which a high percentage of students identified as having acquired but not perceived as required by employers, as shown in Table 7.

This is of interest as it shows that students feel that they do have certain skills but perhaps do not recognise them as being important in the workplace. Therefore, this raises the issue of whether they are selling themselves in the right way to potential employers.

Table 7: Skills Students Obtain That They Do Not Identify as Being Required by Employers.

Skills & Attributes	% Students Listing Skills as acquired but not perceived as required by employers.
Presentation	24.7
Research	20.7
Writing Skills	19.5
Time Management	18.3
Communication	17
Self Confidence	15.9
Teamwork	12.7

The main area of knowledge students felt they needed to develop was knowledge specific to the industry. The most popular method identified to develop these skills and knowledge was on the job training with 73% of students who wanted to gain sports employment stating this and 65% of those not wishing to enter sport. The second most popular method was professional courses. A greater number of those who wanted sports job (44%) stated professional courses than those who did not want sports jobs (27%). This is probably because those going into sport related employment are more aware of the professional courses on offer compared to those wishing to enter other industries. There was also a fairly high number of students who wanted to undertake Masters courses, particular amongst those wanting to go into sport related employment (21%) as opposed to non-sport employment (15%).

In relation to how informed students felt about employers' expectations, work experience seems to have given students more insight, 66% of those who had been on work experience felt informed compared to 54% of those who had not been on work experience. This is consistent with the fact that students identified that the main information they needed from employers was about what skills, knowledge and qualifications they needed.

These results raise several key issues. Firstly, the students may not be aware of the skills and knowledge that they are gaining from courses, perhaps they could be more explicitly stated within courses. Secondly, there appears to be a difference in the awareness of skills gained and perceptions of employers' expectations between those who have undertaken work experience and those who have not.

The results also identify that many sport and recreation students do not want to go into the sport industry but wish to enter education as a career. However those who do wish to enter the industry do so in fairly specific areas of work and they appear to have high entrance level expectations. Few specified jobs within leisure policy or QUANGOs. The students realise that they need to continue learning when they enter employment as they recognise courses generally do not provide all the skills and knowledge that required. Finally, by their own admission, many students are not confident of their perceptions of what employers' expectations are in terms of the qualifications needed and the skills and knowledge required. Although they listed skills and knowledge which they expected employers to require, they also wanted information from employers themselves.

3.2 GRADUATES

Sample Structure

The sample structure of the graduate survey was the following:-

- Age: 91% were between 21 to 26, 7% were 27 - 35 and the oldest age range was 36 to 39 with 2%.
- Sex: 47% were female and 52% were male (One per cent did not answer this question).
- 99% had been full-time students .
- Ten different institutions were represented, and the courses were categorised as 86.5% sport related and 13.5% leisure.
- Degree type: 67% BA, 31% B.Sc. and 2% B.Ed, the degree classes obtained are shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Degree Classifications Gained by Graduate Respondents.

Degree Class	% students
First	3.7
Upper Second Class	48.2
Lower Second Class	42.4
Third Class	4.5
Pass	0.4

- Year of graduation: 24% graduated in 1993, 31% in 1994 and 45% in 1995. This pattern was expected as obviously those who have been out of education longer are more difficult to access in terms of responding to the questionnaire.

The Degree

Table 9 shows the skills graduates' perceive that they gained from their degree. These are broken down by those who undertook work experience and those who did not. There are large differences in specific skills such as communication, coaching and leadership, which are mentioned more by those who had undertaken work experience. However, statistically these are not significantly different ($p > 0.05$) except for coaching which significantly more work-experience students chose ($p < 0.05$). For those who had not undergone work experience a higher percentage identified computing, research, social interaction, time management, teamwork and analytical skills. Again these are not significantly different. Both sets contain transferable, vocationally related skills; however the non-work experience graduates specified what may be termed more 'academic' skills.

Table 9: Graduates' Perceptions of Skills Gained From Their Degrees.

Skills Gained	Work Experience (%)	Non Work Experience (%)
Communication	46.5	36.0
Presentation	31.7	29.3
Writing	26.7	23.3
Computing	25.7	32.7
Self Confidence	20.8	17.3
Coaching	21.8	10.0
Organisation	19.8	16.7
Research	18.8	26.7
Social Interaction	16.8	20.0
Teamwork	14.9	18.0
Sport Skills	14.9	14.0
Time Management	13.9	19.3
Health & Fitness Assessment	12.9	13.3
Analytical	8.9	14.7
Subject Specific	8.9	8.0
Leadership	7.9	3.3
Independence	5.9	7.3

During their degree courses many graduates gained other qualifications: 50% possessed governing body awards at leader's level, many of the students picking up a range of different awards, 22% gained qualifications in lifesaving and 13% in first aid. In relation to additional elements to academic study 40% had undertaken work experience and 68% had paid work before or during their degree, half of all employed were in the service sector.

Employment

The survey enabled a snapshot of the current employment situation in the sport and recreation industry. Overall 82% of the graduates were in employment. None of those who were not employed could be classified as unemployed as they were either travelling or undertaking post graduate courses. Of those employed, 36% had sport related jobs, which does not include the 19% who had become physical education (PE) teachers, and 45% had obtained non-sport and recreation related jobs. Table 10 shows the main types of sports related jobs they had entered in relation to graduates overall and graduates employed in sport.

Table 10: Main types of employment entered.

Job Type	% of all graduates	% of Sport Jobs Entered by Graduates
Fitness Instructor	9.3	21%
Sport & Recreation Manager	8.2	19%
Sports Development Officer	6.8	15%
Lecturer	6.8	14%
Research	4.4	10%

The majority of graduates were employed by local authorities, however 29% had jobs within the commercial sector. It is surprising that educational organisations feature so highly as teachers have been excluded from Table 11. This is because of the number of lecturers and research assistants, however there were some leisure managers, sports development officers and fitness instructors within educational organisations showing that there are opportunities for sports graduates in this sector. Table 11 shows the range of organisations.

Table 11: Types of Sport and Recreation Employers.

Employer Type	Percentage of graduates employed in sport.
Charity	4.4
Educational Organisation	27.5
Local Authority	38.5
Self Employed	1.1
Large Commercial Organisation	14.3
Medium Commercial Organisation	7.7
Small Commercial Organisation	6.6

In terms of the nature of the sport and recreation jobs, 87% are full-time and 64% are permanent, by comparison, for non-sport related jobs, 84% are full-time and 68% permanent. Teaching seems to offer the most secure area of employment with 82% permanent and 97% full-time, which may explain why such a high percentage enter the profession.

The length of time the graduates have been in their jobs will obviously be affected by how long ago they graduated, therefore Table 12 shows this in relation to year of graduation.

Table 12: Length of Current Employment.

Employment Length	Percentage of 1993 Graduates	Percentage of 1994 Graduates	Percentage of 1995 Graduates
Less than one month	8	2.9	3.2
Between 1 and 6 months	8	14.3	29.1
Between 6 months and 1 year	12	31.4	48.4
More than 1 year.	72	51.4	19.4

The figures suggest that the movement within sport and recreation employment is fairly dynamic, however this can be further shown if the number of jobs the graduates who are currently employed within sport and recreation are identified (Table 13).

Table 13: Number of Jobs in Relation to Year of Graduation.

Number of Jobs	Percentage of 1993 Graduates	Percentage of 1994 Graduates	Percentage of 1995 Graduates
2 Jobs	24	34.3	38.7
3 Jobs	32	11.4	22.6
4 Jobs	-	5.7	3.2
5 Jobs	-	8.6	-
6 Jobs	-	2.9	-

The employment history throws up some interesting results. It is surprising that graduates from 1993 have had the least number of jobs considering that they have been out of HE for the longest. However, the number of graduates from the other years illustrate the dynamic nature of the sector in terms of employment. The numbers involved are small as they have been broken into subgroups but it does offer an illustration of the situation.

This is further supported by the reasons that the graduates in sport jobs gave for leaving, 18% left because they found a better job, 13% gained promotion and 18% left because the job was temporary and, in most cases, their contract had finished. This latter finding supports the picture of employment in sport as being insecure.

It is interesting to compare the level at which students expected to enter the sector with the level of the job the graduates had (Table 14). This cannot be a direct comparison as the current jobs of many graduates are obviously not their first but the comparison does give an indication of the realism of the students' expectations. The figures are also broken down into graduation year to enable a better idea of employment entry if 1995 graduates are considered on their own. It is also of interest to examine the difference that three years out of HE makes by examining 1993's results.

Table 14 shows that many more graduates are employed on the shop floor than they expected, however the findings seem to indicate that they do not stay in this position. They do not necessarily move into management as the figure for middle management is less for 1993 graduates than for 1994. It may be that they have undertaken PGCEs and entered teaching, thus suggesting that people leave the sport and recreation

industry. This is the case with fifteen of the graduates, most were in temporary shop floor jobs but two were in sport management jobs and left to take up management positions in other industries.

Table 14: Actual and Expected Employment Entry Level.

Entry Level	Expected	Actual			
	All Graduates	All Graduates	1993	1994	1995
Shop Floor	4.6	20.8	6.1	28.3	23.5
Specialist (e.g. SDO, Coach)	35.4	17.7	24.6	8.7	21.6
Academic (e.g. lecturer, researcher, teacher)	36.9	46.9	60.6	41.3	43.1
Junior Manager	9.2	2.3	0	0	2.0
Middle Manager	3.1	10.8	9.1	15.2	7.8
Senior Manager	0.8	0	0	0	0
Trainee Manager	6.2	1.5	0	2.2	2.0
Other	1.5	0	0	0	0

It is important to consider the reasons why people did not gain employment in the sport and recreation industry. Of those, 19% were not interested in working in the sector, 12% did not wish to enter it because of poor pay, 9% were undertaking postgraduate courses and 7% were travelling. A key finding from this is that 37% of those who did not gain employment in sport and recreation had tried to enter the industry but could not get jobs. These 37% were analysed to isolate the factors that may have affected why they were not able to get jobs. Table 15 compares those who got jobs with those who did not in relation to the qualifications they gained at college.

Table 15: Qualifications Obtained Related to Ability to Gain Employment.

Awards & Experience Gained During HE course.	Sport Jobs	Unable to get sport jobs
Governing Body Award	45%	46.3%
Life Saving	53.7%	14.6%
First Aid	50%	4.9%
Work Experience	47.3%	31.7%

Table 15 suggests that possible factors for not gaining employment in the sports industry could be the need for vocational skills such as life saving and first aid qualifications as well as work experience. Degree classification obtained made little difference to those who obtained jobs and those who did not.

Knowledge and Skills Relevant to the Industry

Table 16 shows that there are fairly large differences between sport and non-sport jobs in relation to transferable skills such as; communication, social interaction and customer care. This higher number of personal skills mentioned by the non-sport employed is surprising considering the sports industry forms part of the service sector where people skills are essential. Obviously there are clear differences in specific skills such as fitness assessment, which covers the ability to assess fitness and compile programmes for exercise, which is obviously sector specific.

Table 16: Skills currently used by those in employment.

Skills	Sports Jobs	Non Sports Jobs	Teachers
Communication	40.7	49.3	28.2
Organisation	21.1	17.3	25.6
Computing	17.1	17.3	10.3
Social Interaction	15.1	21.3	10.3
Customer Care	11.2	18.7	2.6
Presentation	11.2	9.3	2.6
Managerial	11.2	9.3	15.4
Fitness Assess	9.6	1.3	2.3
Coaching	8.8	1.3	17.9
Teaching	8.8	2.7	25.6
Writing	8.4	9.3	0
Teamwork	7.2	6.7	5.1
Marketing	5.2	8.0	0

In terms of knowledge used there are obviously major differences as this tends to be more specific to the sector, apart from general business and management knowledge (Table 17). The strong support for knowledge of physiology is probably related to the number of fitness instructors within the group.

Table 17: Knowledge currently used by those in employment.

Knowledge	Sports Jobs	Non Sports Jobs	Teachers
Physiology	41.8	9.3	17.9
Subject Theory	23.1	9.7	12.8
Industry	18.7	33.3	10.3
Psychology	13.2	2.7	5.1
Management	12.1	6.7	2.6
Coaching	11	2.7	7.7
Marketing	11	20	0
Sport	9.9	2.7	46.2
Business	4.4	14.7	2.6
Finance	5.5	13.3	2.6
First Aid	7.7	1.3	5.1

The survey also asked whether or not graduates felt that their jobs used the knowledge and skills that they gained on the degree. The reason this was included was to ascertain whether or not graduates become frustrated if they do not use the skills and knowledge they developed during their degree. Of those who were employed in sport 47% said that they used all or most of the skills and knowledge gained from the course in their job. As expected less of those who worked outside of sport said that they used all or most of the skills and knowledge (34%). Nearly 15% of non-sport employed graduates said that they did not use anything from their degree compared to very few sport related employed graduates. Predictably this is higher for non-sport than sport jobs, but a disquieting figure considering the transferable skills claimed for many courses.

In terms of the areas of skills and knowledge not used these varied and small numbers of people chose different areas, this obviously reflected the type of job that they had.

Table 18 shows the results for the *appropriateness* of the knowledge and skills the graduates had gained from their course to their current employment.

Table 18: Appropriateness of Skills and Knowledge to Employment.

	Skills			Knowledge		
	Sport Jobs	Non Sport	Teachers	Sport Jobs	Non Sport	Teachers
All	6.6	5.5	5.3	5.5	2.7	5.1
Most	40.7	19.2	39.5	47.3	13.5	46.2
Some	48.4	67.1	47.4	42.9	50	41
None	4.4	8.2	7.9	4.4	33.8	7.7

As expected the sports employed graduates and teachers felt that their course gave them more appropriate skills and knowledge than the graduates not employed in the sports sector. However, skills were rated as more appropriate than knowledge for a higher percentage of non-sport employed graduates, suggesting that they have gained basic transferable skills from their course.

Future Development

Of the graduates employed in sports jobs a high number had undergone further courses, 84% compared to 55% of those who were not employed in sport and 85% of teachers. The main course undertaken by sports-employed graduates was the PGCE which 14% had done, however these graduates were not in teaching jobs. Other main courses were first aid (10%) and sports therapy (7%). 13% had done in-service vocationally specific training, although very few had undertaken professional courses such as ILAM and ISRM.

The specific skills and knowledge graduates identified that they needed to develop were; industry specific knowledge which was mentioned by 20%, followed by finance (19%), specific subject theories (11%) and management theory (10%). The skills that they needed to develop were; management skills (18%), computing (12%), and 8% specified social interaction, communication and presentation skills.

The methods of developing these skills were identified as professional courses (42%), Masters (20%) but the majority (70%) specified on the job training. This reflects the need to develop industry specific knowledge. National vocational qualifications were mentioned by 6%.

For those who worked in sport and those who did not a similar percentage (50%) received a formal induction into their first job. However 72% of those who worked in sport and had an induction found it valuable compared to 91% of those who worked outside of sport and 88% of teachers. In the sport related jobs the induction generally covered introductions to the company and job.

In terms of staff development only 38% of those employed in sport had their own development programme. However, for those not employed in sport only 34% had a development programme, teachers as would be expected in an organised profession were much higher with 61% having a staff development programme. This is of interest as 84% of graduates stated that they had undertaken further qualifications which suggests many were not part of an organisational training plan.

Table 19 shows the length of time graduates intend to stay in their current job. It illustrates that many graduates both, sport and non-sport, currently want to leave. However, many more non-sports employed people intend to pursue a career in their current employment, indicated by the longest time indicated, five years or more.

The main reasons for wishing to leave within 3 years were that 23% of sport employed graduates were looking for promotion, 13% felt that they were not challenged and 7% because of poor pay.

Table 19: Intended length of time in current employment.

Length of Time	Sport	Non Sport	Teachers
Currently Looking	30.7	35.7	8.3
Between 6 - 12 months	18.2	10	11.4
Between 1 - 3 years	31.8	25.7	41.7
Between 3 - 5 years	13.6	7.13	22.2
5 years and more	5.7	21.4	16.7

Summary

The key issues from the graduate results are that they obtain other qualifications whilst in HE and many of these are relevant to the sport and recreation industry. However, after leaving HE lower than expected numbers of graduates are employed in the industry, some because they are not interested in obtaining a sports job however, many cannot get jobs. Of those in the industry, some are in unstable jobs and many graduates have had several jobs. Furthermore, their actual level of employment has not always matched their expectations. The results also show that many of the skills gained from sport and recreation HE courses are transferable across sectors, although some graduates do not perceive this. Finally, despite the fact many graduates have continued their development through further qualifications and courses, less than half have a development programme set out to facilitate this process.

3.3 COMPARISONS BETWEEN UNDERGRADUATES AND GRADUATES

In order to ensure valid comparisons could be made the same analysis was performed on student data using only those ten institutions that had been involved in the graduate survey. This indicated that there was very little difference between the whole sample of students and this sub group therefore valid comparisons could be made using all 19 institutions in the students' data.

Expected job versus actual job

Of the students 79% were aiming to enter sport related employment, but of the graduates only 36% actually entered this area of work, however 19% did become teachers. This is also reflected in the types of job the students' wished to enter, the range is similar but the numbers of graduates employed are less than the student data would suggest. In terms of types of employers the students' expectations were fairly similar to graduates' employment in relation to local authorities and educational organisations, however, less graduates gained jobs in the private sector than students' expectations.

In relation to entrance level expectations it is difficult to make direct comparisons as the questions were slightly different, however some indications are provided by the findings. With shop floor level entry the students seem quite realistic, in that the percentage that identify this as an entry point matches those graduates in that position. However this figure in the student data includes sports development officers, which was quite a popular choice, but this was categorised as 'specialist' in the graduate survey. Therefore, if 'specialist' were to be added to 'shop floor' for graduate data this would suggest that students do not really expect to enter at the shop floor level apart from in specialist areas of work. When the entrance level of junior manager is identified, 23% of students believe that they will go in at this level whilst in the survey 2% of graduates were actually in that position. The students also overestimate the possibility of becoming trainee managers - 33% students compared to 2% of graduates being in this position.

Skills gained

Generally very similar results were found between graduates and students in relation to the skills that they felt they gained from their course. The similarities in the overall comparison undermine suggestions that students are not aware of the vocational relevance of the skills that they gain. It might have been expected that the graduates would identify more vocationally relevant skills as they are more aware of them after being in the workplace, but this does not appear to be the case. When looking at the small amount of graduates who are employed in sport, there is not a consistently greater awareness of the need for vocationally relevant skills.

The only clear difference between graduates and students in relation to skills gained from their course was that a higher percentage of students than graduates identified computing skills, which may be because emphasis on IT is continually increasing within HE courses.

When comparing students and graduates who had undertaken work experience on their course, a higher percentage of students who had been on work experience, compared to graduates who had not undertaken it, claimed to have skills in communication, time management, teamwork and social interaction, and there was a major difference in management skills. There was also a much greater difference in the transferable skills gained by work experience students and non-work experience students, compared with the same groups in the graduate samples. This may be because work experience has improved in quality.

Employment skills and knowledge

In terms of the students' perceptions of skills that employers needed for sport and recreation related jobs and actual skills used by graduates in those jobs, students actually seemed to overestimate the need for interpersonal skills. The percentages of students identifying social interaction, communication, organisation and leadership were higher than the percentages of graduates who identified them as skills that they used. The one main exception was customer care, approximately 2% of students mentioned it compared to 13% of graduates in sport jobs. However, the more 'mundane' skills were under represented by the students, for example computing, writing and presentation skills. Perhaps this represents what the students would like to be doing.

In terms of knowledge that employers require, the students' perceptions match fairly well with those of the graduates who are currently employed in sport. This suggests that students do have a basic understanding of the knowledge required for sports employment which should be true as they have been studying this area.

Development of skills and knowledge

Apart from a greater percentage of graduates stating the need to develop computing skills, the development needs of the students and graduates are similar. Both the groups suggest that the skills they identify are best developed on the job. In fact preferences for different development methods were almost exactly the same for both groups.

Appropriateness of courses

Comparisons of the answers given by students and graduates suggested that students were slightly over optimistic of the appropriateness of the knowledge gained on their course for employment, however in terms of skills their rating of the appropriateness for employers was almost exactly the same as the graduates.

The comparisons illustrate similarities in the perceptions of students and graduates in the sport and recreation sector, particularly in relation to skills they have gained and the skills that they need to develop. This suggests that continuous learning and self development is required within employment.

3.4 EMPLOYERS

Sample

Table 20 shows the breakdown of the questionnaires that were returned and the completed interviews from the various industry sectors.

Table 20: Completed Interviews

Sector	Surveys Returned	No. of Graduate Recruiters in survey	% of Graduate Recruiters in survey	Nos. of Interviews of survey respondents completed	% of respondents interviewed
sport and leisure operators / departments	99	98	99%	14	14%
outdoor providers	118	71	60%	13	11%
playwork providers	147	45	30%	12	8%
health & fitness clubs	153	38	25%	14	9%
Totals	517	252	49%	53	10%

Table 20 illustrates the job roles of the graduates that were employed in sport and recreation organisations who responded to the survey.

Table 21: Graduate Job Roles

Sector	Total No. of respondents employing graduates	No. of employers with graduates in job roles listed							
		Management		Coaching/ Teaching/ Development		Operational (inc. playworkers)		Trainees	
		Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
Sport & Leisure	98	N.A.	-	N.A.	-	N.A.	-	N.A.	-
Outdoor	65	51	78%	9	14%	44	68%	8	12%
Playwork	48	39	81%	26	54%	13	27%	0	-
Fitness	41	31	76%	5	12%	15	37%	1	2%

(N.A. refers to the fact that the figures were unavailable)

Sector Descriptions

The size of organisation and nature of recruitment and career development differs greatly in each of the sectors. For this reason it is useful to have a description of the nature of employment within the various sectors (employment figures are taken from the SPRITO Industry Census Report), and to look separately at the employment of graduates within each sector. It is not possible to distinguish job roles from the Local Government Management Board (LGMB) figures.

Table 22: Sport & Leisure Centre Operators/Local Authority Leisure Provision

Organisation Size	no. of respondents	% of respondents	nos. recruiting graduates	% recruiting graduates
less than 10	0	0%	0	0%
10 - 49	0	0%	0	0%
50 +	99	100%	98	99%
Total	99	100%	98	99%

Table 22 shows the results for local authority provision which are largely leisure centres being operated by an in-house contracting team or a private sector contractor. In some cases the interview was conducted with an officer from the local authority department, in which case the information also relates to employment within the department (such as sports development officers, directors of leisure) as well as within operating sites. The projected figure from the survey developed with LGMB for local authority employment within sport and recreation in England is 36980 of which 472 would be graduates. In relation to the rest of the sector each individual authority is a large employer of specialist sport and recreation staff and it is therefore unsurprising that this sector had the widest diversity of job role and opportunity for graduate recruitment.

Table 23: Outdoor Education, Training and Recreation

Organisation Size	no. of respondents	% of respondents	nos. recruiting graduates	% recruiting graduates
less than 10	47	40%	15	31%
10 - 49	54	46%	43	77%
50 +	17	14%	7	41%
Total	118	100%	65	55%

The outdoor education, training and recreation sector encompasses three different kinds of operation, with differing skills needs. These are:

- outdoor education centres
- outdoor activity providers
- outdoor development training providers

Outdoor education centres are frequently operated by local authorities or local education authorities and are not subject to contract as they are regarded as education and not leisure provision. These centres often employ qualified teachers, thereby boosting the number of graduates employed in this sector, they also tend to be the

larger employers in the sector (see Table 23). Outdoor activity providers are usually private companies (although some are charities) providing recreational and introductory activities, mostly for children, but also adults in a controlled outdoor environment, throughout a long spring, summer and autumn season. Outdoor development trainers tend to be private sector or charitable operators, and frequently run development activities in a wilder environment throughout the year. The aims of the development organisation influences their recruitment, for instance those working with young people at risk may require a social/youth work background, whilst those in the corporate sector may require a management background.

Table 24: Playwork

Organisation Size	no. of respondents	% of respondents	nos. recruiting graduates	% recruiting graduates
less than 10	66	45%	13	15
10 - 49	62	42%	30	39
50 +	19	13%	8	30
Total	147	100%	48	33%

Playwork provision is largely in the public and not-for-profit sectors. In the public sector it is only out to contract where it is an integrated part of wider leisure provision. Many playwork providers operate only in school holidays and employ their largest number during the summer holidays, frequently employing current students (see Table 24). There are however an increasing number of after school play settings, and some settings operate throughout the day. The figures in the above table will vary according to the time of year, as some respondents returned figures for their "closed" season and others for their busiest period.

Table 25: Health and Fitness

Organisation Size	no. of respondents	% of respondents	nos. recruiting graduates	% recruiting graduates
less than 10	110	72	23	21%
10 - 49	37	24	16	43%
50 +	6	4	2	33%
Total	153	100	41	27%

The SPRITO Industry Census reveals that 72% of health and fitness clubs employ less than 10 people, which greatly restricts employment and progression opportunities within the sector (see Table 25). There is an increasing number of health club management companies operating chains of fitness centres often within hotels and country clubs, yet still only 4% of operators employ more than 50 people. Fitness suites in local authority leisure centres are increasingly recruiting fitness specific staff, and branding of fitness facilities is increasing amongst private sector contractors. Local authority contractors, and larger health club chains are more likely to employ graduates than the majority of smaller, privately owned fitness centres.

Employment of graduates with relevant degrees

The large number of degrees related to the sport, recreation and allied occupation sector include both broad leisure management degrees and those specific to a particular sector of the industry. The extent to which appropriate employment opportunities exist depends upon the employment sector they are aimed at. Meanwhile the extent to which these degrees are seen to prepare an individual for the workplace depends upon the individual employer's perception of their skills needs and how these can be met.

Sport and Leisure Centre Operators / Local Authority Provision

These are the operators who have the widest variety of employment opportunities and are therefore able to recruit graduates from a variety of degree specialisms. All employers contacted, excepting one, indicated graduates within their employment. More sport and recreation related graduates are found in this employment sector than elsewhere, 23 related titles were given in our sample, plus over 30 unspecified degrees. There was also however a large incidence of recruitment of graduates with unrelated degrees; at Greenwich Leisure for instance, none of the 13 graduates employed hold sector related degrees. Posts such as fitness manager, total life project co-ordinator and community recreation officer seem to reflect the aspirations of graduates within sport and recreation, but many are also employed as recreation assistants and leisure attendants, not on the basis of their degree but because this is an attainable entry point to the industry with appropriate qualifications such as the pool lifeguard. There is evidence that graduates are progressing with experience to senior management positions such as Head of Recreation, Director of Leisure. In these roles they are as likely to hold unrelated degrees such as history and politics as sport and leisure related degrees. This may reflect the newness of the sport and leisure degrees in relation to the age of these senior managers.

Outdoor Education, Training and Recreation

The most popular degree possessed in this sector was 'Outdoor Education' - held by several instructors in five centres, across the outdoor education, activity and development training spectrum. Some employees also held degrees in a discipline of leisure management, whilst youth and community work degrees were seen as desirable by some employers. Many employees held teaching degrees in other specialisms, and others who were employed on the basis of governing body qualifications and experience, held unrelated degrees. The large numbers of qualified teachers in the sector is reflected by the fact that 71 of the 118 survey respondents employed graduates. Many employers who received applications from graduates with leisure or recreation management degrees felt that the content of these degrees did not correspond directly to their needs, particularly in technical areas.

Playwork

There is no degree specific to the playwork sector, so for employers wishing to recruit a graduate with a relevant degree it is definitely a case of a best fit choice. Many of our sample in full time playwork employment (play scheme managers, play development workers) held degrees in youth and community, teaching and social science. 63 of the

147 survey respondents employed graduates. Due to the seasonal nature of much playwork employment, many playworkers were students gaining experience during vacations before entering full-time employment, rather than graduates. In many cases the degree courses of seasonal playwork employees were skill/performance related (e.g. art and drama) rather than industry related.

Health and Fitness

The smallest incidence of graduate employment (38 of 153 respondents) is in the health and fitness sector, due to the large number of small operators who do not have scope for regular recruitment and progression. Where graduates are employed, our sample shows that the degree most frequently held is sports science, followed by physical education and recreation management. Five sports science graduates were also employed within the fitness suites of sport and leisure centres, and in some this was a required qualification. This reflects a growing commercialism based on health related activity. There were fewer employed within the private sector, largely due to the lack of regular recruitment and reliance on local advertising amongst small operators. Typical job titles are assistant, instructor and manager with little opportunity for variation in the job role. However, typically of small businesses, the job roles themselves are diverse; marketing, management, operational and administrative activities are needed to supplement specialist instruction/exercise prescription activities.

Other qualifications/experience specified

Many employers in every sector, but in particular health and fitness and outdoor operators specified various governing body and other professional awards as pre-requisites to employment. Furthermore a key factor in all sectors was the possession of prior experience.

Sport and Leisure Centre Operators

Those with wet facilities specified either an RLSS Bronze Medallion or Pool Lifeguard qualification when recruiting operational staff. In many facilities coaching qualifications were seen as desirable, and one facility saw a sports related further education diploma as an appropriate entry qualification. At supervisory and management level some employers also specified professional body qualifications such as ISRM and ILAM diplomas. Only one operator specified NVQs as required qualifications.

Playwork

Many employers now have to prove the competence of their staff to their local authority social services department to comply with the Children Act 1989. Only two operators required nursery nursing qualifications for their staff, as these are aimed at those working with the under five's, and playwork relates to children of all ages. All employers however specified experience of working with children and 4 of our sample provided training towards playwork NVQs - the only nationally recognised playwork qualification available.

Outdoor Education, Training and Recreation

Almost every employer in this sector required their staff to possess one or more national governing body qualifications. The level of qualification required depended both on the type of activities offered by the centre in question and the level of the employee within that organisation. For those operating closed environment activities the requirement for many staff was for trainee instructor status, with an instructor in charge. However for Outdoor Education centres operating in wild environments higher level qualifications such as senior instructor were required.

Health and Fitness

Most fitness operators, (8 of our sample) requested a relevant qualification upon appointment, but not any one particular qualification - they would enquire about the content at interview. Only three respondents requested a specific qualification, and just one mentioned NVQs. Two operators provided in-house training to their company standard upon appointment and one sent new recruits on a recognised external training course.

Perception of graduates within the workplace

Many respondents stated that they made no distinction between graduates in general and other employees in terms of performance within the workplace, as these factors were dependent on the individual. Despite this a number did share common experiences or perceptions as to the abilities of graduates within the workplace. Other respondents felt that whilst ability was very much dependent on the individual, this could still be influenced by the background of that individual - hence attending a university course as opposed to entering employment would have an effect on the ability of an individual.

The section below outlines employers perceptions of recent graduates within the workplace according to the question structure used in the interview

Technical Ability

The view of most employers was that the technical ability of graduates in general was poor. This was due to the fact that university courses did not cover the technical aspects of recreation management - such as equipment usage and health and safety. However those graduates who had gained employment within the industry were technically competent as this was a requirement of the job. Their competence had however been acquired through their own previous experience of the workplace, not through their course of study.

Personal abilities

This relates to the ability of an employee to relate to others (both customers and colleagues within the workplace). Employers' views varied as regards the team working and communications skills etc. of graduate employees. Most respondents

stated that the major factor in this was the personality of the individual employee, as opposed to any educational or working background.

The following points were however made with specific regard to graduate employees:

positively: that the communication skills of graduates were often well developed through their education. This was a significant factor in recruiting graduate employees, as report writing skills became important at a middle management level, and often those who had been promoted from an operational level had not received training in this area.

negatively: some graduates have problems communicating appropriately within the workplace, examples being: difficulty in preparing for and expressing themselves at interview and completing official documentation.

Two particular points noticed by many employers were:

- an attitude that graduate status was in some way superior to experience, often created difficulties within the workplace;
- many graduates had difficulty in adapting to the workplace, for instance in addressing customers appropriately. A key example of this are sports science graduates who have a thorough knowledge of physiology but are unable to translate this into a practical work programme for the customer. Only one employer felt that graduates had the necessary customer oriented approach.

Willingness to Train and Learn

Again views were divided on this point:

- a significant minority of employers expressed a negative view that graduates were unwilling to learn as they felt they had completed their learning at university. This poor experience of graduates makes employers more wary of the graduate market.
- most employers were however of the opinion that graduates were keen to train and learn both to compensate for their lack of experience and also because they were used to doing so.

Skills brought to the employer outside of the normal job role

It was not felt that the content of degree courses provided extra skills to an employer, but that the process of studying for a degree could develop useful skills, in particular with the increasing presence of information technology within the workplace. Many employers recruited graduates not on the basis of current skills, but on the basis that a degree was a mark of an ability to learn and develop, and that this was indicative of future potential. There was a slight difference among playwork employers in that the students/graduates they employed frequently possessed creative skills which were of use to their immediate employment.

Loyalty to an Employer / Likelihood to move on

Many respondents noted that this issue was affected by the fact that the labour market is currently very static within the industry, and that whilst their graduate employees

may wish to move on, they do not often have the opportunity to do so. Beyond this a variety of views were expressed with regards to this issue

- some employers particularly within sport/leisure centres and health and fitness clubs expected graduate employees in operational roles to try to move on within two years. They felt that their current employment was offering initial work experience to be used when applying for the employee's next post, whether or not this was in sport and recreation. Some respondents actually hoped that employees would move on before becoming disillusioned with the work as the opportunities for progression within their workplace did not exist. There was no evidence of prejudice against graduates amongst these employers. The supply of graduates and restricted job opportunities inevitably results in graduates applying and being recruited into entry level jobs.
- others who did provide comprehensive training for recent recruits hoped that graduate employees would stay in order to make this investment worthwhile. It was felt that the provision of such training often enhanced the loyalty of the employee. The opportunity for progression within the organisation was however a cause for concern.
- seasonal employers in playwork and the outdoors found that loyalty was good, particularly during the actual student years when people needed holiday work, and in the final year before seeking full time employment. Whilst some playworkers would seek full time posts in the field employment opportunities are few. For those in the outdoors loyalty was often a case of lifestyle choice amongst people who enjoyed the outdoors and would therefore return each season and then spend the remainder of the year pursuing their own outdoor activities. Many people aspiring to employment within the outdoor sector, wished to work in mountainous areas, and therefore employers in urban/flatland areas had difficulty in retaining staff.

Recruitment, induction and development procedures

This section of the interview was designed to gain an insight into current recruitment, induction and development practice within the various sectors of the industry, and to give employers the opportunity to specify those areas in which they felt there was room for improvement.

Person Specifications

Thirty nine of the fifty three employers interviewed used a person specification as part of their recruitment procedure. The fitness sector accounts for six of the respondents not using one. This was due to the lack of regular recruitment within small fitness clubs and to the variety of possible qualifications available. Many of the person specifications concentrated on personal qualities rather than qualifications through statements such as 'the applicant must be keen and enthusiastic'.

Satisfaction with Quality of Applicant

Due to the lack of opportunities currently available almost all respondents received large numbers of applicants for the posts they advertised, and were consequently able to draw a short list of good quality applicants to interview at all levels of recruitment. Significant factors were as follows

- Many employers experienced a large number of poor applications, from people of all levels of academic achievement, along with good quality applications. Problems experienced were poorly presented applications and applicants not fulfilling the conditions required. This raised concerns about the effectiveness of the original advertisement in ensuring appropriate applicants.
- All respondents felt that the interview was a crucial part of the process, particularly in assessing the "character" of an applicant. Whilst applicants were called to interview on the strength of the qualifications and experience stated on paper this needed reinforcement at the interview. Those applicants who came over as being enthusiastic with strong communications skills were those who were most often appointed.
- The outdoor sector had the highest level of satisfaction with applicants. Those operating seasonal activities had high levels of returning instructors, with whom they were happy. Outdoor Education Centres require highly qualified and experienced staff and offer competitive salaries to obtain these. The number of appropriately qualified and experienced applicants is currently greatly outweighing opportunities in the sector.
- The sport and leisure sector and fitness sector suffered from many applicants being attracted to the industry on an impression of glamour, but having little understanding of the reality of the work. They found many applicants assuming their job would be an easy role and were not aware of the demands of customer care, equipment maintenance etc.

Issues specific to graduates were:

- some employers felt that whilst many had good paper qualifications they were unable to demonstrate sufficient linked experience. This also related to those who had recently gained national governing body qualifications without substantial experience. This inexperience often led to an inability to perform well at interview.
- those with few or no graduate employees stated that this was not due to an unwillingness to employ graduates, but that they received no applications from graduates. The employers felt that this was because the pay and opportunities for progression did not meet the expectations of graduates.

Induction procedures

All employers interviewed claimed to operate some form of induction for new employees. These varied greatly in formality and in time taken. A common factor in all sectors was time and resource limitation and the need to have staff on the job as soon as possible. The smaller the operation the more urgent was this situation particularly where a staff member had left unexpectedly and there was no notice period (prevalent within the fitness sector).

Sport and Leisure Centres

Induction programmes within sport and leisure centres tended to be formal and to combine both an induction to the local authority/department and the centre/job role. The emphasis of the induction varied from centre to centre. Many respondents felt

that their induction process was too mechanistic and did not give enough emphasis to the actual job role.

Playwork

Playwork providers tend to recruit largely just prior to the summer holidays, and employment lasts for a six week period. This allows many providers to hold a specific induction period of up to a week covering the basics of the operation and also specific issues such as disability awareness.

Outdoor

There were a variety of induction processes used for new staff within the outdoor sector. The majority of respondents used a formal or written process, three respondents operated a training programme for new staff (one lasting a week, another 1 month, the other 2 months). For those Outdoor Education Centres whose staff had very broad roles induction was more difficult as a formal process could not cover the scope of their activities. In these situations induction also included visits to sites and venues used by the centre.

Fitness

Induction is frequently a case of informal on the job training within fitness centres due to the pressures of needing staff to be active as soon as possible. The positive side to this however is that staff do gain a thorough induction to all aspects of the work over a long period of time.

Encouraging staff development

Twenty one respondents had either a company development plan or an appraisal system of which seven were linked to obtaining recognition as an Investor in People. The main restrictions on offering the ideal scenario for training provision were time to release staff to train and money to pay for training. There was however substantial variation regarding staff development between sectors, due to the differing nature of employment within each sector.

Sport and Leisure Centres

Most operators hoped to encourage staff development effectively, frequently through the use of training needs analysis and appraisals. Most operators provided in-house training specific to the job role, but also looked to provide broader opportunities for staff development where this could also be of value to the organisation.

Playwork

Due to the seasonal nature and short employment period of playwork opportunities for providing for staff development are limited. The opportunities that are available are from the sharing of experiences between playworkers of different backgrounds and attending short courses on a wider range of subjects when they become available.

Outdoor

A large part of encouraging staff development within the outdoor sector involves encouraging staff to develop their own ideas and take on new responsibilities in the organising and delivery of courses. Many centres, particularly those with a training aspect to their business also had a formal system of appraisals and target setting.

Exercise and Fitness

Only two respondents had a formal development programme. Four respondents said they liked to give staff the ability to choose their own development plan if it could be of use to the centre. The employers were often willing to assist with the cost of courses in these cases.

Room for improvement?

Most respondents were reasonably happy with their current staff recruitment, induction and development programmes whilst acknowledging that these could be improved, particularly if time and money constraints were removed. Few respondents replied that they saw no room for improvement. The major improvement to be made in recruitment according to many respondents would be to improve the targeting of advertisements to ensure that appropriate applicants were attracted, particularly where only local advertising was used. Given more resources, many respondents would provide a more thorough induction comprising organisation background, operational procedures and the actual job role. Most operators also felt that they would like to offer further development opportunities if they could find resources to do so.

Summary

The needs of each sector in terms of technical ability differ greatly, whilst all require strong interpersonal and communication skills. None of the sectors investigated feel that their technical or inter-personal requirements are specifically catered for by the degree courses currently on offer (with the exception of some employers specifically recruiting sports science graduates), although graduates may have developed these skills through their own experience. Those graduates who have gained these skills are often seen as good employees, whilst those who have not may struggle to find employment or not be seen as valuable employees.

Many employers who have recruited graduates state that they view a degree as an indication of an ability to progress in the future - not to fulfil a current skills need, otherwise there is generally no distinction made by employers between recruiting a new graduate or an employee from a different background.

Whilst there is a feeling amongst employers that graduates are very short of valid employment experience upon applying for their first jobs, few employers make particular provision for a new graduate employee to gain a fuller induction into the workplace, yet those graduates who recognise their inexperience are more likely to be open to learning. The exception to this was found in some local authorities and contract organisations where specific graduate trainee schemes exist.

There is no general feeling for or against the recruitment of graduates into the industry, but there is an acknowledgement that graduates are generally not prepared to enter the industry at the level of responsibility, frequently managerial, that they seek.

The way forward

From the employer point of view there are two main issues regarding the current preparation of graduates for the workplace:

- lack of technical skills
- lack of interpersonal skills

To improve upon the current situation it is felt that:

- degrees could hold more technical content
- students should be encouraged to gain more realistic work experience - either through paid employment, or a substantial placement, as this would help them perform better upon their initial employment
- acquisition of industry based or governing body awards could be integrated into the course of study

3.5 COMPARISONS OF EMPLOYERS, GRADUATES AND UNDERGRADUATES

In comparing the employers' interviews and the findings of the student and graduate surveys it is possible to examine the wider issues of graduate employment in the sport and recreation industry.

In terms of employment sectors both the industry and graduate research agreed that local authorities employ the most sport and recreation graduates. It was also stated in the industry research that many are employed as fitness instructors which again supports the findings of the employment of graduates. The commercial sector employed less graduates than within local authorities, however probably more are employed than would be expected from the data gathered from the employment interview. This suggested that very few graduates were employed within the commercial sector. Despite the higher than expected figures compared to the employers' interview fewer graduates are employed in this sector compared to the students' expectations. This is probably because there are not the number of jobs in this sector for the graduates that want them.

Outdoor education, training and recreation organisations were found to employ graduates with specific outdoor education degrees. It is difficult to compare the results of the student and graduate surveys with these results as outdoor education degrees were not included in the courses used in the research. Some of the courses did include elements of outdoor education however no graduates who returned questionnaires were found to be employed in this area.

There are specific areas that students aspire to more than others, for example sports development. However few graduates obtained employment in this area and the employer research also found little evidence of sports development officers who were graduates.

The employer research also identified the other qualifications that many sport and recreation employers specify, for example governing body awards and lifesaving. The survey of graduates showed that many of them have these qualifications, however a key point made by employers is that experience is needed to support these qualifications, in particular coaching qualifications. It could be that students are picking up a range of governing body awards whilst at college but do not actually put them into action and gain experience. Equally it may be unreasonable for an employer to expect a lot of experience in addition to the qualifications.

Another key requirement of employers is technical ability e.g. pool plant skills, however very few students and graduates identified these as skills they possessed. Few of those who had entered the industry stated that they needed technical skills suggesting that they were unable to enter jobs where this was an important attribute. Technical skills are an important inconsistency between the immediate skills required of graduates and the more academic skills to be found in HE. A more positive point is that employers felt that graduates had well developed IT skills which is reflected in the percentage of graduates who identified this as a skill they possessed.

The industry research reports mixed attitudes towards the personal skills of graduates. This corresponds with the fact that between a quarter and a half of graduates are very aware of the need to possess interpersonal skills, whilst the rest have a distinct lack of awareness. Many graduates also do not perceive what might be seen as 'mundane' tasks such as report writing as being particularly relevant.

Another problem that was identified by employers was that graduates are poorly prepared in terms of initial applications for jobs and interviews. This supports the possibility that graduates lack awareness of employers expectations and the relevant vocational skills.

Although the majority of employers found graduates willing to learn, a few employers suggested that graduates had an attitude that they had gained all they needed from their degree. The results of the graduate survey do not support this perception as the majority of graduates in sport related employment had undertaken further courses and training.

In terms of loyalty to the employer the industry research suggested that the labour market in the sector was static. This was not reflected in the number of jobs the graduates had undertaken, however the survey identified that many graduates found it difficult to progress in their career in sport.

All employers in the industry research stated that they operated induction programmes this contrasts with the graduate survey where only half of graduates undertook an induction programme. This difference in results was also found in relation to staff development, many employers claimed they undertook staff development programmes however only 38% of graduates stated that they had their own development programme. Clearly there is inconsistency between what employers think they are providing and what graduates perceive they are receiving.

Overall, despite the fact that some common student expectations seem unrealistic, notably concerning the level of entry, other expectations appear quite accurate, particularly the additional required skills and knowledge and means of developing them.

4.0. PHASE ONE RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

Several issues emerge from the research phase of the project. A key finding is that 55% of graduates gained employment in the sport and recreation industry, including teaching. This falls to 36% when teaching is excluded. This is not only low in comparison with student expectations (79% of the student sample in the research were considering employment in the sport and recreation industry) but also particularly low when compared to Coalter and Potter's (1990) 79% and the CNAAs (1990) 52% findings. These research conclusions will try to explain this apparent reduction.

First, however, it is important to get the key finding above in perspective. The graduate employment record of sport and recreation degrees is good, certainly no worse than most other degrees and better than many. Many of the HEI providers of sport and recreation degrees stress the transferable skills of the courses they provide - i.e. few if any are aiming to provide graduates only for the sport and recreation industry.

Two of the more obvious reasons for a fall in the percentage of sport and recreation graduates gaining employment in the sport and recreation industry are statistical explanations. First, the sample taken for the current research may have been biased towards courses with a greater likelihood of students searching for jobs in other industries. We have not tested for such bias, so it remains a possibility. Second, the rapid growth in the numbers sport and recreation degrees in the last ten years or so has spawned a similar growth in the number of graduates emerging from them, whilst the number of jobs in the industry has not grown to nearly the same extent, nor has its propensity to employ graduates. It is statistically inevitable, therefore, that a lower proportion of the current sport and recreation graduates will be demanded by the sport and recreation industry.

However, there are other factors disclosed by the research which may be impeding the potential for graduate employment in the sport and recreation industry. One such factor appears to be a lack of awareness by some sport and recreation students and graduates of the need for interpersonal skills for employment within the sport and recreation industry. They do not appear to be able to communicate the qualities that they have to prospective employers, thus some employers perceive that graduates do not possess such skills. However a more positive point is that the problem appears to be primarily communication, in general the students do seem to have many of the skills and knowledge required within the sports industry.

Students also appear to have too high expectations for their level of entry into the industry. Those who employ graduates indicate that it is often for the skills they have that can be used in future employment, however it seems that they need to progress up the organisation in order to use those skills. Thus graduates are probably confronted with initial jobs that are temporary, low paid, that do not enable them to use their knowledge and to a lesser extent the skills that they have gained. This was underlined by some of the qualitative comments in the questionnaire where graduates felt

frustrated because they were doing jobs that could be done by "people without degrees".

In terms of career development once graduates have entered employment they do not seem to be progressing as quickly as expected. The Coalter and Potter (1990) and CNAAs (1990) surveys both found evidence of rapid promotion to senior and middle positions. This lack of promotion may be because of the static nature of the industry.

Graduates have obtained extra qualifications on their HE courses that are relevant, but they did not appear to gain relevant experience to support the qualifications during HE. Therefore it would appear that although large numbers of students have relevant professional awards, what they need is relevant experience, e.g. coaching at student clubs, or if they have this experience they need to communicate this to employers more effectively. It would also appear that more technical qualifications are important, for example pool plant certificates, however these are often difficult for students to obtain if they are not employed in the industry. An issue that needs to be discussed is whether or not it is appropriate for HE courses to be offering such specific skills, and in any case arguably the most effective place for graduates to obtain such skills is during on the job training by the employer, perhaps with induction or staff development programmes.

The comparison of those with jobs in the industry and those without supports some of the comments employers have made. Many of those with jobs have gained work experience and specific qualifications like lifesaving and first aid. However the number of students with casual employment during their degree, particularly in services industries seems to be increasing. They should be emphasising to employers the skills they have gained from those jobs. Work experience also seems to be a valuable activity for students to undertake in order to get a realistic appreciation of the industry.

Is it also realistic of employers to expect graduates to have gained specific on the job experience when they have been concentrating on qualifications? Some employers are aware of the particular attributes of graduates which are useful to the workplace, however they must also realise that there will be weaknesses in terms of experience therefore graduates will need a different emphasis within induction and staff development programmes. This may be the reason why some graduates do not perceive that they have a staff development programme because it is not formalised and related to their actual training and development needs.

There is, unsurprisingly, no single, fundamental reason for the low percentage of graduates who obtain employment in this sector. Employers do not seem to have recruitment policies that either encourage or discourage graduates. There are several possible factors involved: that there are more graduates for the jobs available and many find jobs in other industries; the students and courses do not market themselves effectively to employers; employers do not target recruitment specifically enough; students have some unrealistic expectations and some misunderstandings of employers' requirements; employers have misperceptions of what skills graduates have and how they can be most effectively used.

The research conclusions serve to provide a number of directions for the subsequent phase of the project. There appears to be considerable scope for recommending means by which students, HEIs and employers all improve their perceptions and practices, in order to bring about a better matching of skills gained by graduates with those demanded by the industry.

5.0 METHODS FOR PILOTING AND MONITORING

It was considered appropriate from the outset of this project that any pilot methods should originate empirically from two sources: sport and recreation practitioners and representatives of higher education institutions operating courses in sport and recreation. To this end the workshop held on 6 November 1996 was pivotal. Delegates to this workshop, invited from the two sources identified above, were informed prior to the workshop by the research results from the project, and given the objective of identifying the nature and purpose of pilot recruitment and induction mechanisms.

The results of the research conducted into student, graduate employee and employer experiences during the first phase of this project were disseminated prior to the workshop. Full copies of the research report were disseminated to all 45 member institutions of SCLRS and members of the project steering group (including four employer representatives). Executive summaries of the research report were sent to all 53 employers who participated in the research interviews (see 2.2 above). A press release disseminated results through trade and academic media. The findings generated a large amount of interest and discussion. This debate continued as others in both the academic and employment fields used the results to inform their own work.

5.1. WORKSHOP REPORT: GRADUATE RECRUITMENT - GETTING IT RIGHT!

This national workshop was held for employers and education providers to discuss the impact of the research, to provide a focus for the wider debate, and enable a consensus to be formed as to the action needed to improve graduate employability and employment in the sector.

The project team sought the following results from the national workshop:

- Understanding among delegates of the research findings
- Identification of key target groups to influence
- Identification of means to influence these groups

The agenda for the workshop is contained in Appendix 5.

The event was publicised through press releases in the trade media and to all SPRITO members and was attended by 42 delegates from employment and education.

The purpose of the first plenary session was to allow delegates to question the project group and thus gain a fuller insight into the implications of the research results. This session resulted in the identification of the following specific issues to be tackled by the project group:

- Employers do not always state their skills needs clearly;
- Graduates do not always demonstrate their skills and experience effectively;
- Employers do not therefore always get the most appropriate recruits or get the best from these recruits.

Following lunch the delegates were split into three groups and asked to consider the above three issues and identify potential solutions. The results of their discussions were then presented to the project group.

Results from discussion

How can employers state their skills needs more effectively?

- Employers need to target advertisements carefully to attract appropriate applicants. If a graduate is required it may be more effective to advertise at a university than a local job centre.
- Skills needs should be stated more specifically within job descriptions and person specifications. The National Occupational Standards for Sport and Recreation could be used to help with this.

How can graduates demonstrate their skills and experience more effectively to potential employers?

- Students need to receive advice and guidance from the start of their university course if they are to prepare themselves well for employment.
- There are a number of groups able to influence students: employers, careers services and tutors - these groups need educating as to how they can help the student to prepare for employment. Employers can advise on appropriate extra qualifications and the type of skills required. Careers services can help with job applications and interview technique. Tutors may be able to provide links with local employers and inform about the realities of employment in the industry.
- Universities need to be honest about the extent of vocational content in their courses, and should encourage/enable students to undertake industry qualifications.
- Course transcripts detail what a student has studied and how they have performed. Students can use these to identify areas in which they need to improve, whilst employers can use them to identify potential employees according to skills and knowledge.

How can employers ensure the best results from new recruits?

- To gain maximum benefit from recruiting graduates, employers need to enable these recruits to use the skills gained during their study, as well as using graduates to fulfil current employment needs.
- Employers therefore need advice on the extra skills a graduate may bring - such as marketing or accounting or health related fitness knowledge.
- A structured training and development programme would enable graduates to contribute at an operational level whilst using the extra skills they bring.
- Ideally, students could gain operational skills whilst studying through work placements or paid vacation/part-time work and then progress to a trainee manager position upon graduation.

Proposals for Action

The results of the discussion identified the need for information and guidance for all groups involved in the education and employment of graduates. It was proposed that a separate package be produced for each interest group, containing appropriate guidance as follows:

Employers

- when and where to advertise jobs;
- writing advertisements, job descriptions and person specifications;
- the benefits of recruiting graduates;
- the content of degree course and the skills and knowledge these develop;
- induction and development.

Students

- an overview of employment in the industry;
- preparing for employment - appropriate experience, skills and qualifications;
- where to look for jobs, writing applications and interview technique.

Higher Education Institutions

- working more closely with industry;
- supporting students to prepare for employment;
- preparing course content to meet the needs of industry.

5.2 POST-WORKSHOP PROCESS

The results of the national workshop and in particular the proposals for producing guidance materials were used by the project team in planning the further development of the project. The suggested content for the guidance materials and appropriate means to disseminate them were developed further at subsequent meetings of the project steering group, ensuring further employer input. Steering Group meetings (including employer representatives and occurring on 2/12/96, 27/1/97, 30/4/97) and Project Group meetings (excluding employer representatives and occurring on 10/1/97, 16/4/97, 17/9/97) concentrated on converting the ideas from the workshop into a practical pilot exercise.

An important decision emanating from the workshop was to concentrate on *documentation* for all three target groups: employers, students and HEI staff. This was not anticipated at the outset of the project but it was the dominant method suggested in the national workshop discussions, with advantages which included:

- putting materials directly into the hands of the relevant populations;
- having the potential for national distribution on a wide scale;
- serving a promotional purpose, alerting target populations to problems and possible solutions, which for many recipients will be the final outcome;
- serving an educational purpose, with an opportunity for recipients to acquire other materials and move proactively to better practices.

The second most popular method suggested at the national workshop, after documentation, was direct training but this was considered inappropriate for piloting because:

- it is incapable of achieving a national impact for three distinct target groups in a reasonable time;
- documentation was considered a preferable substitute for general, advisory 'training';
- for employers and HEIs the national organisations leading this project, SPRITO and SCLRS, have both the potential and desire to organise training forums as a second stage, after a first stage which concentrates on wide dissemination of appropriate documentation.
- for students and HEI staff, appropriate training mechanisms are more effectively conducted within HEIs, both within student courses and as part of staff development.

In other words, direct training was considered more appropriate as a follow up to dissemination of documentation, rather than as a substitute for it. Therefore the method being piloted was the documentation.

It was agreed in the Steering Group (2 December 1996) that the three target groups, SME employers, HEI students and HEI staff, should, for the purposes of the piloting, be treated as distinct groups with separate materials needed. It was infeasible to pilot exactly the same materials to all or any two of these groups, although there would be similarities in the contents of the three sets of materials.

It was also agreed that the purpose of the pilot materials was to influence both the short term and the longer term behaviour of the three target groups.

Short term examples

- employers - improvement of job descriptions, person specifications, recruitment methods;
- students - appreciation of SME employers' requirements, appropriate level of entry, standard of job applications;
- HEI staff - more working with SME employers in delivery of programmes, closer liaison with HEI Careers Services.

Long term examples

- employers - improvement of induction and staff development planning for graduates, incorporation of National Occupation Standards into recruitment and development procedures;
- students - planning of personal development and rounded profile;
- HEI staff - modifying course design to suit SME employers' needs, NB personal skill development, professional qualifications.

It was also acknowledged that whereas recruitment was tending to dominate the agenda in the research, the workshop and the design of pilot materials, induction should still be an explicit consideration wherever appropriate. It was felt that recruitment and induction were closely related in any case, because induction began

with recruitment, so that materials relating to recruitment had implications for induction too - see section 1.1, page 2 above.

The Steering Group agreed that the most appropriate format for the pilot guidance materials was a leaflet for wide dissemination among the relevant populations, with supporting guidance notes, in packs, available on request. On reflection it was decided that whereas the leaflet served a useful purpose for the employers and students (because they were large population groups needing a brief, readable introduction to the materials), for HEI staff a leaflet was not necessary, and it was more appropriate to draw their attention straight to the guidance notes.

5.3 PILOT MATERIALS

The Steering Group prioritised a matrix of suggested content for the three target groups' guidance notes which originated from the workshop discussions. The resulting materials are attached in Appendices 6 (employers), 7 (students) and 8 (HEI staff). In summary the guidance notes consisted of the following.

Employers

- The benefits of employing graduates
- How to recruit a graduate
- Categories of sport related courses and the skills and attributes developed
- Contact addresses for courses
- Job descriptions and person specifications
- Working with Higher Education Institutions
- Making placements work
- Off to a good start

Students

- Closer working with the industry
- Transcripts and the provision of information to industry/employers about your achievements
- Getting your foot in the door
- Looking for jobs
- Applying for jobs
- Learning at work
- Useful names and addresses
- A student guide to National Vocational Qualifications and National Occupational Standards

HEI staff

- Closer working with the industry
- Work placements
- Transcripts and the provision of information to employers about the course and students' achievements
- National Occupational Standards and S/NVQs in sport, recreation and allied occupations
- Graduate employment in the sport and recreation industry: Executive Summary of research report.

Leaflets were distributed to 200 employers; and 500 students on ten courses in the five pilot HEIs: University of Wales Institute, Cardiff; University of Luton; Manchester Metropolitan University; University of Northumbria; University of Ulster at Jordanstown.

Guidance notes were sent to 46 employers; and made available for reference to staff and students in the five pilot HEIs

Monitoring process

Appendices 9 (employers), 10 (students) and 11 (HEI staff) contain summaries of the procedures and instruments used to monitor the effectiveness of the pilot materials. The main instruments were:

- in-person and telephone interviews with 50 employers;
- questionnaires and focus group interviews for students on ten courses in five HEIs;
- questionnaires and focus group interviews for staff in five HEIs;

In addition, a 'response rate' from employers was gauged by the return of a form, attached to the leaflet, which requested further materials and also contained a brief evaluation of the leaflet.

The focus group interviews were utilised not only to evaluate qualitatively the pilot materials, but also to explore some of the underlying issues which the pilot materials seek to address and in doing so help to assess how relevant the pilot materials were to the groups on which they were tested. These underlying issues include:

- perceptions of the employability of students;
- responsibility of courses to vocational orientation;
- responsibility of HEIs and students for personal skills development;

The results of the piloting and monitoring are discussed in the next chapter.

6.0 PILOTING RESULTS

6.1 EMPLOYERS

The objectives of the pilot process were to establish:

- how useful the guidance materials were to employers
- whether the content of the materials could be improved
- whether the presentation of the materials could be improved
- the best method of dissemination for the materials

A controlled two stage dissemination process was chosen as the main means of piloting the materials. The process involved mailing an information leaflet to raise awareness of the materials among employers, with a return slip to order the full information pack. This method was chosen to avoid wastage by sending a full guidance pack to those not engaged by the issue. The return slip also asked for comments on the leaflet so that its success could be reviewed qualitatively (see Appendix 9).

A sample of 200 organisations to be mailed information leaflets was chosen as follows:

- 50 organisations which had been contacted during the research phase and promised copies of the resulting products.
- 85 SPRITO members who should be aware of the project and could easily be telephoned if the response was low.
- 35 organisations thought to have no knowledge of the work (no explanatory letter was included in order to test the impact of the leaflet)
- 30 organisations thought to have no knowledge of the work (with an explanatory letter.)

In addition to the mailing there has been continuous debate of the subject within the industry press, and the issue of graduate supply to the industry has been on the agenda at many industry conferences. SPRITO has also used these opportunities to promote the guidance materials.

The leaflets

As a result of the leaflets there were the following number of requests for the information pack:

<i>SPRITO member</i>	<i>Research participant</i>	<i>Cold call with letter</i>	<i>Cold call without letter</i>
4	4	2	1

The overall response rate is 5½%. These results show a higher response rate among organisations who were aware of the project through previous contact. It is difficult to draw conclusions about the impact of the leaflet from such a low response. However the comments on the return slips received were positive about both presentation and content.

Telephone follow-up to the leaflet mailing

As a result of the leaflet mailshot 11 guidance packs were requested. Telephone calls were made to those who had not requested the pack in order to reach the target of 50 packs to be mailed during the pilot.

'Cold call' Organisations

Of the 65 organisations who had no prior knowledge of the project, 33 were telephoned. During the course of these telephone calls it was established that there was a mailing wastage rate caused by:

- the addressee having moved on within or having left the organisation since the initial mailing
- the addressee passing the mailing on to someone they considered to be more appropriate, usually within a personnel department. (This would indicate that despite contracting within local authorities, recruitment and training are seen to be client functions.)

Only three people admitted to receiving the mailing and not actioning it. 11 people agreed to receive the guidance pack during the course of the telephone calls.

SPRITO Members

Twenty SPRITO member organisations were telephoned. During the course of these conversations it was established that graduate recruitment is not the foremost issue in the minds of:

- busy leisure centre managers who are more concerned with operational issues;
- busy training officers who are engaged with Modern Apprenticeships and national Traineeships which carry a financial incentive.

Fourteen of the SPRITO organisations agreed to receive the guidance pack.

Interest Generated Through Press and Events

Ten guidance packs were requested by employers attending the ILAM Leisure Education Seminar at which there were less than 100 delegates. 24 copies of the initial research report have been sold as a result of articles in the industry press (the remainder have been given free of charge to HEIs and representatives of industry networks.)

Responses to the Guidance Notes

In total 46 people (excluding the Steering Group) received the guidance notes "Making the most of Graduates - A Guide for Employers." A questionnaire was included with the guidance notes so that their success could be monitored. Two people returned written responses to the questionnaire. Further qualitative responses have been received by telephone follow-up and discussion at industry seminars.

Many pack recipients stated that they were interested in the guidance, had looked through it and would refer to it in future. The issue of graduate recruitment was not however seen to be a priority (see above).

The explanation of course types and list of universities was found to be very useful by all respondents. In some cases this had been the sole reason for requesting the guidance pack.

Two respondents had actually used the universities' listing:

- Greenwich Leisure Ltd. advertised a post through the careers services of the universities listed;
- South Cerney Outdoor Education Centre used the list to identify relevant courses from which to recruit.

All respondents felt that the pack was well laid out, straightforward to use and clearly presented.

Three recipients would like to see further detail in the university course listing. This included:

- the addition of higher education courses thought to be missing
- details of courses during which students would definitely have access to National Governing Body and other short courses
- details of the balance of course components (e.g. what % of management is oriented to outdoor education)

Conclusions and recommendations

The percentage response to the leaflet mailing is above average for direct mail but still creates a lot of wastage. Conversely, industry seminars and press have a captive and interested audience and a higher response rate, but only reach a limited audience.

Clearly the people who responded to the leaflet and pack are already interested in recruiting graduates, and this is reflected in their interest in the universities' course listing. Similarly, those who responded as SPRITO members, or through the printed media and industry seminars are open to new ideas - hence their membership, reading and attendance. Raising the involvement of those for whom the issue is not a priority is more of a challenge as can be seen from the number who received the leaflet and did not action it.

The results of the pilot process inform the proposals for further development and dissemination of the guidance materials:

- add further details to the guidance notes, especially more details of university course content and extracurricular opportunities;
- develop and extend dissemination to those target markets with higher likelihood of being interested in the material - e.g. SPRITO networks; conference/seminar delegates; industry media subscribers;
- a national campaign specific to sport and recreation, to alert employers to the potential of graduate recruits;

- incentivise the issue by tying it to a funded scheme if possible, e.g. graduate apprenticeships.

6.2 STUDENTS

Promotional leaflets and guidance notes on gaining employment were produced for undergraduate students. The pilot study was undertaken for the leaflets and guidance notes in order to investigate the:

- effectiveness of the promotional leaflet
- extent to which students access the career packs
- reasons why students may not access the career packs
- usefulness of the guidance notes to students
- careers information that students would find useful.

Five higher education institutions were included in the pilot process which were chosen so as to include a range of sports related courses and a geographical spread.

Manchester Metropolitan University: BSc Sports Science

University of Luton: BA Sports Studies

University of Northumbria at Newcastle: BA Sport Management

University of Ulster: BA Sports Studies

University of Wales Institute, Cardiff: BSc Sports Science and BA Human Movement Studies

Second and third and third year undergraduate students participated in the pilot study. In addition, at Manchester Metropolitan University, first years were also used to test the reaction to the materials early in the course.

The promotional leaflets and guidance notes were sent to either a head of department or course leader of each institution. These institutional contacts were asked to distribute the promotional leaflets to students. They were also asked to place the guidance notes in a site that was easily accessible to students, for example the library or careers department. Lecturers were requested to draw attention to the guidance notes and inform students about how they can be accessed.

After approximately six weeks evaluation questionnaires were distributed to students (see Appendix 10). Focus group sessions were also undertaken with representatives of students from each year, at each institution to enable more in depth and qualitative feedback on the materials. The make up of the groups and response to the questionnaires are shown below.

Manchester Metropolitan University:

Focus group: Year 1: 5 males and 2 females

Year 2: 5 males and 4 females

Year 3: 5 males and 1 female

Questionnaire returns: 123 (56% response rate)

University of Luton:

Focus group: Year 2: no students took part

Year 3: 3 Males and 2 females.

Questionnaire returns -133 (48% response rate)

University of Northumbria at Newcastle:

Focus group: 1 male (year 2) and 1 female (year 3).

Questionnaire returns: 86 (43% response rate)

University of Ulster:

Focus group: Year 2: 3 males and 4 females

Year 3: 5 males and 4 females

Questionnaire returns: 45 (30% response rate)

University of Wales Institute, Cardiff:

Focus group: Year 2: HMS - 3 males and 1 female.

Year 3: HMS - 2 males and 2 females

Year 3: Sports Science - 3 females

Questionnaire returns: 24 (8% response rate)

The focus group discussions were taped and transcribed. The questionnaires were analysed using SPSS.

Important contextual considerations

The key issues that were identified from the focus groups and questionnaires are presented below. The questionnaires related only to the materials and therefore are only referred to towards the end of this section. The focus groups asked more wide ranging questions regarding students aspirations and preparedness for work.

Reasons for undertaking sports related courses

Generally, most students undertook sports related courses because they were interested in sport and wanted to do a degree in an area that they enjoyed. Many had undertaken sports studies or PE 'A' Level and saw a sports degree as a natural progression. Few had definite career options in mind and most had not undertaken the degree for vocational reasons, with the exception of PE teaching. A large number of students were not sure about what employment was available in sport, particularly when they were applying for degree courses. Some had actually changed their mind from a career in PE teaching as they had found that their degree had broadened their minds to other opportunities such as sports development and sports management. A number did not mind if they stayed in sport or not and some had made the decision to work outside of sport. The general feeling was that students did not really know what they wanted to do when they chose their degree and most were still not sure when they got to their third year.

Preparedness of students for the workplace

Most students recognised that a degree was not enough to prepare them for the workplace and many were picking up skills and experiences outside of college through part-time work, coaching and voluntary work. Those who had undertaken a placement found that particularly useful because of both the preparation skills and the placement itself. The former part gave them CV and interview skills, the latter vocational skills such as time management and communication. Some felt that the placement had given them the determination to get a better grade when they returned, in order to get a better job. A few who had been out for a year found it hard to return to study. Those who had not had the opportunity to undertake a placement generally felt that it would have been very beneficial. Many stated that their degrees were too theoretically based and they needed to develop more practical skills and hands on experience.

A minority felt that a degree was currency in itself, no matter what subject, and that it would lead to places on graduate training schemes.

Differences between graduates and non-graduates

The students found it very difficult to identify how they would differ from someone who did not have a degree and who had experience in a particular area. Some thought that the non-graduate would be more attractive than them as experience was the most important attribute. Many realised that the degree wasn't enough to differentiate themselves and that they had to pick up other experiences and qualifications outwith their degree. Some pointed out that there was an increasing number of people who had a degree; therefore they had to also differentiate themselves from them. After much prompting the students did identify a range of skills that they felt they had developed on the degree, in particular, social skills, the ability to work independently, communication and organisational skills were mentioned by a number of students from different institutions. Many identified that their knowledge and intelligence differentiated them and that the skills and knowledge that they had developed would be critical in the longer term in their career progression. This seemed to be supported by the fact that many of the mature students in the focus groups, who had had jobs within and outside of sport, felt that they needed a degree to progress and that was one of the key reasons for undertaking their course.

Job Searching

There was a great deal of variation in the time considered appropriate to start looking for jobs: it ranged from the beginning of year three to after they had completed their degree. Some wanted to take some time out to travel and others wanted to get temporary jobs to repay debts and they would start applying for 'proper' jobs the Christmas after they had graduated. There seemed to be a consensus that you should start searching for jobs before finishing your degree. However they felt students probably would not get around to it because of degree commitments, and that it was difficult to get the ball rolling before the end of the degree.

Careers guidance

Most students interviewed had not received any careers guidance from their HEI and the majority not only did not know where their careers office was but also could not be bothered to find it. There were a lot of negative perceptions about the HEI Careers Services despite the fact most had not used them - this may have been due to poor experiences at school. The few that did use Careers Service found it to be generally helpful but lacking specific materials and knowledge on sport and leisure. Many students wanted advice on issues such as what employment they could go into with a sports degree and what jobs were available in sport. Many did not know where to look for jobs - the most cited publication was 'Leisure Opportunities' and local and national newspapers. Many students would like presentations from employers about what specific jobs entail and what employers are looking for. They also felt that it would be useful for ex-students to give presentations on how they got where they did. Many cited the need to network and that jobs were found through personal contacts. However, overall there was a general atmosphere of apathy to approaching the Careers Service and an expectation the Careers Services should be approaching them rather than students taking responsibility themselves for their career search.

Evaluation of the promotional leaflets and guidance notes.

Many of the students in the focus groups had not received the leaflets and therefore had not looked at the guidance notes. This was confirmed by the questionnaire results where 60% of respondents stated that they had not received the promotional leaflet. During the focus groups some students stated at first that they did not receive the leaflets, but when the leaflets were described and shown to them they remembered that they had. These students and many of the others that did remember receiving them felt that because the leaflets were distributed with other information, and because they did not grab their attention, most people ignored them. Students forgetting the leaflet may also be the reason for the large number of questionnaire responses that stated that they had not received the leaflet. Of those who received the leaflet 71% actually read it, which may be considered disappointing given the attention drawn to it, or encouraging given the high proportion of leaflets that normally get thrown away without being read.

Of those who read the leaflet 39% found it helpful, 47% had a neutral opinion of it and 14% found it unhelpful. Of those who read the leaflet 30% went on to access the guidance notes, which might be considered a reasonable 'conversion rate'. Some students accessed the guidance notes without first reading the leaflet. This was to some extent influenced by the focus groups - many of those who were involved went straight to the guidance notes as they knew that they would be asked about them.

The focus groups identified several reasons for the poor response to both the leaflets and guidance notes. Generally it was agreed that the timing was poor for year three because they were too busy, most suggested that some time in year two was best. The questionnaire confirmed this - the most common reason, stated by 35% of those for not accessing the materials, was lack of time. However, 37% of all students did not respond to the question, 'why they did not read the notes?' suggesting possibly a lack of interest, or apathy. Many students that received the leaflet admitted that they could not be bothered to read the guidance notes. It was also suggested by several students

from different institutions that this sort of material should not be given out as a 'one-off shock' but would be better integrated into the course so that career awareness could become part of the culture.

Of those who read the notes 56% were neutral in their attitude towards them, 29% found them useful and 15% felt that they were useless. The focus groups identified that some students accessed the notes but were put off reading them by the thickness of the file. Some commented that they looked too "wordy" and did not look very interesting or grabbed the attention. Many found that the content was basic common sense and that they knew most of it already. This attitude could be questioned as when some of the points were discussed in the focus groups they did not seem to know about them.

The areas that students found particularly useful were about 'how to provide information to employers about your achievements' and 'how to apply for jobs'. The reasons suggested as to why these were useful tended to be that they gave an idea of the pathway to take in terms of further qualifications and skills. However, these were small subgroups due to so few reading the leaflets. Only three students found any of the notes particularly useless and interestingly they also identified 'how to provide information to employers about your achievements', because they felt that not enough information was provided. The focus groups gave more in-depth feedback on the guidance notes. A point that several students raised were that the range of jobs were not detailed enough and limited to leisure management, with little about sports science.

The questionnaire found that 50% of those who read the guidance notes stated that they would take further actions, the majority indicating that they would undertake further qualifications. It also identified that the further information that students wanted most was specific information relating to their own career aspirations such as; working abroad and with children. Some wanted more addresses for contacts.

The focus groups identified that students wanted more information on specific jobs with example job descriptions and also example CV's and application forms. They wanted to be guided through the guidance notes in relation to what was appropriate to them. They also wanted to know what were the best qualifications to do to complement their degree with reference to specific jobs. Many, however, did find the information useful.

Overall the students in the focus groups felt that guidance notes were important but their importance needed to be sold more to their peers. Most students identified the promotion of the guidance notes as being a key problem and suggested that they needed to be both highlighted more by lecturers and promotional material would be more effective if put on the notice board rather than given to each student. They felt they should be aware of the guidance notes so that they could access them when they needed. The idea of a short video which could be sent to institutions to promote the guidance notes was suggested. Most agreed that the library or Careers Service was the best place to leave the guidance notes. Those who had access to a computer network suggested that this might be an effective method of accessing them, perhaps via an Internet site. It was also suggested by students from different institutions that

discussion groups such as the ones that we had undertaken were an effective way of grabbing attention and most had found the session very useful.

Conclusions

The focus groups and the questionnaires both identified that HE students lack interest in their own career development whilst at college. This is probably because many of them undertake a sports related course for enjoyment rather than a career outlet. This is also reflected in the fact that they often leave job searching until after they have graduated. This can create problems - if they do not start looking at jobs until after graduation they will not have gained an awareness of what employers are looking for, and then it may be too late to undertake extra qualifications.

This apathy towards career development, and also the poor perceptions students have of HE Careers Services, supports the need for career guidance materials. Career development awareness needs to be instilled as part of the HE culture but specific materials could probably be introduced at the beginning of second year. The interviews also identified a need for staff development for careers advisors to ensure greater specificity of guidance in the subject area.

The focus groups support the findings of phase one of this research project, in that students found it difficult to articulate the graduate skills and knowledge that they had developed. Therefore, there must be clear guidance to help them achieve this. In order to encourage students to access the materials they need to be much more user friendly and actually guide students to the appropriate sections for them.

To support the guidance notes, institutions must endorse the importance of career development. A useful method students suggested is using successful graduates from that institution to give presentations about their experiences in terms of career development. There is also a need for careers seminars with employers outlining their employment needs. The Fitness Industry Association (FLA), supported by SPRITO, already provide this service at the Leisure Week Conference, this could also be endorsed by the Standing Conference.

The key conclusion is that any materials produced must be challenging and grab the students' interest, and possibly be less reliant on the message given by lecturers.

Recommendations

on the guidance notes:

- material content to be redesigned to be interactive and user friendly;
- guidance notes to be redesigned to be more eye catching and challenging;
- notes to include more specific information: example CV's, application forms, job descriptions;
- include information on sports science jobs.

on dissemination of guidance:

- use a promotional video to attract attention to the guidance notes;
- encourage institutions to invite ex-students to explain their career development to current students;
- put guidance notes on the Internet;
- a national workshop on the sport and recreation industry for HE careers advisors;
- arrange a presentation on the importance of career development for sports students at the Standing Conference;
- Standing Conference to endorse and promote the Careers conference undertaken by the FIA;

6.3 HEI STAFF

HEI staff on the same ten courses/five institutions as the students monitoring were provided with access to the guidance notes. The purpose of the staff monitoring was to assess

- how many had accessed the guidance notes;
- the reaction to the guidance notes;
- reasons for the reactions to the guidance notes;
- discussion of important contextual considerations.

Relevant staff were asked to complete an evaluation questionnaire and focus groups of selected staff were arranged. (see Appendix 11).

Important contextual considerations for HEI staff

Preparedness of students for the workplace

The field of academic study embraced by 'sport and recreation' is a varied one, with some degrees clearly vocational, such as recreation management and physical education, and other degrees not so obviously vocational, such as sports science. One clear reason provided by HEI staff for the lack of specific vocational orientation in sports science is that there are simply not enough jobs in sports science to justify such an orientation.

HEI staff are inclined to make another clear distinction in sport and recreation degrees - between being immediately vocational in the sense of graduates being useful in their first day of employment, and being vocational in the sense of a future career. It is the latter that HEI staff typically see themselves responsible for, fostering and developing broadly vocational, generic, transferable skills such as literacy, problem solving, critical thinking and analysis, written and verbal communications, confidence, independent working, and numeracy - i.e. a fairly traditional notion of 'graduateness'. Some of these skills tend to be 'caught rather than taught', i.e. they are implicit rather than explicit in course content and assessment. Other generic skills, such as presentational skills and group work, may not be acquired by all students. At a more functional level another group of generic skills is commonly claimed, e.g. word processing, spreadsheets, data management.

This emphasis on generic, transferable skills is consistent with the fact that sport and recreation graduates typically enter the labour market not via a narrow professional track, but across a wide variety of first positions. These jobs are not only within a disparate industry but also outside, in other industries, as the research for this project demonstrates. In such circumstances the justification for industry-specific technical skills is diluted.

However, it is commonly acknowledged by the HEI staff interviewed that many students are poor at selling these generic skills, taking them for granted as 'obvious' and clearly feeling that there is no need to promote them. Staff are openly critical about the general quality of students' CVs and job applications.

Staff also recognise the need for students to attain more than a degree as graduates. At the same time they are aware that too many students show a reliance on their degree as a single ticket to the job market, ignoring other important attributes such as specific skills in job search and application, and relevant industrial experience.

It appears characteristic of HEI staff that there is insufficient information on the employment of their graduates for them to be able to analyse systematically the course-related and other factors which are important to getting and being successful in employment.

One defence against the criticisms of students above is that many are perceived by staff as having at best a hazy notion of their future work intentions, both when they select courses and when they are about to leave their courses.

"It's always alarming how many students arrive in their final year not knowing what they want to do (afterwards)." (HEI tutor)

Such short-sightedness is arguably excusable in a generation wishing to keep its options open and not be tied down too quickly. In such circumstances it is not surprising that there is apparently little thought given to either the acquired generic skills to sell to future employers, or the extra curricular achievements which might help in securing employment. If this position is taken as intractable, it shifts the responsibility for raising and promoting such considerations from the student to the HEI and its staff.

Responsibility of HEI staff for preparing students for the external workplace

Staff often recognise the need for mechanisms within and outwith the course design and delivery for the development of personal skills relevant to job search and short run employer requirements. However, this is typically countered by a more fundamental emphasis on underpinning academic knowledge and generic skills associated with higher education, such as those mentioned above. Furthermore, sport and recreation courses achieve quite easily an application to the sector which is immediately broadly relevant to the industry. One constraint to a consistent and formal pursuit of the considerations raised by the guidance notes is the crowded curriculum - there is simply not enough room in an already congested, multi-disciplinary course for substantial components in personal skills development. Examples were cited where personal skills

sessions were positioned in the induction and in the post-exam period, but such 'ghetto' times mitigate against students taking the subject seriously.

Nevertheless, discussion of the guidance notes brought out the admission that HEI staff could do more to promote skills and experiences which are not only educationally valid but also relevant to the interface between the HEI course and the workplace. Although industrial placements are valuable, it was acknowledged that they did not provide all the answers. In three of the five HEIs visited, staff were quite frank about their courses' weaknesses in preparing students for job search and application, e.g.

"We do a bit. It can only be improved." (HEI tutor)

Despite congested timetables, some of the suggestions by staff involved formal provision such as integration of governing body awards into practical modules, formal modules on professional self development, and formal assessment of such components. Whether the responsibility for delivery of personal/professional skills modules is the department's or the HEI's is a moot point, but staff were quick to recognise the ideal position where such an initiative had a clear lead person on the staff, and was continuous and integrated in the course, rather than ad hoc and marginal. In two HEIs, visited it was noted by staff that when ad hoc opportunities were provided for students' personal skills development, they were typically poorly attended.

However, acknowledging ideals is one thing, but assessing practical possibilities is a very different prospect. It is almost certainly the case that given other, higher priority demands on the curriculum, initiatives to develop technical, professional qualifications and personal skills will be provided outwith many courses. Regarding such measures, the most common references in the interviews were to the provision of opportunities for students to take extracurricular awards such as governing bodies' coaching awards, first aid certificates, etc. (the HEIs visited have comprehensive extracurricular programmes of professional qualifications); the opportunities provided by HEI Careers Services in fostering job search and application skills; and the students' own initiative in finding part-time or voluntary work experience.

The staff have an uncertain attitude to the potential of Careers Services within HEIs for making good any deficiency in personal skills development and promotion by students, particularly in job search and application. Whilst such services have the generic skills and knowledge to help, there are doubts about their ability to be sport and recreation specific in their contributions (or whether such specificity is actually warranted). Another constraint to the more systematic use of HEI Careers Services is the lack of awareness of what they provide, by both students and staff.

In two of the HEIs visited staff interviewed identified a responsibility, within or outwith the course, for helping students acquire relevant industrial experience (apart from industrial placements). One or two staff also identified practices in their courses which echoed features in the guidance note 'working with the industry'; so there was some attempt to promote valid practical experience within the courses.

In the interviews HEI staff expressed the feeling that the higher turnover of graduates from their first jobs was as much the responsibility of the employer/industry as the

graduate/HEI, an impression that is reinforced by the research results from this project. Sport and recreation employers are perceived by HEI staff as being short sighted in their recruitment, looking for immediate technical skills and failing to recognise the qualities and potential of graduates. The industry does not have a clear career structure for graduates, nor attractive and successful induction procedures. This is arguably at least partly for reasons beyond the industry's control, such as its size structure being so characterised by small organisations.

The disenchantment of some HEI staff with the way graduates were perceived and used by some employers, contrasted markedly with one exceptional example of a graduate gaining entry to the Whitbread training scheme, with two years of personal development clearly mapped out. If the more negative impressions are widespread then they do not provide much of an incentive to improve vocationalism in degree courses, since the return on such an initiative is impeded by the industry's weaknesses in dealing with graduates. This, of course, is a 'chicken and egg' argument - if vocationalism was improved in HE courses the industry might respond with a more systematic approach to graduate recruitment and development.

Some HEI staff expressed the view that if the employment record of their graduates is on the whole good (which it is), then there cannot be such a problem with the suitability of their degrees as preparation for the workplace.

Evaluation of HEI Guidance Notes

Evaluation questionnaires

Only 14 evaluation questionnaires were completed by staff in the five HEIs piloted with guidance notes, which may itself be an indication of the low priority given to the guidance notes and their contents. This impression is reinforced by the fact that more than one of the members of staff interviewed suggested that the only reason they had accessed and read the guidance notes was because the course tutor had told them to or because they knew the focus group interview was to be held!

Nevertheless, the 14 questionnaire returns are largely positive about the intent and content of the HEI guidance notes. All 14 staff had read all the notes, which may just indicate the atypical effects described above. Half of the respondents found the notes to be useful, rating them in the top two of a five point scale and no-one found them to be useless - the other half gave responses of 3 or 4 in the five point scale. Ten of the respondents rated the clarity of the notes in the top two of a five point scale, and no-one found them very unclear. Eleven respondents found some or all of the guidance notes particularly useful, between them listing a number of notes, including those on 'working with industry', 'placements', 'transcripts' and the research report. Only one respondent identified any of the notes as particularly useless, namely the note which suggested listing all experience in a CV - this tutor felt that "employers cast aside long-winded CVs".

Focus group interviews

The satisfied

The general satisfaction with the guidance notes was also evident in the interviews, although here a significant minority of staff expressed reservations about the presentation of the guidance notes. The satisfied majority, largely in four of the five institutions visited, referred to a large number of different, specific points raised in the guidance notes which made them reflect on what they were doing with their courses. These points included the benefits of placements, alternatives to placements in working with the industry, user friendly language for external audiences, and the industry employment statistics.

Interestingly this thought process was stimulated despite the common claim that the guidance notes did not raise anything new, anything they were not aware of. It seemed for such staff that the guidance notes were an opportunity to think again about matters which they would not normally have the time or incentive to think about. They represented an important opportunity for reinforcement of considerations that were not the subject of continuous attention or review. Nevertheless, even the satisfied staff often acknowledged the lack of time to look at the guidance notes.

One or two staff took the familiarity point too far. Comments such as "We actually implement a lot of the stuff that is in here anyway, so a lot of it we are familiar with." demonstrate an uncomfortable degree of apathy, especially in the face of confessions in the same interview that the tutors do not do much to develop specific personal skills relevant to job search. For the majority of those interviewed, however, familiarity did not breed contempt, but rather an uneasy feeling that despite their awareness of the considerations raised by the guidance notes, there were a lot of matters which they had not successfully dealt with on their courses. Hence the importance of the reminder from the guidance notes.

The satisfaction of most of the tutors interviewed extended to the design of the notes, the language used in them, the eye-catching binding and the ring binder making copying easy. The majority of staff interviewed had no criticism of the method by which the guidance notes were distributed or made accessible for staff.

The dissatisfied

The opinions of the more critical minority of staff interviewed are important because even though they are a minority, their criticisms can help improve the materials in the post-pilot implementation. Furthermore, given the considerable barrier of lack of prioritisation by staff of the matters raised by the guidance notes, anything that can improve the impact of the materials in future is important to consider. The critical staff felt that the idea behind the guidance notes was good - staff need to be reminded of the considerations in the notes. However, they felt that a good message was spoilt by poor presentation. These staff used words such as 'turgid', 'off-putting', 'academic', 'descriptive', 'generalised', 'long winded' and 'wordy' to criticise the notes. They acknowledged that reinforcement is important but felt that the notes did not cause staff to question what they do, did not lead them in fresh directions, did not provide tools

for action and did not prioritise action points. They also criticised the notes for not being interactive, not asking questions of reader - they thought that the notes did not go far enough because they were written to give information, not to be useful.

There was a feeling by one or two staff that the notes seemed management oriented, less relevant to sports science, which may simply be a reflection of the limited job opportunities in sports science, but might also be a reflection of the personnel who compiled the notes.

Recommendations

Some of the major implications arising from the monitoring of the HEI guidance notes are as follows:

On the guidance notes

- improve the presentation of the guidance notes by a lighter approach, e.g. use of attractive graphics, yet with more detail;
- real examples of good practice, e.g. good transcripts;
- profiles of students - both those who get jobs (e.g. graduates in jobs reflecting back on the course) and those less likely to get jobs;
- a stage by stage guide to considerations for both new courses and revisions to existing courses;
- clearer segmentation of what the students need, what employers need, and by different subject areas, i.e. management, sports science, etc.;
- design for dipping into for different purposes;
- advice on profiling student competencies, identifying student strengths and weaknesses, and writing references;
- list of appropriate information on the Internet (e.g. ILAM job adverts);
- information on the resources needed to implement work-based learning properly;
- matching, where possible, extra-curricular qualifications and experiences to particular career aspirations;
- more material of relevance to sports science, coaching, and sports excellence

On the dissemination of the guidance notes

- improve the accessibility of the guidance notes by putting them on the Internet;
- provide an incentive for HEI staff to take the considerations raised by the guidance notes more seriously: where possible embed the development of personal skills, professional qualifications and relevant experience in courses and assess them formally - this is the major way to make both staff and students take the issues more seriously;
- provide forums locally/regionally/nationally for employers, students and staff to discuss the considerations raised by the guidance notes jointly;

7.0 PROJECT CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This project has achieved the objectives set out in the first chapter, section 1.1 of this report. The research phase, the results of which are reported in Chapter 4, identifies relevant student perceptions and attributes, graduate attitudes and experiences, and employer perceptions and practices. This information was successfully disseminated to HEIs and employers to enable pilot materials to be designed. The piloting phase has tested these materials and led to clear recommendations for a more permanent mechanism to promote graduate recruitment and development in the sport and recreation industry.

The conclusions to the project provide a clear statement of the current situation regarding preparation, recruitment and use of sport and recreation graduates in the sport and recreation industry. The recommendations are designed to ensure that what the project has started leads to a continuing, permanent initiative, taken forward by the two principal partners SPRITO and SCLRS, in association with other relevant industry bodies.

7.1 CONCLUSIONS

Project objectives, processes and outcomes

In the main, the project objectives have been achieved. However, two principal refinements to the objectives occurred in the process of conducting the project. First, in monitoring the piloted materials, an important implicit objective became apparent, i.e. that in order to fulfil this task accurately it was necessary to investigate the attitudes of students, HEI staff and employers to the ideas put forward in the recruitment materials as well as to the materials themselves. In this sense the research did not cease at the end of phase one, but was integral to a proper assessment of the pilot phase. Whereas the phase one research provided important quantitative findings, it was only in phase two that extensive qualitative research was conducted, which both complemented the phase one research and fulfilled the monitoring requirements of phase two.

The recruitment and induction objectives were separately specified at the outset of the project but in practice they collapsed into one mechanism in the piloting phase. The transition from recruitment to induction is considered to be more appropriately seen as a continuum, such that any improvement in recruitment impacts favourably on induction practices. The common concerns of the three constituencies at the heart of the project, employers, students and HEIs, centred on the recruitment end of the continuum. Ideally a separate investigation is required to explore matters of induction of sport and recreation graduates within the sport and recreation workplace. This would need to be centred at the workplace and would therefore not involve students and HEIs to the extent that the current project has.

The partnership of SPRITO and SCLRS has been very effective in conducting this project and it is recommended that DfEE should actively promote such partnerships for other projects, where appropriate. Both partners share concerns and devote policy attention to issues of graduate recruitment and development. Both partners welcome opportunities for dialogue with each other about such issues. This project has demonstrated that this willingness to co-operate can be fairly easily taken one step further, to joint action.

More pragmatically, joint action is not simply feasible but also a very sensible division of responsibilities - with SCLRS responsible for communications with HEIs and students, and SPRITO responsible for communications with employers. In hindsight alternative arrangements, e.g. where SCLRS had to communicate with employers without the active co-operation of SPRITO, would have almost certainly been less effective in securing the desired outcomes.

In retrospect it is possible to identify one major missing partner in both the research and the piloting phases: HE Careers Services. These services have a professional responsibility to bridge between the worlds of HE and work and the conclusions and recommendations to the project identify them as having a key role in promoting better practices by both students and HEI staff. However, the project itself did not set out to confer closely with HE Careers Services, nor did it do so. This omission will be borne in mind in continuing the initiative.

Whereas the project outcomes are positive about promoting the issues and possible solutions to problems, and continuing the initiative through the project partners SPRITO and SCLRS, the recommendations of the project are set against some endemic constraints and issues which are not specific to the sport and recreation sector. These include the resource and timetable pressures which do not allow much room for the development of already crowded curricula in HE; the fundamental reasons why students enter HE and their mind set in favour of the immediate rather than the future; the immediate functional needs of employers as recruiters; and the relative roles of training and HE in providing for the medium to long term needs of the industry. These constraints and issues are worthy of more research, not only by the project partners but also by HEI agencies and employer associations alike.

The 'Using Graduate Skills' (UGS) Network had the potential to set a generic context to the work of this project, by distilling and focusing the lessons from other projects. However, in practice this was not achieved for the members of the project team who attended Network meetings. This was partly because of the necessity to concentrate on the requirements of the project, so proper networking to other UGS projects outside of Network meetings was not achieved. It is also the case, however, that most of the useful outcomes of networking in this case are probably to be derived now, when each project's outcomes are clear. It was arguably too ambitious for projects to learn about processes from each other when the processes were ongoing and the outcomes unclear.

Employers

Key issues here probably reflect the immaturity of the sport and recreation industry with respect to graduate recruitment, as well as the size structure dominated by SMEs:

- Diverse industry, with each of four sub-sectors - sport and leisure, outdoor activities, playwork, health and fitness - often having different requirements for and experiences of recruitment.
- Low aggregate level of interest in graduate employment and associated issues.
- Vague targeting in recruitment, with little sign of targeting graduates for specific job descriptions.
- Recruitment of graduates is conditioned and constrained by short-term objectives - assessing how useful the graduate would be on day one.
- Looking for more than just a degree from graduates; other important required attributes are technical/professional qualifications and relevant experience.
- All claimed to give graduate recruits a formal induction.
- Many make no distinction between graduates and other employees in terms of performance within the workplace.
- There is a high turnover of graduates in their first employment in the industry. This implies that graduates are not used effectively. It also leads to a vicious circle of short term objectives in recruitment, lack of development planning, high turnover, etc..
- Most employers are reasonably happy with current recruitment, induction and development practices, but acknowledge room for improvement.
- Some employers show considerable interest in up-to-date lists of degree courses and their content.

It is the dominance of short termism - recruiting for immediate attributes, ineffective utilisation of skills, high turnover - that needs to be diluted to establish a more positive culture for graduate employment. In addition the sheer variety of sport and recreation degrees may inhibit employers from developing a more sustainable culture of graduate recruitment. Better information on the nature of the graduate from different types of sport and recreation degrees may help. Graduates seeking employment with SMEs in the industry need to be very aware that a degree is not enough.

Graduates

Sport and recreation graduates have a good employment record, both within and outwith the sport and recreation industry. They do not appear to suffer in their employability from the negative views of graduates often given by employers in the sport and recreation industry. Despite these negative views, employers often recognise the generic skills of 'graduateness', as well as the extracurricular awards that many sport and recreation graduates possess.

- Good employment record.
- 55% (including teaching) 36% (excluding teaching) find jobs in the sport and recreation industry and they acknowledge the relevance of subject-specific knowledge and skills derived from their degree.

- Nearly half are either currently looking for their next job or intend to do so within a year.
- Half acknowledge receiving formal induction and 70% of these found induction valuable.
- Possess transferable, generic skills, possibly enhanced by personal attributes from sports participation.
- Competing in an increasingly competitive job market.
- Acknowledge the need for more than just a degree, i.e. technical qualifications, experience.

Students

The main feature of sport and recreation students in respect of potential employability is their reluctance to take career development and job search seriously until very late, if at all, during their degree. These students, in common with both other students and employers, suffer from short termism. They prioritise the academic requirements associated with their course.

- Not interested in career development and job search. Leave this very late, often until after having been awarded the degree.
- Poor at job search/application skills. These are a low priority.
- Those with experience of an industrial placement during the degree course demonstrate a greater awareness of personal skills.
- 79% considering the sport and recreation industry for employment.
- Wrong expectations of entry into the job market - over-ambitious about entry level and suffering an illusion of graduate training schemes' availability.
- Possess transferable, generic skills, possibly enhanced by personal attributes from sports participation.
- Poor at promoting generic skills when selling themselves in job market.
- Acknowledge and acquire extra technical/professional qualifications, typically as extracurricular activity.
- Increasingly acquiring practical experience (vacations, part-time or voluntary), but poor at promoting this when selling themselves in job market.
- Poor perceptions of HE career services, often in ignorance of what such services provide.
- Unresponsive to pilot leaflets.
- Generally favourable response to pilot guidance notes, but low penetration of these in the student body.

Students increasingly possess the key attributes required by the industry: i.e. technical/professional competencies, some service sector experience, as well as the specific knowledge and generic skills from the degree. However, their selling of such attributes is deficient. This, together with the lack of job search/application skills and the lack of interest in career development represent a package of constraints that needs to be attacked not with 'quick fixes' but with a more continuous initiative throughout the degree courses.

It is possibly too much to expect students to be responsive to even a continuous initiative given the nature of HE and their priorities in entering and participating in it.

This places a considerable responsibility on HEIs and staff to ensure that any initiative to raise the profile and priority of personal skills development is meaningful and attractive.

HEIs

Unfortunately, priorities for HEI staff providing sport and recreation degree programmes do not lie with attacking the package of constraints identified for students above. This is understandable if HEIs' primary responsibilities in providing degrees are to academic standards.

- Foremost responsibility seen as providing transferable, generic skills rather than more immediately vocational skills.
- Educating for a career not just the first job.
- Good at providing extracurricular opportunities for technical/professional qualifications.
- Poor at providing opportunities for job search/applications skills development.
- Career services not sufficiently aware of specifics concerning sport and recreation industry.
- Good response to the message in the pilot guidance notes, but mixed response to the presentation and delivery of these notes.

There is no doubt that HEI staff recognise and identify with the need for action to remedy deficiencies in students' personal skills development. However, while the spirit is willing the curriculum is crowded and it is a considerable step to deliver a continuous programme of this type as a formal requirement of the course. Outwith the course, one of the main agencies which might take on some of the responsibility - the HEI Careers Service - seems to be chronically under-utilised by students and staff alike.

7.2 DISSEMINATION

Immediate dissemination of the outcomes of this project will take the form of media articles and press releases. Further dissemination is implicit in the continuing initiative, particularly in the form of :

- wider distribution and promotion of guidance materials to all three main constituencies, employers, students and HEI staff;
- promotion of the issues of graduate recruitment and development to relevant sport and recreation industry and HE conferences;
- initiation of promotional arrangements with HE Careers Services;

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations relate to employers, students and HEI staff specifically involved in sport and recreation. Many of the recommendations may well be relevant across other sectors of industry and academia but this has not been verified - the focus of this project has been entirely on the sport and recreation sector.

The recommendations are designed to fulfil the aims of the project, i.e.

- match the skills gained through education by sport and recreation graduates with those demanded by employers, particularly small and medium sized enterprises;
- provide greater immediate return for the sport and recreation employer and better employment prospects for the sport and recreation graduate.

For key constituencies

Dissemination of the project results is embedded in all three sets of recommendations which follow. Promotion of the project results is integrated with promotion of the continuing initiative, such that dissemination will target:

- a substantial number of sport and recreation employers, through the formal routes of conferences, seminars and membership of professional associations;
- relevant staff and students in all member institutions of SCLRS;
- relevant staff and students in all other HEIs active in the field of sport and recreation.

Each of the recommendations is cross referenced in parenthesis to points in the project's findings which are relevant. However, many of the promotional recommendations arise from the whole set of results rather than specific points, so these are labelled as 'general' in the cross references.

There is no prioritisation in any of the three sets of recommendations which follow. This is because they represent integrated sets of recommendations and complementary actions within each set, rather than separable alternatives.

To make meaningful inroads into the systematic weaknesses identified above, it is almost certainly necessary to incentivise change. To expect employers to start thinking about the longer term benefits of graduates as employees, to expect students to plan their full package of attributes and rehearse selling these, to expect HEIs to introduce a continuous programme of personal skills development - all voluntarily because they 'see the light' - is somewhat ambitious.

For employers money is a powerful incentive - one of the stated reasons why little interest was shown by employers in the pilot materials of this project was because they prioritise schemes with financial benefits, such as Modern Apprenticeships. For both students and HEI staff the main symbol of something being taken seriously is if it is assessed formally.

Employers

- a national campaign for sport and recreation, initiated by SPRITO and if possible in association with professional associations, to alert employers to the potential of graduate recruits and encourage more specific targeting of graduates in recruitment. [pages 30, 31, 35, 40, 50, & general]
- Specifically target opinion-leading employers to spearhead the promotional initiative aimed at encouraging a more systematic consideration of graduates as possible recruits, and develop good practice case studies for that purpose. [pages 30, 40, 50, 60, & general]

- Use industry press and events for promotion of further initiatives, where there is a captive audience, as opposed to a single issue direct mailing. [pages 30, 31, 40, 50]
- Explore the concept of Graduate Apprenticeships and seek funding to support it. Although it has not yet been tested in the industry, it has the potential to promote accepted points of graduate entry in the industry, especially for SMEs. [pages 4, 10, 19/Table 14, 28, 35, 40, 50, 60].
- Include a direct response mechanism, e.g. a purely promotional leaflet, enabling employers to order further guidance materials. [page 48]
- Ensure that guidance notes are generic enough to be relevant to all four sub-sectors of sport and recreation employers, but specific enough to retain the interest of any single sport and recreation sub-sector. [pages 28, 29, 35]
- Add to guidance notes: higher education courses thought to be missing; details of courses during which students would definitely have access to National Governing Body awards and other short courses; details of the balance of course components. [page 50]
- Develop and extend dissemination of guidance notes to those target markets with higher likelihood of being interested in the material - e.g. SPRITO networks; conference/seminar delegates; industry media subscribers. [pages 35, 50]

Students

- SPRITO to investigate with member institutions of SCLRS the possibility of making its PRIDE (Personal Record of Industry Development and Experience) available to students. Although it has not been tested yet, it has the potential to help formalise initiatives to improve students' recording of their experience and skills. [pages 30, 33, 36, 37, 40]
- Rather than use leaflets, introductory information should be placed on the teaching department notice board and a promotional video used. [pages 54, 55]
- Material content of guidance notes to be redesigned to be interactive and user friendly; more eye catching and challenging; and to include more specific information: example CVs, application forms, job descriptions; information on sports science jobs. [pages 55, 56]
- The guidance materials should be available at and promoted by HE Careers Services. [pages 53, 54, 55, 56]
- Guidance materials should be freely available via the Internet (e.g. SPRITO and/or SCLRS home pages). [page 55]

Other recommendations of relevance to students are implicit in those for HEIs below.

HEIs

- Integrate personal skills development, including job search/applications skills, into formal course assessment, either as discrete components or as explicit elements of compulsory components, e.g. human resource management, industrial placement. [pages 14, 31, 37, 39, 55, 56, & general]
- Promote the gaining of relevant work experience and extracurricular qualifications, to complement the degree. [pages 29, 33, 35, 37, 39, 40, 52, 59 & general]

- Design such initiatives to run continuously throughout the degree course, to develop and maintain a culture of awareness of such issues. [pages 31, 53, 54, 55 & general]
- Use devices less reliant on HEI staff to deliver such initiatives, e.g. ex-students, employers, Internet, promotional video, Careers Service. [pages 53, 54, 55, 56, 57]
- Develop jointly with HE Careers Services, at national and local levels, sector-specific awareness, information, promotion and delivery of skills training. This will involve a dialogue between SCLRS and AGCAS at the national level, and promotion of closer ties between individual HEI departments responsible for sport and recreation and their respective HE careers advisory services. [pages 53, 54, 55, 56, 59 & general]
- Raise profile of graduate recruitment and development issues nationally, through SCLRS dissemination and promotion. A dialogue between SCLRS and the Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR) may serve to focus such promotional effort on good practice and link it to the wider workplace, as represented by the AGR. [pages 53, 54, 55, 56 & general]
- Standing Conference to endorse and promote the Careers conference undertaken by the Fitness Industry Association. [pages 53, 54, 56]
- Provide forums locally/regionally/nationally for employers, students and staff to discuss the considerations raised by the guidance notes jointly. [page 62, general]
- Improve the presentation of the guidance notes by a lighter approach, e.g. use of attractive graphics. [pages 61, 62]
- Add to guidance notes: [page 62]
 - real examples of good practice, e.g. good transcripts, profiles of students;
 - a stage by stage guide to considerations for both new courses and revisions to existing courses;
 - clearer segmentation of what the students need, what employers need, and by different subject areas;
 - advice on profiling student competencies, identifying student strengths and weaknesses, and writing references;
 - list of appropriate information on the Internet (e.g. job vacancies);
 - information on the resources needed to implement work-based learning properly;
 - matching, where possible, extra-curricular qualifications and experiences to particular career aspirations;
 - advice on working with HE Careers Service;
 - more material of relevance to sports science, coaching, and sports excellence.
- Improve the accessibility of the guidance notes by putting them on the Internet. [page 62]

Resourcing future development

Short term

Current project funding includes a sum to disseminate the conclusions of this project. The project has concluded that whilst leaflets of the type that were piloted are not cost effective, revised guidance notes are appropriate for all three main constituencies: employers, students and HEI staff. The dissemination budget is therefore best utilised in revising, producing and distributing the guidance notes to the full population of relevant HEIs and for SPRITO to hold a stock of employer guidance notes.

- This is entirely consistent with the project's recommendations for all three constituencies, stressing the need for continued promotion of the issues of concern over graduate recruitment and development.
- It ensures that transitional documentation is in place to provide material support for the dissemination process, i.e. dissemination not only discloses the project's findings and promotes important issues, but also provides materials to help all three constituencies act on the dissemination advice.
- These transitional guidance notes provide an important bridge between the project and the substantive measures and materials which will emerge from the continuing SPRITO and SCLRS partnership, i.e. they play an important part in maintaining the momentum of the initiative beyond the project's life.

The short-term revisions to the content of the guidance notes will be only those which are relatively quickly accomplished. The major short-term revisions will be to the presentation of the guidance notes, via professional design work.

Longer term

New funds need to be sourced to enable the longer term developments to take place. The key costs are for:

- comprehensive revision of the content of the guidance notes;
- printing and distributing the further revised guidance notes;
- producing and distributing promotional materials such as a poster, a video, and a different promotional leaflet for employers;

A number of potential funding sources have been identified:

Development Costs

This work will be a central strand in SPRITO's Education and Training Strategy, and a bid will be placed with DfEE to continue this work.

The Standing Conference will contribute time given by members to the continued development of the products and their subsequent launch within their own institution.

Publication

Hobsons Publishing produce guidance packs for students across a range of industries and may recognise the gap for a sport and recreation industry product. The project group will approach Hobsons with regard to this, and also investigate the publication of the other guidance packs by Hobsons.

SPRITO has some contact with the educational publishers Stanley Thorne and will investigate this as a means to fund publication.

SPRITO will also add the guidance notes to the list of its publications eligible for sponsorship.

It is the declared intention of the principal partners to this project, SPRITO and SCLRS, to continue the partnership and build on the interest stimulated by this project.

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APPENDIX 1.

Student Expectation Questionnaire.
Graduate Experience Questionnaire

UK HIGHER EDUCATION STANDING
CONFERENCE ON LEISURE, RECREATION
AND SPORT

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS SURVEY.

This survey is part of a research project undertaken on behalf of the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport, of which your institution is a member. The project was commissioned by the Department for Education and Employment with the aim of enhancing co-operation between employers and Higher Education to enable more effective employment of graduates.

By completing this questionnaire you will help us to analyse the expectations of students in relation to employment after completing a degree course. It will also give employers a greater understanding of your needs and expectations. The findings will also be fed back to those responsible for degree course development.

Completed questionnaires will be treated with anonymity so please answer questions as honestly and fully as possible.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Project Officer: Sue Minten
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YOUR COURSE

11. Please list the full titles of all the subjects/modules that you have undertaken during the final two years of your current degree course. (If you are part time please include modules for the final two years equivalent)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

12. Did your course include a work experience element/module?

Yes No (go to Q14)

13. Please state the organisation you worked for and the role that you had during your work experience.

Organisation _____

Role. _____

14. Please list the skills you feel that you have developed during your degree programme (i.e. personal, technical and practical skills).

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

FUTURE CAREER

15. Are you considering employment in the area of sport and recreation after you have graduated?

Yes No (Go to Q17)

16. Please identify the type(s) of job you are considering in sport and recreation.

17. What (other) areas of employment are you considering (i.e. non sport)?

18. What type of employer do you aim to work for?

(Please rank your choices, i.e. 1 = the most appropriate employer, 2 the next appropriate, etc. N.B. You do not have to rank them all, only those that you are considering.)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Armed Forces | <input type="checkbox"/> | Self Employed | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Charity | <input type="checkbox"/> | Large Commercial/ Private Business (>250 employees) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Educational Organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Medium Commercial/Private Business (50-250 employees) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Emergency Services (e.g. police) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Small Commercial/Private Business (<50 employees) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other
<i>(please state)</i> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

19. Did you select a **local authority, medium or small commercial/private business** in Q18?

Yes *Please state reasons for selection*

No *(Please State reasons for not selecting these types of organisations.)* _____

20. At what level do you expect to enter employment?
(please tick the appropriate box)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| 'Shop floor'/customer face | <input type="checkbox"/> | Junior Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trainee Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> | Middle manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Supervisory | <input type="checkbox"/> | Senior Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
- (please state)* _____

21. Please list the knowledge and skills that you feel employers would require for the type(s) of job that you have identified in Q16 to Q20.

Knowledge	Skills
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

22. To what extent do you feel that your degree programme has given you the appropriate knowledge to perform the job(s) that you have identified in Q16 - 20? *(Please tick the most appropriate box)*

- All of the appropriate knowledge
- Most of the appropriate knowledge
- Some of the appropriate knowledge
- None of the appropriate knowledge
- Don't know

23. To what extent do you feel that your degree programme has given you the appropriate skills to perform the job(s) that you have identified in Q16 - 20? *(Please tick the most appropriate box)*

- All of the appropriate skills
- Most of the appropriate skills
- Some of the appropriate skills
- None of the appropriate skills
- Don't know

24. What knowledge and skills do you still feel that you need to develop to meet employers' requirements for this type of job? (i.e. that have not been sufficiently developed on your degree programme.)

Knowledge

Skills

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

25. How do you think such knowledge and/or skills could be developed?

Professional Courses
(e.g. ILAM & ISRM)

Masters Degree

On the Job Training

Other (*please state*) _____

26. Do you feel sufficiently well informed about what the employers you have identified in Q16 - 20 would want from you? (i.e. qualifications, skills knowledge etc.)

Yes

No

27. Do you feel sufficiently well informed about what you would be doing in the employment you have identified?

Yes

No

28. Please state what further information you feel you need about the potential employers/employment that you have identified in Q16 -19.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In analysing the results of this questionnaire you will be treated with anonymity. However, we wish to do follow-up research about the employment areas that you actually enter. It would be of great help to this research if you could fill in your name and address below if you do not object to being contacted for this follow-up research. Obviously, this information will remain confidential and will not be passed on to any other organisation or used for any purpose other than this research. However, if you do not wish to be contacted again please return the completed questionnaire as specified but leave this page blank.

Thank you for you co-operation.

Name: _____

Address: (please give an address that we will be able to contact you at after you have graduated)

If you require any further information about this project please contact Sue Minten at the address given at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Please tick the appropriate boxes to answer the following questions.

1. Age: 21-26 27-35 36-49 50+
2. Sex: Female Male

YOUR (FIRST) DEGREE COURSE

3. INSTITUTION _____

4. COURSE NAME _____

5. DEGREE TYPE BA B.Sc. B.Ed. Other _____
(Please circle) (please state)

6. Part-time Student Full-time Student

7. Year of graduation _____ Degree classification obtained _____

8. Please list the main subject components of your degree course, i.e. module titles from final two years.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

9. Please list the skills that you feel that you developed as part of your undergraduate degree programme (i.e. personal, technical and practical skills).

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

10. Did you obtain any other qualifications whilst undertaking you degree? (e.g. coaching, first aid, pool bronze)

Yes No *(go to Q12)*

11. Please state the qualification obtained and tick the appropriate box whether each qualification was organised by your institute or yourself.

Qualification	Organised By:	
	Institute	Yourself
i _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Did your course include a work experience element/module?

Yes No (go to Q14)

13. Please state the organisation you worked for and the role that you had during your work experience.

Organisation _____
 Role _____
 Placement length _____

14. Before and/or whilst undertaking your degree were you in employment (part time, full time, permanent or temporary) not including work experience?

Yes No (go straight to Q16)

15. Please list the jobs that you had below.

YOUR EMPLOYMENT

16. Are you currently in paid employment? Yes No (go to Q.18)

17. What are you currently employed as?

Current Job Title	Employer Type (see table below)	Length of Employment	Part time/ Full time	Permanent/ Temporary
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

EXAMPLE

Job title	Employer Type	Length of Employment	Part time/ Full time	Permanent/ Temporary
<i>Sports development officer</i>	<i>LA</i>	<i>1 year 3 mths</i>	<i>FT</i>	<i>Perm</i>

(Please use the following codes for employer type.)

Armed forces: <i>AF</i>	Local Authority: <i>LA</i>	Medium Commercial/Private Business (50-250 employees): <i>MCB</i>
Charity: <i>C</i>	Self Employed: <i>SE</i>	
Educational Organisation: <i>EO</i>	Large Commercial/private Business (>250 employees): <i>LCB</i>	Small Commercial/Private Business (<50 employees): <i>SCB</i>
Emergency Services: <i>ES</i>		

18. Have you been employed in any (other) post since graduating?

Yes No (go to Q20)

19. Please write details of any paid employment (part time, full time, permanent and temporary) since graduating (most recent first & using the codes from Q17 for employer type).

	Job Title	Employer Type	Length of Employment	P.T/ F.T	Perm./ Temp.	Reason for Leaving
I.						
II.						
III.						
IV.						
V.						

20. If a substantial amount of your work since graduating has not been in sport and physical recreation please state the reasons below.

21. At what level did you expect to enter employment after graduating?
(please tick the appropriate box)

'Shop floor'/customer face (e.g. recreation assistant)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist Role (e.g. Sports Development Officer, coach, instructor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Middle Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic (e.g. teacher, lecturer, research)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Junior Manager (e.g. supervisor)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trainee Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. Please list the main knowledge and skills that you have had to use within the jobs that you have undertaken since graduating.

Knowledge

Skills

23. Do you feel that your current job uses all the main skills and knowledge that you gained during your (first) degree?

Yes (go to Q25) No

24. What knowledge and skills, that you gained on your degree, do you feel have not been fully utilised?

Knowledge

Skills

25. Overall, to what extent do you feel that your degree programme gave you the appropriate knowledge to perform the job(s) that you have undertaken since graduating? (Please tick the most appropriate box)

- All of the appropriate knowledge
- Most of the appropriate knowledge
- Some of the appropriate knowledge
- None of the appropriate knowledge
- Don't know

26. Overall, to what extent do you feel that your degree programme gave you the appropriate skills to perform the job(s) that you have undertaken since graduating? (Please tick the most appropriate box)

- All of the appropriate skills
- Most of the appropriate skills
- Some of the appropriate skills
- None of the appropriate skills
- Don't know

27. Have you undertaken any further education and/or training since graduating? (This includes masters degrees, post graduate diplomas, professional qualifications (ILAM & ISRM), short courses and in-service training)

Yes No (go to Q29)

28. Please list the education and/or training that you have undertaken. Also list the main skills and knowledge gained that were different from those obtained in your undergraduate degree.

Title/Description of education/training undertaken.	Skills Gained	Knowledge Gained
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

YOUR EXPECTATIONS

29. What knowledge and skills do you feel that you still need to develop to meet current and future employment needs?

Knowledge	Skills
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

30. How do you think such knowledge and/or skills should be provided?

Professional Courses (e.g. ILAM & ISRM) Masters Degree S/NVQ

On the Job Training Other (please state) _____

31. Did you undergo an induction programme in your first permanent, full-time job?

Yes No (go straight to Q32)

Did you feel it was a valuable experience?

Yes No

Please state the reasons for your answer.

32. Within your current job do you have a staff development programme set out for yourself?

Yes No (go straight to Q33)

If yes, what does this development programme involve and how effective do you feel it has been?

33. How long do you envisage staying in your current job? (*Anonymity guaranteed, please answer as honestly as possible*)

Currently looking for another post Between 3 to 5 years (*go to additional information*)
Between 6 to 12 months 5 years plus (*go to additional information*)
Between 1 to 3 years

34. If you intend to leave within 3 years, please state why.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In analysing the results of this questionnaire you will be treated with anonymity. However, we wish to do follow-up research with regard to the career development of graduates. It would be of great help to this research if you could fill in your name and address below if you do not object to being contacted for this follow up research. Obviously, any information will remain confidential and will not be passed on to any other organisation or used for any purpose other than this research. However if you do not wish to be contacted again please return the completed questionnaire in the stamped addressed envelope provided but leave this section blank.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Name: _____
Address: _____

If you require any further information about this project please contact Sue Minten at the address given at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Appendix 2.

Higher Education Institutions Involved In the Student Expectation Questionnaire.

Bolton Institute of Higher Education
Bournemouth University
Cardiff Institute of Higher Education
Cheltenham and Gloucester Institute of Higher Education
De Montford University
Leeds Metropolitan University
Liverpool Hope University College
Liverpool John Moores University
Manchester Metropolitan University
Roehampton Institute of Higher Education
Sheffield Hallam University
Staffordshire University
Thames Valley University
University of Brighton
University of Luton
University of Northumbria
University of Ulster
University of Wolverhampton
Warrington Collegiate Institute

Higher Education Institutions Involved in the Graduate Experience Survey.

Bournemouth University
Cardiff Institute of Higher Education
Liverpool Hope University College
Liverpool John Moores University
Manchester Metropolitan University
Roehampton Institute of Higher Education
Staffordshire University
University of Northumbria
University of Ulster
Warrington Collegiate Institute

APPENDIX 3.

EMPLOYERS INTERVIEWED

The Ackers Trust
Adventure Unlimited
Arthog Outdoor Education Centre
Avalon Leisure
Bath Area Play Project
Bodyshack Gym and Fitness
Classic Adventures
Corniche Health & Leisure Club
Dacorum Borough Council
Denbighshire County Council
Derbyshire Outdoors
Dutch Houses Fitness Centres
Eastern Ravens Trust
Edale YHA
Energise Ladies Fitness Studio
Essex Sailing School
Fairbridge
Greenwich Leisure Ltd.
Haven Banks Canoe and Sailing Centre
Hightone Health and Fitness Centre
Horsham District Council
Kirklees Metropolitan Council
London Central YMCA
Lanarkshire Council
Manchester Adventure Play
Mike Corby Group
Mint Condition Fitness
Newbury District Council
Nottingham Play Forum
Powerhouse Fitness Centre
Scarborough Playlink
Seb Coe Health Club, Jarvis Hotel, Manchester.
Simply Fit
Skern Lodge
Tandridge District Council
Thames Young Mariners
Thornaby After School Centre
Tillington Hall Leisure Club
Venture Associates
Waves Leisure Club
Willows Club
Windows Project.

APPENDIX 4

Employers Structured Interview.

**GRADUATE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SPORT
AND RECREATION INDUSTRY**

You were recently kind enough to return a recent employment survey conducted by SPRITO for the Department for Education and Employment. SPRITO is contracted to investigate current recruitment practice within the industry and to develop a mechanism to aid employers in recruiting staff who meet their needs. Would you be willing to answer some research questions on your current recruitment policy?

Organisation:

Sector:

Contact Name:

Address:

County:

Postcode

Tel:

Fax:

1. Have you ever employed any graduates (people who have completed a first degree of any kind) within your employment?

Yes No

2. Do you have any graduates (people who completed a first degree of any kind)

Yes Number employed _____

If No please go to question 8.

3. How many of these people graduated: before 1993 _____
after 1993 _____

4. How many of the degrees held are in any way sports or leisure related? _____
If possible please give title or indication of content below.

5. For each graduate list the post they hold:

1]	2]
3]	4]
5]	6]
7]	8]

6. Did you specifically require graduates in these posts? Please answer yes or no for each post.

1]	2]
3]	4]
5]	6]
7]	8]

7. When you employ new staff how do you rate the following skills on a scale of 1-4:

1. Essential 2. Important 3. Desirable 4. Not Important

Operational Staff

technical skills (e.g. first aid, coaching)

personal skills (e.g. communication, teamwork)

functional skill (e.g. I.T., administration)

knowledge of the industry (e.g. consumer trends, government policy)

Supervisory Staff

technical skills (e.g. first aid, coaching)

personal skills (e.g. communication, teamwork)

functional skill (e.g. I.T., administration)

knowledge of the industry (e.g. consumer trends, government policy)

Administrative Staff

technical skills (e.g. first aid, coaching)

personal skills (e.g. communication, teamwork)

functional skill (e.g. I.T., administration)

knowledge of the industry (e.g. consumer trends, government policy)

Managerial Staff

technical skills (e.g. first aid, coaching)

personal skills (e.g. communication, teamwork)

functional skill (e.g. I.T., administration)

knowledge of the industry (e.g. consumer trends, government policy)

8. What qualifications/experience do you currently specify for in an:

1. Operational Post
2. Supervisory Post
3. Managerial Post

9. When you recruit new staff are you generally happy with the level and quality of experience and qualification amongst those who apply?

Attitude to Graduate Recruitment.

10. What are your perceptions of graduates in terms of:
- i. Their technical ability (e.g. equipment usage and maintenance procedures, first aid)?
 - ii. Their personal abilities (e.g, teamworking and communication skills)?
 - iii. Their willingness to train and learn?
 - iv. Any skills that they may bring to the employer beyond their normal job role?
 - v. Their loyalty/likelihood to move on?
 - vi. Their expectations of the employers in terms of opportunities for training and progression?
 - vii. Any other key employment factors not listed above:
11. For those posts in which you employ graduates can you give a brief summary of why you have recruited graduates.
12. For those posts in which you do not employ graduates can you give a brief summary of why you have not recruited graduates?

Induction and Development Procedures

13. Do you use a person specification to state the skills, competencies and qualifications you require for each post?
Yes No
- If no state other method of ensuring appropriate applicants for a post.
14. Do you have an formal/written induction programme specific to each post for newly recruited staff?
Yes No
15. How effective do you believe this to be in enabling your new staff members to adapt to their role?
Very Fairly Average Not Very Poor

16. How do you encourage staff to develop within your organisation?
17. Do you believe that your recruitment procedure could be improved?
If so how?
18. Do you believe that your induction procedure could be improved?
If so how?
19. Do you believe that you could encourage staff development more effectively?
If so how?
20. Would you like any further information on the graduate recruitment programme?

Appendix 5

Agenda for National Workshop: Graduate Recruitment - Getting it Right!

10.00	Arrival and Coffee	
10.15	Welcome from the Chair of the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure Sport and Recreation	Mike Cogger
10.30	Introduction to SPRITO and to the project from SPRITO Chief Executive	Stephen Studd
10.50	Presentation of and interpretation of results from research of students and graduates.	Sue Minten
11.10	Presentation of and interpretation of results from research of employers	Andrew Hanson
11.30	Synthesis and conclusions from the research findings	Peter Taylor
11.45	Questions to speakers from the audience	Chaired by P Taylor
12.00	Plenary Session: Definition and agreement of key issues raised by the research and to be tackled by the project group	Chaired by P Taylor
12.45	Lunch	
13.45	Discussion of key issues and identification of means to tackle these	Group work
15.00	Presentation of issues and potential solutions identified by each project group - questions from the audience to each speaker	Group spokesperson
15.45	Summary of the proposals identified for the project group to take forward	Peter Taylor
16.00	Conclusion	Mike Cogger

APPENDIX 6.

Employers' Pilot Documentation

Text cut off in original

and this leaflet (Please tick as appropriate):

very informative

quite informative

uninformative

other (please comment)

very interesting

quite interesting

uninteresting

other (please comment)

very well presented and easy to read and understand

quite well presented and quite easy to read and understand

poorly presented and difficult to read and understand

other (please comment)

I suggest the following improvements to:

KNOW YOUR GRADUATE

When selecting from a large number of applicants (the number of applicants to fully fill each position) it is vital that you know the knowledge and abilities your needs. The course transcripts that are referred to in your current situation help you to identify the skills and abilities of your current staff. Opportunities for many students are available in the industry (qualifications, work experience or paid employment) you should be able to identify who has taken advantage of this. Added value: during the selection process you could set a task relating to the extra skills your company.

THE TOOLS FOR RECRUITMENT

The skills needs of our industry are clearly stated in the National Occupational Standards for Sport and Recreation. These can be used to create job specifications and they set a national standard for performance. Job descriptions can be written to encompass both current and projected skills needs - you can state which Standards you expect new employees to meet and those you expect them to develop. If you can deliver the training to provide for these skills you will be seen as a 'good' employer and attract and retain high calibre staff. If you are an employer in the National Standard provides a blueprint for matching training to business needs.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

If you would like to know more about recruiting graduates for your business, or any of the above issues, complete and return the attached form to SPRiTO at 21 Stephenson Way, London, NW1 2HD. Tel: 0171 388 7753. This information will be forwarded free of charge.

MAKING THE MOST OF GRADUATES

How do you meet your staffing and skills needs?

How well are you prepared for your next five years?

Have you considered the skills that a graduate might bring?

Do you know how you might attract a graduate to your company?

Read on to find out how a graduate can bring you the skills you need and more!

SPRiTO

The UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport

DELIVERING TODAY AND PLANNING FOR TOMORROW

Do you have the staff to deliver today's business and to plan for tomorrow's? Do you have the staff to deliver today's business and to plan for tomorrow's? Do you have the staff to deliver today's business and to plan for tomorrow's?

Do your staff have the skills you need to deliver today's service now? Or will they have the skills you need to deliver tomorrow's service? Do your staff have the skills you need to deliver today's service now? Or will they have the skills you need to deliver tomorrow's service?

WHY EMPLOY A GRADUATE?

Graduates have been an employment mainstay since the 1950s. They have the qualifications and experience to meet immediate needs. Many degree courses are now quite practical. Courses such as Business Administration and Marketing will provide specific technical skills. Depending on their course, graduates will also have gained a variety of skills which will help them develop into supervisory or managerial roles. Examples are report writing skills, computer literacy and business skills. A graduate should also learn quickly and be able to manage their own learning.

HOW DO I ACCESS THE GRADUATE LABOUR MARKET?

SPRITO will be able to help you. SPRITO will be able to help you. SPRITO will be able to help you. SPRITO will be able to help you. SPRITO will be able to help you.

CLOSER THAN YOU THINK!

You could also find out more about these students who work part time or during holidays in your organisation. They may wish to enter the industry upon leaving university. You will have to find out the skills they are currently developing and will be able to help them create an action plan to prepare them for full time employment. Perhaps with your own organisation. SPRITO can provide guidance on the use of work placements and vocational work as extended interviews for more permanent employment.

WORKING WITH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are keen to build links with local employers as there is much to be gained for both parties by sharing expertise. You may be able to work with an HEI to carry out market research and other forms of business development, whilst providing students with the opportunity to contribute in a real way to your business and giving you the opportunity to get to know them and their skills.

HOW DO I ATTRACT THE RIGHT GRADUATE?

As you will know the recruitment process is paramount to ensuring the right staff. SPRITO can provide guidance materials on advertisements, writing person specifications and job descriptions.

HOW DO I MAKE THE BEST USE OF THEM?

All staff need to be properly introduced into their new company if they are to perform well. Guidance on induction procedure is available from SPRITO.

Name: _____

Organisation: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

I would like to know more about recruiting sport and recreation graduates. Please forward the following information to me:

- a list of universities by region and course and a list of industry journals
- advice on person specifications and job descriptions
- an introduction to National Occupational Standards
- an introduction to the Investors in People National Standard
- an introduction to graduate skills - general and course specific
- a guide to successful work placements
- a guide to recruitment and induction
- a guide to working with higher education institutions
- any other information (please specify)

I would be grateful if you would give your opinion of this information leaflet on the opposite side of this sheet and return it with this order form to SPRITO, 24 Stephenson Way, London, NW1 2HD, Tel 0171 388 7755

MAKING THE MOST OF GRADUATES:

A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

SPRITO

**UK HIGHER EDUCATION
STANDING CONFERENCE ON
LEISURE, RECREATION & SPORT**

This is a product of Graduate Recruitment and Development in the Sport and Recreation Industry, an initiative funded by the Department for Education and Employment's Higher Education Project Fund

MAKING THE MOST OF GRADUATES: A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

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THE BENEFITS OF EMPLOYING GRADUATES

Recent research supported by the Department for Education and Employment undertaken by SPRITO and the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport has identified that graduates of sport and recreation degrees have a range of skills and attributes that are of value to sport and recreation employers, helping them to respond to the dynamic leisure environment and improve their effectiveness.

Knowledge

A graduate gains substantial knowledge within their degree subject area. An important part of this is the acquisition of a set of principles which can then be applied to a range of situations. The principles range from exercise physiology through to marketing, depending on the degree subject area (see separate guidance notes on course specific skills and attributes).

Intellectual ability

The possession of a degree should indicate a level of thinking ability in terms of being able to assimilate knowledge, critically analyse information, solve problems and reflect on experiences. It is a mistake to interpret these attributes as 'airy fairy', 'head in the clouds' and irrelevant - many graduates can bring ideas and creativity to an organisation which are crucial for it to be effective.

Willingness to learn

Due to the dynamic nature of the sport and recreation industry it needs flexible, adaptable employees. Graduates are independent learners who should have the ability to develop personally and learn new skills in response to changing needs.

Personal skills

Although the most obvious thing acquired by students is a lot of subject knowledge, it is important to realise that substantial personal development takes place on degree programmes as well. Graduates are usually self motivated, independent and have initiative, they are used to planning and organising their time, and working to deadlines. Many will be self starters and self motivated, however these attributes are usually balanced with interactive skills. Graduates have the opportunity to develop communication skills including written skills such as drafting letters, report writing and summarising documents. They should also possess good oral communication skills including the ability to undertake formal presentations, participate in group discussion, exchange ideas and persuade others.

Graduates should also have had experience of working in teams in order to develop ideas with others and solve problems. They should be able to move from one team to another and, where appropriate, many will be able to lead teams.

Technical skills

Graduates will have developed technical skills in their particular subject area, these may range from coaching to fitness assessment through to IT skills. However, where graduates have not specifically gained vocational skills their intellectual capacity and personal ability should enable them to learn new skills quickly.

Extracurricular experiences

During their degree course most graduates have had opportunities to undertake extracurricular activities that will add to their skills and abilities. These include undertaking other qualifications such as first aid, governing body coaching awards, National Coaching Foundation awards, pool lifeguard qualifications, weight training and aerobics related awards. Many graduates will also have had part time/vacation jobs to support themselves through college and some of these jobs may have been within the sport and recreation sector. Typical jobs include working in bars or shops, these types of service sector jobs will have given the graduate experiences in customer care and handling money as well as developing a range of other interpersonal and technical skills. Graduates may have gained experience through involvement with the student union (SU) or running SU clubs. This will have given them practical administration and organisational skills as well as developing a range of interpersonal skills.

Graduate expectations

Graduates do have high expectations of the employment they will gain. Often they will actually obtain a post that is of a lower level than they aspired to. An aim of this project is to give graduates realistic employment expectations, however employers need to recognise that a graduate's high expectations may actually be a bonus in terms of enthusiasm and willingness to learn. Employers need to exploit the skills that a graduate has to the full, even in shop floor positions. They also need to recognise the fact that a graduate could satisfy future needs. The induction section in these guidance notes gives advice on inducting graduates in order to make the most of new graduates.

HOW TO RECRUIT A GRADUATE

One of the keys to attracting the right candidate is ensuring that your advertisements reach the right people at the right time.

Local partnerships

Research shows that many graduates seek employment in the areas where they study, furthermore many people now study near to their original home. Bearing this in mind it can be very effective to advertise at a local Higher Education Institution (HEI) that offers a course that meets your needs. Many students seek part-time employment and work-placements during their study as well as vacation employment. A list of HEI sport and recreation courses and contacts is part of the available guidance notes. Striking up a partnership with one or more university departments and careers services can prove to be an efficient and effective means of recruitment.

When to advertise

Most students will be at university between October and June of each year, although those not local to an area may return home at Christmas and Easter. Many students seek part-time employment throughout the year and the only months when you are unlikely to get a response to an advertisement are July, August and September, when few students visit their institution. If you are advertising a full time post, then the more organised students will be seeking employment between October and Christmas. Job seeking will continue until March, then most students will be concentrating on final projects and completing their degree. Whilst it is difficult to gauge when students seeking vacation work will begin their search, it is never too early to advertise if you are sure of a vacancy, as the sooner the student is assured of summer employment they are free to concentrate on their studies.

Wording the advertisement

Our research shows that most students are realistic about their immediate employment prospects and will seek an appropriate first job. They are however concerned with their future and will be attracted to jobs with some prospects of progression. An advertisement which conveys the possibility of future career progression and welcomes graduate applicants will therefore catch their eye. An example would be "ideal first job for a graduate - an operational post with good opportunities for development".

Other recruitment media

Local Media

If you are seeking to recruit locally, then local and regional newspapers can be very effective - particularly if you are seeking a graduate who has been resident in the area for some time.

National Media

Many of the 'quality dailies' have specific 'graduate days' in which they carry advertisements targeted at graduates. These can be effective in attracting a broader range of graduate applicants, but they are expensive.

Industry Journals

As you will know, many people working in or seeking to enter sport, recreation and allied occupations read industry journals. If you wish to advertise nationally and target a specific interest group, using these journals can be very effective.

- *Leisure Opportunities*: A fortnightly classified magazine of general interest to the leisure industry. This frequently carries advertisements for commercial organisations (particularly in the fitness sector), contractors and local authorities. Address: Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 1DJ
- *Leisureweek*: A weekly news and classified magazine again well read in the leisure industry and carrying a wide range of advertisements. Address: Leisureweek, St. Giles House, 50 Poland Street, London, W1V 4AX

Professional Body Appointment Services

The Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management and the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management are two major Professional Bodies for the industry. Their membership consists both of practising professionals and students. Both institutes provide an appointments service, the former mailing all advertisements to its members weekly and the latter every ten days. Many students seek employment from these sources.

Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management
ILAM House
Lower Basildon
Reading
RG8 9NE

Institute of Sport and Recreation Management
Giffard House
36-38 Sherrard Street
Melton Mowbray
LE13 1XJ

Sport Specific Journals

If you are looking for someone to coach or lead activities in a specific sport you should advertise in the magazines read by those participating in that sport. Very often the sports governing body will produce its own magazine, and give details of any others relating to the same sport. SPRITO will provide individual governing body addresses by telephone or alternatively you can buy a full listing from the English Sports Council.

CATEGORIES OF SPORT RELATED COURSES & THE SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES DEVELOPED

The confusing array of sport and recreation related courses often makes it difficult for employers to identify which will satisfy their staffing needs. Similar course titles do not mean they have a similar content and with modular degree structures students can choose from flexible pathways within a particular course. This information sheet aims to differentiate between courses and identify basic course content which relates to the needs of employers. The courses are listed by region and contact addresses are listed at the back. Explanations of the different items included in the table are given below.

Placement This refers to whether or not the course offers a formal period at a workplace. If the student has undertaken a placement this will have given them some vocational experience. The length of the placement can vary from two weeks through to a year, therefore the experience the student gains can range from developing a basic appreciation of the work of a sport related organisation via shadowing members of staff through to actually taking on responsibilities for areas of work. Often students will have undertaken a piece of work for the organisation such as market research or reviewing the effectiveness of a particular work area.

Coaching/Practical This refers to whether or not the course offers modules in which students learn the theories of coaching and have the opportunity of applying them. In some courses this will involve gaining basic coaching skills and practical experiences in a range of sports: these students will usually be at a level where they have the background knowledge from which to undertake a range of level 1 coaching awards. Other courses include the coaching qualifications as part of the course or as an extracurricular activity.

Sports Science This refers to courses that provide a substantial amount of sports science related subjects. This would include modules in physiology, psychology and biomechanics. Where students have undertaken modules in physiology they should have expert knowledge of fitness assessment and exercise prescription which gives them an excellent foundation for gym instructing. As customers become more aware of health and fitness issues they expect staff to have an in depth understanding of the area in order to give them sound advice.

Sport Social Sciences These courses contain modules that give students an appreciation of the social issues that may influence participation. This will give them a foundation for working in community related activities. These social sciences include economics, sociology, politics and geography.

Research Research skills are one of the key attributes of graduates. Students who have undertaken these modules should be able to undertake research projects and be able to problem solve, analyse and review issues more effectively both at an operational and strategic level. They should also have the ability to communicate their research findings through written reports in a clear and concise manner.

Health Students who have undertaken these modules/courses will have an appreciation of the relationship of exercise and health as well as broader health issues. They will have knowledge that should be useful in working with the general public in a range of environments from gym management through to exercise and health promotion.

Management This refers to courses that cover a range of management areas. These will include management theory, marketing, managing people, finance, operations management and strategic management. However, it is important to note that some courses offer these as options and students may have only specialised in some of these areas. Other courses may offer 'leisure management' modules that cover a combination of these areas, which usually means each individual functional management subject is covered in less depth.

Policy and Administration This refers to modules that will have an overall appreciation of the structure and administration of sport and its wider environment such as the impact of national and local political policies. These students should understand the nature of the public, private and voluntary sector and issues such as CCT, public sector funding, and the National Lottery.

Leisure This refers to courses that give students the opportunity to undertake modules in other leisure areas besides sport - such as tourism, countryside, arts and entertainments.

IT This identifies when courses have explicit, formal modules in IT - typically introducing students to such software as word processing, spreadsheets and databases.

Play This refers to courses that include elements of play theory and possibly play work. These students will have knowledge that will be of relevance to play providers.

Outdoor Education This refers to courses that have an element of outdoor pursuits.

Code: Where a Y is placed next to a category this means that the course contains a substantial element of this feature, an O indicates that the feature is an option therefore not all students will have undertaken it.

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	Placement	Coaching/ Practical	Sports Science	Social Sciences	Research	Health	Management	Policy & Admin	Leisure	IT	Play	Outdoor Ed
Eastern Region												
University of Luton												
BA Leisure Studies				Y	Y	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
BA Sport & Fitness Studies		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
East Midlands												
De Montfort University Bedford												
BSc Leisure Studies				Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y
BSc Sports Studies			Y	Y	Y					Y		
Loughborough University												
BSc PE & Sports Science		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	
BSc Recreation Management				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
BSc PE, Sports Science and Recreation Management		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Nottingham Trent University												
BSc Sport (Admin & Science)		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Greater London & South East												
University of Brighton												
BSc Exercise Science	O	O	Y	Y	Y	O			O	Y	O	O
BSc Sports Science	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	O			O	Y	O	O
BSc Leisure Policy & Administration	Y (12 WKS)	O	O	Y	Y	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	O	O
BSc Leisure & Sports Studies	O	O	O	Y	Y	O	O	Y	Y	Y	O	O
BSc Leisure & Sport Management	Y (12WKS)	O	O	Y	Y	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	O	O
Bournemouth University College												
BSc Leisure Management	Y			Y	Y		Y	Y	Y			
BSc Sports Studies		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y		
Canterbury Christ Church College												
BSc/BEd Sports Science		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y						
BSc/BEd Tourism & Leisure Studies				Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y

	Placement	Coaching/ Practical	Sports Science	Social Sciences	Research methods	Health	Management	Policy & Provision	Leisure	IT	Play	Outdoor Ed.
University of East London												
BSc Fitness & Health		Y	Y		Y	Y	O	O		Y		
BSc Sports Development	Y (2wks)	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		
Roehampton Institute												
BSc Leisure Management				Y	Y		Y	Y	Y			
BABSc Sports Studies			Y	Y	Y	O	Y	Y				
University of North London												
BA Leisure & Tourism Management	Y (1 year)			Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		O
BSc Sport & Biological Sciences	O	Y	Y		Y	Y				Y		
BSc Sports Science & Sports Therapy	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				Y		
BSc Sport & Recreation Management				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		O
BSc Sport Science & Nutrition	O	Y	Y		Y	Y				Y		
BSc Sports Science												
St Mary's University College												
BSc Sports Science	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y
Northern Region												
Durham University												
BA Sport in the Community	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	O	O		O
University of Northumbria at Newcastle												
BSc Sports & Exercise Science	Y (6 wks)	Y	Y		Y	Y						Y
BA Sport Development	Y (6 wks)	Y	O	Y	Y	O	O	Y				Y
BSc Sport Management	Y (12 wks)	O	O		Y	O	Y	Y		Y		Y
BA Sports Studies	Y (6 wks)	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	O				Y
University of Sunderland												
BABSc Sports Sciences	O (10 wks)	O	Y	O	Y	O	O	O	O	Y		
University of Teeside												
BSc Sports Science		Y	Y		Y	O				Y		

	Placement	Coaching/ Practical	Sports Science	Social Sciences	Research methods	Health	Management	Policy & Provision	Leisure	IT	Play	Outdoor Ed
North West Region												
Bolton Institute of HE												
BA Leisure Management	Y (6 wks)	O		O	Y	O	Y	Y	Y			
BA Leisure Studies	O (4wks)	O		Y	Y	O	O	Y	Y			
University College Chester												
BA/BSc P.E. & Sports Science	Y (6wks)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y				Y
Edge Hill University College												
BA/BSc Sports Studies		O	O	O	O	O	O	O		Y		
Liverpool University												
Human Movement Science & PE	Y		Y		Y	Y				Y		
Liverpool Hope University College												
BSc Health and Physical Recreation	Y(4 wks)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
BA/BSc Sports, Recreation & PE	Y (4 wks)	Y	O	O	Y		O	O				
Liverpool John Moores University												
BSc Coaching Science	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	O	Y	O	Y	O	
BSc Sports Science		Y	Y	O	Y	Y	O	Y		Y		
University of Manchester												
A Leisure Management	Y (14 wks)			Y	Y		Y	Y		Y		
Manchester Metropolitan University												
A Business with Sport			Y		Y		Y	O		Y		
A Sport, Coaching & Exercise Science	O	O	Y	O	Y	O	O	Y		Y		
BSc Sports Science		O	Y		Y					Y		
BSc Sports Science with Coaching		Y	Y		Y		O			Y		
University College of St Martin												
BSc Sports Science	Y (7 wks)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
A Sports Studies		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y		
Liverpool University												
A Leisure Management	O			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Liverpool College Warrington												
Leisure with Business Studies	Y (9 wks)	O	Y	Y	Y	O	Y	Y	Y			
BSc Sport Science with Business Studies	Y (9 wks)	Y	Y	Y	Y	O	Y	Y				

	Placement	Coaching/ Practical	Sports Science	Social Sciences	Research methods	Health	Management	Policy & Provision	Leisure	IT	Play	Outdoor Ed.
South Western Region												
Bournemouth University												
BA Leisure Marketing	Y (6 wks)				Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		
Cheltenham & Gloucester College of HE												
BA Leisure Management	Y			Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	O	
BSc Sport & Exercise Sciences	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y		O
Chichester Institute of HE												
BSc Sports Studies	Y (10wks)	Y	Y	Y	Y	O	Y	Y	Y	Y		O
College of St. Mark & St. John												
BA Physical Recreation		Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	O	Y		Y
Southampton Institute of HE										Y		
BA Maritime Leisure Management		Y			Y	Y	Y			Y		
BA Sports Studies with Business		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
Southern Region												
Buckinghamshire College												
BA Leisure Management			Y				Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
Oxford Brookes University												
BA/BSc Exercise & Health			Y	Y	Y	Y				Y		
West Midlands												
University of Birmingham												
BSc Sport & Exercise Sciences		Y	Y		Y	Y				Y		Y
BA/BSc Sport & Recreation Studies		Y	Y	Y	Y	O	O	O		Y		Y
Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies												
BA Leisure Management		O			Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		O

	Placement	Coaching/ Practical	Sports Science	Social Sciences	Research methods	Health	Management	Policy & Provision	Leisure	IT	Play	Outdoor Ed.
Staffordshire University												
BSc Exercise & Health	O	O	Y	O	Y	Y	O	Y	O	Y		
BSc Sport & Leisure Management	O	Y	Y	Y	O	O	Y	Y	Y	Y		
BSc Sport & Leisure Studies	O	Y	Y	Y	O	O	O	Y	Y	Y		
BSc Sports Studies	O	Y	Y	O	Y	O	O	O	O	Y		
BSc Sport, Recreation & Tourism	O	Y	Y	Y	O	O	O	Y	Y	Y		
BSc Sport & Exercise Sciences	O	Y	Y	O	Y	Y	O	O	O	Y		
University of Wolverhampton												
BSc Sports Studies		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y				
Yorkshire & Humberside Bradford & Ilkley College												
BSc Leisure, Recreation & Community John	Y (10 wks)		O	Y		O	Y	Y	Y	Y		O
BSc Physical Education Leeds University	Y (4 wks)	O	O	O	Y	O	O	O	O	O		O
BSc Sports Science & Physiology		Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		
BSc Sports Science (Outdoor Activities)		Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y
Leeds Metropolitan University												
BSc Leisure Studies	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			
BSc Physical Activity, Exercise & Health												
BSc Sport & Exercise Science		Y	Y	Y			Y	Y				
BSc Sport & Recreation Development		Y	Y	Y			Y	Y				
Sheffield Hallam University		Y	Y	Y			Y	Y				
BSc Recreation Management	Y (10 wks)	Y	O	Y	Y	O	Y	Y	O			
BSc Sport & Exercise Science		Y	Y	Y	Y	O				Y		
Leeds University & All Saints College, Leeds												
BSc Sport, Health & Leisure with Management	Y (12 wks)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
BSc Sport, Health & Leisure with Media	Y (12 wks)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y		

	Placement	Coaching/ Practical	Sports Science	Social Sciences	Research methods	Health	Management	Policy & Provision	Leisure	IT	Play	Outdoor Ed.
Scotland												
University of Glasgow												
BSc Physiology & Sports Science	O (1 yr)		Y	Y	Y	Y				Y		
BSc Sports Medicine	O (1 yr)		Y	Y	Y	Y				Y		
University of Stirling												
BABSc Sports Studies		Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y			
University of Strathclyde												
BA Sport in the Community	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
BA Outdoor Education in the Community	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
BSc Sport & Exercise Science			Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y		
Northern Ireland												
University of Ulster												
BA Sport & Leisure Studies	O (48 wks)	Y	Y	Y	Y	O	Y	Y				
Wales												
University of Wales, Bangor												
BABSc Sports Science		O	Y		Y	Y				Y	O	O
University of Wales Institute Cardiff												
BA Recreation & Leisure Management	Y (13 wks)	Y	O	O	Y		Y	Y	Y			
BSc Sport & Exercise Sciences	Y (4 wks)	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y		Y		
BA Sports and Human Movement Studies	Y (4 wks)	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		O
Swansea Institute of HE												
BA Leisure Management	Y (15 wks)	O		Y	Y	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

CONTACT ADDRESSES

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- Bournemouth University, School of Service Industries, Dorset House, Talbot Campus, Fern Barrow, Poole, Dorset.**
- Bradford & Ilkley College, Leisure Studies, Ilkley Campus, Wells Road, Ilkley, Bradford, LS29 9RD**
- University of Brighton, Chelsea School, Eastbourne, BN20 7SP**
- Brunel University College, School of PE & Sport, Osterley Campus, Borough Road, Isleworth, TW7 5DU**
- Buckinghamshire College, Faculty of Leisure, Queen Alexander Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2JZ**
- Canterbury Christ Church College, Department of Sports Science, North Holmes Rd, Canterbury, CT1 1QU**
- University of Wales, Cardiff, Sport & Physical Ed, Cyncoed Centre, Cyncoed, Cardiff, CN2 6XD**
- Cheltenham & Gloucester College of HE, Faculty of Environment, Francis Close Hall, Swindon Road, Cheltenham, GL50 4AZ**
- University College Chester, Sports Science, Cheyney Rd., Chester CH1 4BJ**
- Chichester Institute of HE, PE, Sports Science & Recreation Studies Section, College Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 4PE**
- De Montfort University Bedford, Leisure & Recreation, 37 Landsdown Road, Bedford, MK40 3QZ**
- University of East London, Recreation & Sports Studies, Loughbridge RD, Dagenham, Essex, RM8 2AS.**
- University of Durham, School of Education, Leazes Rd. Durham, DH1 1TA**
- Edge Hill University College, School of Organisational & Management, St Helens Road, Ormskirk, L39 4QP**
- University of Glasgow, Institute of Biomedical & Life Sciences, West Medical Building, Glasgow, G12 8QQ.**
- King Alfred's College, Sparkford Rd, Winchester, Hants, SO22 4NR**
- University of Leeds, Sports Science, Leeds, LS2 9JT**
- Leeds Metropolitan University, Leisure & Tourism, Carnegie Hall, Beckett Park, Leeds, LS6 3QS**
- Liverpool Hope University College, Sport & Health, Hope Park, Liverpool, L16 8ND**
- University of Liverpool, Movement Science & PE, PO Box 147, Abercromby Sq, Liverpool, L69 3BX**
- Liverpool John Moores University, School of Human Science, Mountford Building, Byrom Street, Liverpool, L3 3AF**
- Loughborough University, Dept of Sports Science, Ashby Road, Loughborough, LE11 3TU**
- University of Luton, School of Travel & Tourism, Park Square, Luton, LU1 3JU**
- University of Manchester, Centre for PE & Leisure Studies, Oxford Rd, Manchester, M13 9PL**

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Roehampton Institute, Whitelands College, Sports Studies, West Hill, London, SW15 3SN
College of St. Mark and St. John, Derriford Rd, Plymouth, Plymouth, PL6 8BH
University College of St. Martin, Lancaster, LA1 3JD
St. Mary's University College, Waldegrave Rd, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, TW1 4SX
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Southampton Institute of HE, Maritime Division, East Park Terrace, Southampton, SO9 4WW
Staffordshire University, Sport, Health & Exercise, Leek Road, Stoke on Trent, ST4 2DF
University of Stirling, Physical Recreation, Stirling, FK9 4LA
University of Strathclyde, Scottish School of Sport Studies, Faculty of Education, 76 Southbrae Drive, Glasgow, G13 1PP
University of Sunderland, Sports Science, Edinburgh Building, Chester Rd, Sunderland, SR1 3SD
Swansea Institute of HE, Leisure Dept, Mount Pleasant, Swansea, SA1 6ED
University of Teeside, Middlesborough, Cleveland, TS1 3BR
Trinity & All Saints, Leisure Dept, Brownberrie Lane, Horsforth, Leeds, LS18 5HD
University of Ulster, Preservice Education, Shore Road, Newtonabbey, Co. Antrim, BT37 0QB
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University College Warrington, Leisure Studies, Padgate Campus, Crab Lane, Warrington, WA2 0DB
University of Wolverhampton, Walsall Campus, Gorway Road, Walsall, WS1 3BD

JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

These are vital documents which, if well designed, could save you a lot of selection problems and raise the quality of the applicants you take to the next stage in recruitment. If they are badly designed they could give you entirely inappropriate applicants to process and they could deter the better quality applicants from applying. The job description should give as detailed information as possible - a list of suggested details is given below. It should be accompanied by a detailed person specification, which describes the attributes, skills, and qualifications considered essential and/or desirable to fit the job description - a list of suggested details for a person specification is also provided below.

Recommended details in a job description

1. The appointment
job title and identification
2. Context
company name
department
location
supervision
reporting relationships
direct subordinates
3. Job summary
purpose and objectives of the job
4. Job content
tasks/duties
frequency
relative importance
equipment/methods used
scope of responsibility
5. Working conditions
physical conditions, hours, holidays
social conditions
economic conditions/salary
6. Other information
promotion opportunities
training and development opportunities
scope for developing the job

7. Performance standards
 specific objectives
 expectations
 assessment standards
8. Individual requirements
 characteristics required to carry out the job

[Source: Personnel Management: a new approach, D. Torrington & L. Hall, Prentice Hall International]

Recommended details in a person specification

1. Qualifications
 Essential
 Desirable
2. Experience
 Essential
 Desirable
3. Training undertaken
4. Skills
 Essential
 Desirable
5. Personal qualities
 Essential
 Desirable
6. Practical attributes
 For example driving, ability to work flexible hours, physical requirements.
7. Sex and preferred age range
 (if genuine occupational requirement)

WORKING WITH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs) are increasingly providing courses which are vocational in nature and meant to serve the needs of employers such as yourselves. It is in both your and their interests to develop continuous working arrangements. For HEIs this will enhance the credibility and industry relevance of their courses. For organisations such as yourselves a closer working relationship with HEIs will help in a number of ways: principally in providing cost effective, expert help with operational or strategic management issues and problems; and also in helping you recruit skilled people for full-time, temporary or even voluntary work. There are a number of ways in which a working relationship with HEIs can be established, including:

Placements Students are often seeking placements for a variety of periods. This is an excellent opportunity for you to utilise someone with relevant knowledge and skills for a short period. The best placements not only provide the student with a good opportunity to learn about working in an operating environment, but also give the employer the opportunity to achieve specific tasks that may not have been possible otherwise. A separate guidance note on 'Making Placements Work' is available.

Case study projects HEIs often prefer to use 'live' case studies to achieve applied objectives for their courses: it is highly desirable to give students real tasks to do for real organisations. Such case studies will typically be for groups of six to ten students, working in a defined period of time (anything from four weeks to four months), on a specific task for a sport and recreation organisation. They will normally cost little or nothing to the organisation financially. Your main contributions would include initial consultations and briefing, some steerage during the case study work, and receiving a report back from the students on completion of their work. In this sense it is a risk-free arrangement because for little or no cost there is a good chance that the students will make a useful contribution to something which you haven't found time to do. You can expect both written and verbal reports on the outcomes of the case study. Examples of the type of work that such case studies could cover are initial preparations for a lottery bid; market research for a potential new product or a new market; organising a special event or promotion; investigating internal communications within the organisation; assessing quality management in the organisation. Such projects are client-led, though: you specify the problem you want investigated and the HEI will attempt to design a case study around that problem.

Individual projects These typically take the form of dissertations, for which students normally have a period of between four months to a year. They cover very similar topics to the group case studies, typically involving a strong research element, although they should be more focused because a dissertation has to be the work of one student. As with group case studies, there are typically minimal costs to the organisation. The principal product for the student and HEI, however, is a dissertation rather than written and verbal reports to the organisation (although these may be arranged) - the dissertation will be written for an academic rather than a managerial purpose. As with case studies, however, there is a strong probability that the organisation will get something useful from the project.

Assessment subjects Increasingly on vocational courses, to give assessed work an applied orientation, assignments require students to use specific organisations as a focus for their work. A common assignment instruction begins: 'For a sport and recreation organisation of your choice,'. This is another very good opportunity for sport and recreation organisations to get specific tasks done, at very little cost and in a short space of time. The outcome will be a written assignment, usually between 1500 and 3000 words, which you can have a copy of for your own use.

Work opportunities The increasing number of sport and recreation students provide a ready labour force from which to draw for part-time, temporary/seasonal, and voluntary work. Furthermore, they are increasingly interested in such work. Research by SPRITO and the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport indicates that employers require more than just degrees from graduate recruits and the message is getting through to students that practical experience is important. Another incentive is that student grants have declined markedly in recent years, so they are more likely than ever to be looking for such work opportunities. This means that sport and recreation organisations are in a position to be more ambitious about recruiting part-time, temporary or voluntary labour - there is the opportunity to tap a skilled and committed reserve of labour in HEIs. An obvious way to do this is to approach local HEIs and course tutors direct to inform them of opportunities. A list of relevant courses is available as part of these guidance notes.

Minor consultancy tasks In addition to the variety of ways in which students can be attracted to work for you, it should be remembered that many staff in HEIs are also increasingly committed to working with external organisations. There is little to distinguish applied research from consultancy and HEI lecturers are in a strong position to lead projects undertaken for local sport and recreation organisations, with or without student support. Such consultancy services are normally at very competitive rates, particularly if there is a clear 'academic spin-off' from the work in terms of materials for teaching or research output.

Make the first move!

Sometimes student enquiries may seem a nuisance. However, they often represent an opportunity to use a cost effective resource for a specific purpose. If you have a problem which you think a supervised student or group of students could help with; or if you want someone to work part-time or seasonally who is committed to learning about your industry, find out where the nearest, relevant courses are and approach the course tutor. Some HEIs have central agencies to receive enquiries about such work possibilities, so approach them if appropriate. Although collaborative work is often conducted by HEIs for organisations in their local area, there are examples of HEIs which conduct such work some distance away - so if a relevant HEI course is not near you, enquire further afield (the list of courses in these guidance notes is arranged by region). Remember that setting up any of the above working relationships with HEIs will take time - all of the opportunities are time constrained and only occur at particular points in the year. You need to find out from the HEI you approach when the various opportunities (assessments, placements, case studies) are planned, so that they can build your organisation into their planning.

MAKING PLACEMENTS WORK

Work placements form a significant part of many sport and recreation degree programmes. A well constructed placement will benefit employer, student and higher education institution.

The Benefits To You

A placement provides an opportunity to get real work done at a minimal cost. At the least it can mean an extra pair of hands to perform regular duties. It could also however be used to undertake those tasks which you would do if only you had the time. A placement student could for instance conduct a customer satisfaction survey or other forms of market research.

A placement also gives the opportunity for an extended interview as it allows you to screen students as potential recruits either as part-time or vacation staff or as a possible future recruit, thus reducing the risk of employing the wrong person. It could act as a testing ground if you have not previously employed graduates. It will give students a real insight into the workplace, help to keep their expectations realistic and help them to develop personal skills, maturity and a professional attitude.

Delivering placements will help you develop a working relationship with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the other ways in which they can provide services to your business. You may be able to influence the HEIs in making their curriculum more relevant to the demands of the work place.

The Purpose of Placements

Higher Education Institutions usually have the following objectives in mind when developing placements:

- To provide students with experience of work organisations and to contribute to the development of personal maturity and understanding of work based interpersonal relationships.
- To enable students to understand the relationships between the theory provided by the course and its application in practice.
- To prepare students for the final level programme where they are expected to draw on work based experiences.

If you are to work with an institution in developing placements you too should have a view of the objectives to be achieved. Examples include single projects (e.g. undertaking market research; investigating training needs; developing promotional material), extended interview for potential recruits, support to a specific staff team/member.

The purpose and objectives will influence the nature of the placement, however these will be set against the practicalities of providing the placement. Table 1 illustrates the different types of placement in relation to objectives of the placement.

Table 1: Spectrum of Work Placements

Placement Time	Type	How long?	Employer Objective	Student Objectives
Day Release	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One day a week within organisation 	One semester	Support to staff team/member	Experiential and developmental.
Short Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific assignment in workplace Work shadowing 	1 - 5 months	Research or other project to meet business need. Support to staff team/member	Immersion into real work, responsibility under sheltered conditions
Sandwich Placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job or quasi job in a potential employment situation 	6 - 12 months	All of the above	Introduction to professional responsibility

Adapted from Brennan and Little (1996) A Review of Work Based Learning in Higher Education

Longer placements are usually more beneficial to both employers and students. Employers will get a greater return on their investment and staff time, and students have a greater scope to gain understanding of the organisation and to develop their skills.

The Placement Partnership

A work based contract is an effective method of ensuring that the needs of the employer and the student are met. These needs should be stated and objectives agreed and identified as learning and work outcomes. The resources to be provided by the HEI and the employer and a timetable of work should be agreed. The HEI, student and placement provider should agree on the evidence of achievement of the learning/work outcomes and the methods of assessment and criteria to be used. The contract may be re-negotiated as work progresses.

There is a range of assessment methods that can be used to assess placements, and these vary in the amount they involve you as the employer. At the least you will want to assess the extent to which your objectives have been met through the placement, and the more involvement you do have the better you will be able to construct your next placement. However you will need to establish what is feasible for you in terms of time. The range of assessment methods is shown in Table 2.

Your Responsibilities as the Employer

If the placement is to be of value to you, you must be aware of the need to plan, structure and supervise it in collaboration with the student and HEI. One of your key responsibilities is to provide a mentor as this is central to the effectiveness of the placement. Mentoring also provides opportunities for your employees to develop skills. The key functions of a mentor are:

- to enable the student to recognise their strengths and weaknesses, develop new and existing abilities and gain knowledge of work practices.
- to help the student to explore how they feel about the work and their learning experiences, be valued as a person, express themselves, receive sympathy and praise.

- to ensure that the student recognises the boundaries of the working role, is able to operate within the team and organisation objectives and performs to the required standards.

Table 2: Methods of assessing work based learning

Method	Advantages	Comment
Direct observation of the student at work	Particularly useful for assessing competence for VQs, can provide evidence of teamwork etc.	A checklist of what to observe is needed. This can be found in the National Occupational Standards.
Assessment of student's log book or work diary	Encourages self reflection as learner	Needs to be established with interview to establish validity
Interview at work.	Obtaining evidence for knowledge and understanding needed for work place tasks	Sometimes workplace might need to be simulated
Assessment of the employer view (managers, peers etc.)	Coverage of all work place tasks and performance	Cheaper than trying to observe all tasks
Student prepares a final report and then is assessed	Encouraging reflection and communication skills	Report should contain reflection on what has been learnt
Written or oral tests of the intended learning outcomes from the work based learning	Testing background knowledge and understanding	Some institutions will wish to include this method, if assessment leads to credit used for an academic reward.

Adapted from Little and Nixon (1995) Assessment Strategies for Work Based Learning

The Support From The Higher Education Institutions

For the placement to be successful, both you and the student need to be clear about the purpose of the placement. Your partner HEI should provide you with systematic guidelines about their objectives for the student and the student should also have had preparation in terms of self reflection and negotiating and managing their own learning. Your partner HEI should also provide a work placement tutor to support students within the placement both to aid learning and to offer personal support. This academic tutor should also be a key point of reference within the HEI for the employer.

Getting Started With Placements

The first step is to identify an appropriate institution. The audit of courses included in these guidance notes indicates which courses offer placements and the content of sport and recreation degree courses. This will act as a useful guide to the courses which are most likely to have students that meet your needs and it has a list of addresses at the back of the guide. Once contact has been made, most HEIs will provide a CV from an appropriate student, however CVs from a number of students could be provided and a number of students could be interviewed. This gives you choice and enables students to practise their interview skills. When a student has been selected, a meeting should take place prior to the placement to set objectives and identify areas of work. You will need to consider how you will appraise and assess the student, although to some extent this will be guided by the HEI's workplace assessment procedures. It is important that you and the HEI work together to evaluate the workplace programme as a whole.

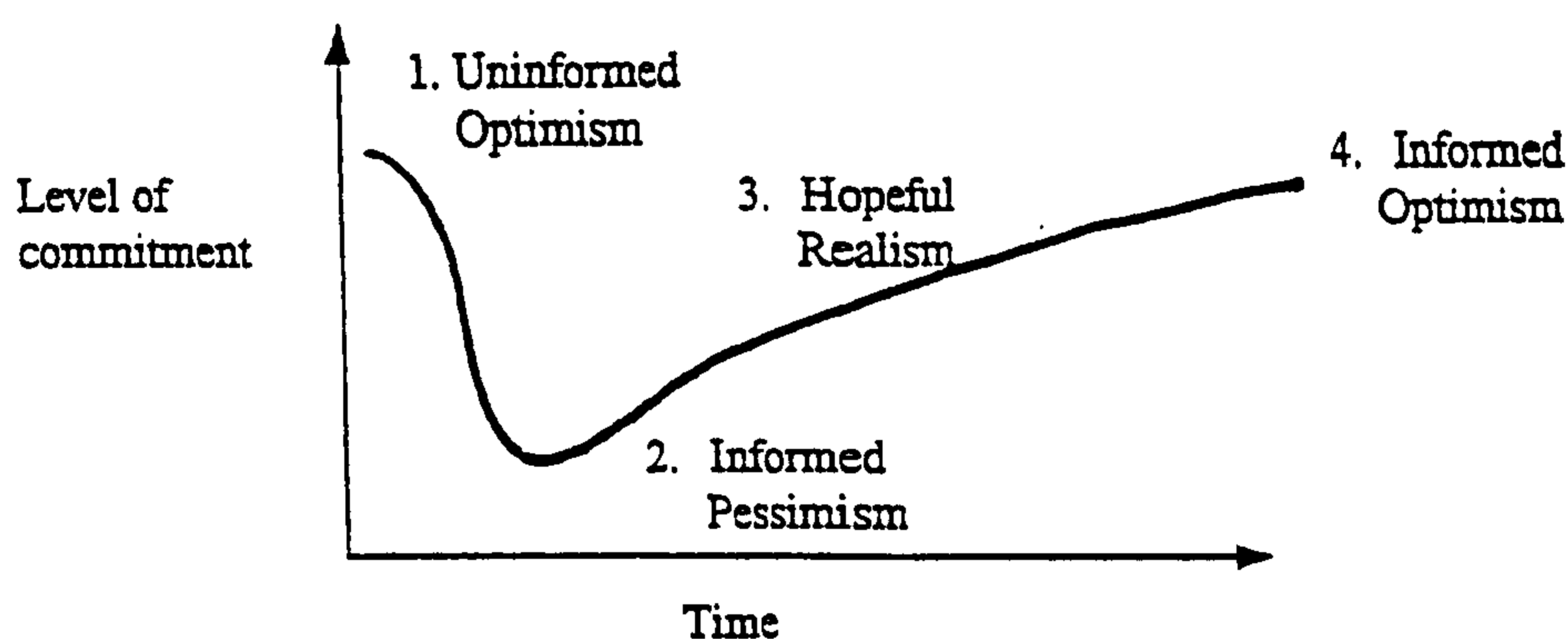
OFF TO A GOOD START!

The first few days and weeks of a graduate's employment are crucial not only to the new employee but to the company itself. A good start can reap a number of benefits:

- faster employee contribution
- higher employee retention rates
- a positive attitude to the organisation and understanding of the culture
- a 'feel good factor' about joining

During the first few months of a graduate's employment they will want to learn and are usually enthusiastic and flexible. Many will have high expectations of their employment and if you make some attempt to meet them it should lead to high performance.

Research suggests that the stages a graduate goes through when they join a new organisation can be illustrated by a commitment curve. (See Figure 1).



Source: Glasgow Development Agency & Investors in People (1993)

1. Uninformed optimism: the new graduate feels positive about the change and themselves. They are happy to have a job.
2. Informed pessimism: the graduate may begin to question their ability to cope and find everything is not quite as they hoped.
3. Hopeful realism: they get over the initial shock, things start to improve again.
4. Informed optimism: they now see new opportunities and are positive and motivated.

An Induction Programmes for Graduates

As you will know there are a number of ways to 'induct'. This may be formal, for instance with a checklist of learning points, or informal, for instance 'shadowing' an experienced member of staff in the same role.

A comprehensive induction should include:

- basic health and safety and equal opportunities policy
- emergency procedures
- a tour of the facilities and meeting future colleagues
- an overview of the organisation and its operation
- appropriate clothing/uniform
- encouraging recruits to become responsible for themselves

All those involved in the induction process should be aware of their role in it: peers, line managers, mentors and the new recruit themselves.

What Needs To Be Developed?

The graduate needs to quickly develop an understanding of the organisation and how it operates. There are a number of ways to achieve this, such as asking the recruit to read the operational procedure and planning and marketing materials. A follow up task would be required to ensure that they understand these. One method of developing a graduate is self guided learning. This could be in the form of a project where the individual has to go and find out more about an area, e.g. business or market. This would then encourage them to read annual reports and talk to colleagues.

At the same time you will need to discuss with the new recruit those areas of the job in which they feel most confident and those in which they will need encouragement and development.

Factors Affecting the Development of a New Recruit

The Direct Line Manager

This is the person to whom the employee is directly responsible. This person has the closest contact with the new recruit and therefore has a major influence on the employee's performance and satisfaction in terms of the following:

- understanding the expectations and the potential of a specific individual
- being the first real person through which the recruit sees the organisation at work
- answering the questions that any new recruit will ask
- coaching the new recruit in their new job
- assessing and evaluating performance

A graduate's direct line manager will need to understand how much experience of the work environment the new recruit has. This will vary amongst graduates, some of whom will have had extensive employment and others very limited amounts. Those with limited experience may find it quite a culture change. The line manager should also assess the expectations of the new employee and the extent to which these are realistic or otherwise. The manager should be committed to the development of the new recruit and not be resentful of the attention they receive. Line managers must also be aware of the experiences a new recruit may bring from previous employment and how these may differ from their new organisation.

Mentors

A mentor is a third party who can offer advice and guidance to new recruits. This ranges from being used as a sounding board as the employee learns about the organisation through to directing career progression. A mentor must be able to be objective about the organisation and able to take time with the new recruit. Training is available for mentors and there are NVQ units in mentoring. The Institute of Personnel Development will have details of these.

Feedback

This is crucial for the employee's development and should have an immediate effect on performance. Graduates usually want feedback on what they are doing, particularly in the early days of employment. Means of providing feedback are given below.

Informal	Formal
The direct manager, through coaching, can provide consistent feedback to the graduate on their performance.	Training course assessments - these can provide feedback on the graduate's skills and performance on the course.
Peers and other recent graduates can relate to the graduate's circumstances and compare how well they are faring against their experience.	Progress reports - written when the recruit has had sufficient time to 'get into' the organisation.
Mentors can provide an objective view and relay what has been said about the graduate in senior circles.	

Appraisal Schemes

These provide the opportunity to resolve problems and spot potential in graduates. Many graduate training schemes use competencies in their assessment, this encourages graduates to compile learning portfolios of their skills which can be discussed at the appraisal, thus making the process more objective.

Evaluation of the Induction Programme

Assessment of the progress of the new recruit will help to evaluate the effectiveness of the development programme itself. The graduate should have an input in order to identify the most useful tools and areas for improvement. Employee retention rates can also be a good indicator of success.

Reference: Delivering the Promise: Recruiting, Training & Retaining New Graduates, Yellowbrick Training and Development Ltd (1995).

APPENDIX 7

Students' Pilot Documentation

THE ROUTE TO TAKE

The sport and recreation industry offers a wide range of development opportunities to meet a variety of needs and aspirations. An accepted route to professional status is to work towards professional body membership through either pre- or post-employment. National Vocational Qualifications are set by the industry and are obtained through training and assessment in the workplace. There are also a number of short courses in different specialisms, all of which will contribute to development. The importance of work itself as a learning experience should never be underestimated and NVQs are an excellent means to measure and record your skills.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

SPRITO and the Standing Conference have supplied your institution with career support materials which are available for you to copy and use - ask your course tutor. You can access information on:

- basic industry qualifications
- recruitment media and realistic employment prospects
- improving your employment experience whilst doing your course
- recording experience and relating it to job descriptions using course transcripts
- National Occupational Standards and National Vocational Qualifications
- professional bodies
- searching effectively for a job
- personal and professional development routes

We hope you have found this leaflet useful and wish you all the best for your future career. For further information contact SPRITO at 24 Stephenson Way, London, NW1 2HD, Tel: 0171 388 7755.

SPORT, RECREATION & ALLIED OCCUPATIONS - HOW TO GET IN!

How well prepared are you for the workplace?

What jobs are out there and where are they?

What skills do employers need?

How do you get your foot in the door?

How do you move up the ladder?

Read on to find out how to get in and get on in sport and recreation.

SPRITO

The UK Higher Education
Standing Conference on
Leisure, Recreation and Sport

WHO CAN I WORK FOR?

Sport and recreation employment continues to grow and diversity jobs can be found with commercial leisure companies, local authorities, leisure house management teams or contracting companies, small health clubs or large management chains, charitable trusts and voluntary groups. Everyone will have their own preferred working environment. SPRIOS research indicates that there are 200,000 people in paid employment in a field covering sports development, facilities management and operational coaching, play work, outdoor education and training, fitness and exercise.

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT?

Your degree is an indication of a certain set of skills and knowledge - but you will need more than your degree to make an impression upon a prospective employer. Gaining entry level qualifications such as a first aid certificate and a coaching award will help you to obtain part time or seasonal employment during term time or vacation. You should ask your institution to provide access to such courses. Voluntary work will also give you experience of the industry. You should make a record of this experience and ask your employer to verify and sign this. The National Occupational Standards for Sport and Recreation (available from SPRIOS) state clearly the skills needed in the industry and you can match your skills against these. You could even begin to work towards a National Vocational Qualification.

GETTING A REAL JOB

Sport and recreation is a hugely attractive area of employment. The competition for jobs is fierce. Our research showed that whereas 70% of sports related students seek to enter sport and recreation, only 35% of sports related graduates do so. There is no indication of graduate recruitment in the industry and graduate trainee schemes are few and far between. Many graduates therefore enter the industry at an operational level and work their way up. Jobs are advertised in a number of industry journals through professional bodies and sometimes in local media.

SELLING YOURSELF

Read job descriptions and person specifications carefully if they are supplied. You need to be able to relate your skills, experience and qualifications to the job and emphasise the value of your previous employment or any voluntary work if you are applying. You should also look to the skills provided by your degree course. For instance report writing or group work. As well as stating what you did explain what you learnt from this. Be prepared to back up your statements with further information if an interview - for example a course transcript or verification of experience from a previous employer. Guidance notes on these subjects are available from your institution - ask your course tutor.

FINDING THE RIGHT EMPLOYER

The working environment is as important as the job itself if you are to perform well in the workplace. You will need to be properly induced so that you understand how your new organisation works. A good employer will find out which skills you currently possess, those which you need to develop and create an action plan and provide support (such as NVQ assessment or professional body training) for you to achieve this. Investors in People recognition is one indication of an employer who takes training seriously.

MOVING ON UP!

Whilst your employer should support those areas of development which directly meet their needs, you will also need to take responsibility for much of your own learning and development. Everyone must accept the need to continuously update and develop their skills. You may wish to develop skills and knowledge which may not be of immediate benefit to your employer. In which case you may need to plan and support this entirely yourself. This may in turn encourage your employer to offer you further training opportunities or responsibility.

SPORT, RECREATION & ALLIED OCCUPATIONS - HOW TO GET IN

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

SPRITO

UK HIGHER EDUCATION
STANDING CONFERENCE ON
LEISURE, RECREATION & SPORT

This is a product of *Graduate Recruitment and Development in the Sport and Recreation Industry*, an initiative funded by the Department for Education and Employment's Higher Education Project Fund

SPORT, RECREATION & ALLIED OCCUPATIONS - HOW TO GET IN A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

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CLOSER WORKING WITH THE INDUSTRY

Students are increasingly choosing degree courses which are vocational in nature and meant to serve the needs of employers. It is in both your interests and the interests of employers to develop continuous working arrangements whilst you are doing your degree. For industry organisations, a closer working relationship with students will help in a number of ways: principally in providing cost effective help with operational or strategic management issues and problems; and also in helping recruit skilled and committed people for full-time, temporary or even voluntary work. For students the working relationship is likely to provide more practical experience to set alongside your academic achievements. According to recent research by SPRITO and the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport, employers seeking to recruit sport and recreation graduates are looking for more than just degrees - they are attracted by a more rounded graduate with appropriate practical experience.

There are a number of ways in which a working relationship with the industry can be established, including:

Placements

This is an excellent opportunity for you to gain extensive experience at the workplace and integrate this with your academic work. The best placements not only provide the student with a good opportunity to learn about working in an operating environment, but considerably enhance your CV and employment prospects.

Case study projects

'Live' case studies are excellent for achieving a practical learning experience and even if they go wrong you can learn a lot. It is very attractive to students to be given real tasks to do for real organisations, the external accountability is good for motivation, it looks good on a CV and it helps you relate the standard academic work to 'the real world'. Such case studies will typically be for groups of six to ten students, working for a defined period of time (anything from four weeks to four months), on a specific task for a sport and recreation organisation. They are an opportunity for you to develop organisational skills, teamwork, communications and presentational skills. The production of written and verbal reports on the outcomes of the case study provide an excellent basis for assessment, even if it is group work. Examples of the type of work that such case studies could cover are initial preparations for a lottery bid; market research for a potential new product or a new market; organising a special event or promotion; investigating internal communications within the organisation; assessing quality management in the organisation.

Individual projects

These typically take the form of dissertations, for which students normally have a period of between four months to a year. Dissertations can cover very similar topics to the group case studies, typically involving a strong research element, although they should be more focused because a dissertation has to be the work of one student. Focusing a dissertation on an issue or problem in one sport and recreation organisation is an excellent way of preventing a student from taking on something with an over-ambitious scope. It may also provide you with the opportunity for simultaneously qualifying for an ILAM award, if the dissertation is sufficiently work-based. The dissertation will be written for an academic rather than a managerial purpose and this needs to be made clear from the outset to the organisation -

although it would be good experience and good practice to produce written and verbal reports for the organisation as well.

Assessment subjects

In order to give assessed work an applied orientation on leisure, sport and recreation degrees, assignments frequently require you to use specific organisations as a focus for your work. A common assignment instruction begins: 'For a sport and recreation organisation of your choice!'. This is another very good opportunity for you to interact with sport and recreation organisations and give yourself 'practical' experience which will not only look good on your CV but also help you to apply academic principles to real situations.

Work opportunities

Sport and recreation students represent a ready labour force from which the industry can draw for part-time, temporary/seasonal, and voluntary work. Furthermore, students are increasingly interested in such work - not only out of financial necessity but also because practical experience is important to complement their academic achievements. You are in an excellent position to secure part-time, temporary or voluntary labour in sport and recreation organisations- you represent a skilled and committed reserve of labour. Make the most of opportunities to do this - all experience is valuable when looking for a job.

Make the first move!

Sometimes employers view student enquiries as a *nuisance*. However, the challenge for you, hopefully with the support of your university/college, is to get employers to see you as an *opportunity* for their organisation. It is important, however, to be proactive in creating such opportunities and this means not only making convincing, professional enquiries of organisations but also getting your tutors to help in the search.

TRANSCRIPTS AND THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO INDUSTRY/EMPLOYERS ABOUT YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Transcripts are an under-utilised means by which accurate, authenticated information can be passed to prospective employers about the structure of the degree you studied and your achievements on it. Most transcripts include details of the modules/courses studied and the assessment grades awarded. Most are produced centrally by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), although it is possible for individual departments to produce them.

However, there are many problems and limitations with transcripts which could be overcome with a little effort but a great deal of return to you in applying for jobs. If these problems and limitations are overcome, transcripts and associated information could be a standard means by which you inform prospective employers about your achievements.

The clarity of transcripts is generally poor, especially for non-academic audiences. Many transcripts have complex explanations of codes used to define modules, levels, and assessment marks/grades/ classifications. To students and lecturers they are fairly straightforward but for employers they are not easy to interpret. They need to be clarified in a way that doesn't lose important detail, to make them less a by-product of central administration records and more a product designed to inform external audiences, principally prospective employers.

Module titles and levels are not enough - they are often phrased very generally. Short descriptions of the module content can easily be appended in the form of appropriate extracts from the course handbook. Better still, a brief appreciation of the personal skills development associated with each module or group of modules would help to erode the perception of many employers that such personal skills have not been developed. This mis-impression is reinforced by the emphasis of HEIs and students in recording students' achievements only in terms of knowledge areas covered, e.g. module titles. Other information of use to prospective employers is whether group work or work with industry was part of any module.

Transcripts are normally confined to formally assessed components of the course. They need to be complemented by an audit of other achievements. Additional qualifications may include, for example, first aid, pool bronze, life-saving, professional qualifications. Work experience may include voluntary or paid work, with a variety of responsibilities of relevance to a career in sport and recreation. The information to complement the formal elements in a transcript must be collated by you, the individual student. However, the effectiveness of this process can be enhanced considerably if your department were to provide regular opportunities for updating. If your department could be encouraged to provide a transcript of your work, you could then use it in your job applications to inform prospective employers with an authenticated, standard, but above all *helpful* document. Such a systematic record would help you to sell your achievements and it would also help academic staff when they write your references. The important principle underlying this guidance note is to think of the employer trying to make sense of your course. They need all the help they can get and you could give them a lot more help.

GETTING YOUR FOOT IN THE DOOR

Employment opportunities and prospects

The facts

Sport and Recreation is an increasingly attractive area of employment and it continues to grow and diversify. However the marketplace is becoming ever more competitive, and in the public sector local authority resources are ever more limited. This means that jobs are less secure, and with the large numbers who want them they are tough to get!

How Big is the Industry?

SPRITO's labour market survey conducted during 1996 showed a total of 16,000 organisations employing in sport, recreation and allied fields with a projected total of 433,000 employees - and this excludes the self-employed. This is definitely a significant industry! It is also a diverse industry - and one undergoing great change. The public sector, which has long been the cornerstone of sports facility provision, is experiencing increasing pressure on its resources. Reorganisation and competitive tendering have led to short-term employment contracts and freezes in recruitment - hence competition for jobs is intense. The private sector is expanding, particularly in health and fitness, outdoor activities and development training. However 55% of these private companies employ less than 10 people, whilst 85% of them employ less than 50. Nationally these sizes of companies account for 9% and 32% respectively of industrial employment. Therefore, whilst there are many private operators their individual recruitment needs are small- again leading to intense competition for jobs.

What will my first 'real' job be like?

A small but growing number of operators, particularly private sector contractors to local authorities and health and fitness club management companies, operate trainee manager schemes, recruiting either directly from higher education institutions or through leisure media (see guidance note *Looking for jobs*). However, regardless of educational background few people enter the industry at a managerial or strategic level. Entrance level job roles tend to be hands-on and operational, but can provide a variety of experiences. For instance in many sports and leisure centres and health clubs employees move from the pool to the fitness studio to reception in one day. If you are flexible as an employee it is quite likely that your responsibilities will increase, preparing you to take the next step in your career. Below are some examples of likely first jobs in different sectors of the industry, and the qualifications you will need to get them. A first aid qualification is essential in every part of our industry, preferably a Health and Safety Executive recognised First Aid at Work Certificate. Two national organisations which provide this qualification are the Red Cross and the St. John's Ambulance, details of which are given at the end of this section. The *Careers in Sport Compendium* available from the English Sports Council provides further useful information. The contact address can be found at the end of this note.

Sport and Recreation Facilities

SPRITO research indicates that there are 5,000 potential workplaces in the sport and leisure sector. The large majority of these will be owned by local authorities and managed either by their own contracting organisation, a private contractor or a form of "trust". In addition to these, a number of large organisations, such as the BBC, have company sports and social clubs. Our research shows that up to 100,000 people are employed directly in these facilities.

Recreation Assistant This is an example of an entry level job and is a key operative level post. There is usually one or more Recreation Assistants on duty at any given time, depending on the size of the facility. Day to day duties will include preparing the venue for use, setting up and taking down equipment, keeping the premises clean and safe, maintaining equipment and, in a 'wet' facility, lifeguarding. Some positions may carry more responsibility than others such as contributing to the creation of marketing materials and supervising casual staff.

Full-time positions attract a salary between £7000 and £14000 - the higher salaries being found in Greater London and larger facilities. The natural progression is towards a supervisory post, in which you will have day to day responsibility for the operation of a facility. Competition to move up the next rung in the ladder will be intense so you need to make the most of every opportunity to further your development - such as gaining further qualifications and taking on more responsibility in your first post.

The Basic Qualifications If you seek employment at a 'wet' facility, you will need to gain the RLSS National Pool Lifeguard Qualification. Details of local courses should be available at your local leisure centre. Sports leadership and coaching awards are also useful, details of which are available from the Central Council for Physical Recreation and individual National Governing Bodies of sports.

Exercise and Fitness

SPRITO has identified 3000 health and fitness providers, excluding those facilities attached to a sport and leisure centre. 72% of these employ no more than ten people. The majority of these small employers will be independent clubs, whilst those employing more than ten are likely to be part of a chain. For instance many hotels have fitness suites and will contract a specialist management company to operate these. Our research shows 38,000 people employed in these facilities - and many more people will operate fitness classes in hired premises.

A popular term for professionals in the fitness field is *Lifestyle Consultant*, although these people may be employed in a number of different ways - many exercise and fitness professionals are self-employed. Two popular methods of working are to book space in a facility to run classes, or to obtain sessional employment as an instructor with one or more fitness centres. The number of "personal trainers", who advise individuals on exercise and diet is also increasing.

Full-time, salaried positions are rarer. Some health and fitness clubs do, however, employ permanent staff. As exercise and fitness facilities are often quite small the job role will often extend beyond running classes and instructing individuals. Duties may include: membership sales and records, fitness assessment of customers, exercise prescription, keeping premises clean and safe, and maintaining equipment. Progression may be easier with a larger management company than in a small independent club.

One factor that has served to increase the number of full-time posts is the *GP Referral Scheme*, whereby a doctor can prescribe exercise to a patient who then presents this prescription to an exercise facility. This has led to the creation of jobs, particularly in local authority fitness facilities, to liaise with local doctors, prescribe exercise and monitor progression etc..

Self-employed fitness instructors are often paid at an hourly rate ranging between £5 - £10 by the facility at which they are working. Full-time salaried posts can command from £7000 to

£14,000. The lower paid positions are likely to include operational duties whilst the higher paid jobs will often include managerial responsibilities such as co-ordinating a referral scheme.

The Basic Qualifications There is a wide range of qualifications for those seeking to work in exercise and fitness. Many of these are short course qualifications and different employers will have different preferences. You should check with a potential employer their preferred qualification and compare this with your own. The most widely recognised exercise qualification is currently the RSA Exercise to Music Award. Obtaining this award usually takes around three months. A level 2 NVQ in the Coaching of Exercise and Fitness (which is a government recognised qualification) is now available.

Outdoors

SPRITO's research indicates 2,500 outdoor providers. Some of these will be large scale providers of activity holidays with a number of bases or local authority education centres, whilst others are individual operators with no fixed base. There are up to 78,000 people employed in this sector, many on a seasonal basis, and job roles vary according to the objectives of the activity being provided.

Activity Leader A seasonal post in a centre where the primary purpose is to entertain the customers. Activity leaders ensure the health, safety and amusement of groups of people on activity holidays. They do not coach in terms of performance but provide enough technical input to an activity for an individual to get started and enjoy it, and they also set up and maintain equipment and facilities. They probably entertain their charges throughout the evenings, so a gregarious nature is required! Progression to supervisory and managerial positions is often offered to those who return in following seasons. These posts often offer the opportunity to gain valuable governing body qualifications and industry experience.

Outdoor Education Teacher Often based in a local authority centre, this post is restricted to qualified teachers who are often required to have a number of high level governing body awards. It can take a number of years to attain the qualifications required and for this reason the post is rarely held by recent graduates.

Development Trainer The focus of the work of a development trainer is to challenge their client with problems and situations which they must solve, thereby stimulating the development of that person. The outdoor environment is frequently used for this work. Many of these people are sole traders who do not have operational bases or a large staff team, although there are a number of large charitable and private organisations involved in this work - it is the latter who are more likely to recruit new staff - often advertising in the 'quality dailies'.

Pay varies enormously in this sector and considerations such as board and lodging need to be taken into account. A seasonal activity instructor may be paid between £50-£100 a week with food and accommodation inclusive. Smaller operators may pay their instructors hourly at between £5-£10 an hour. An outdoor education teacher will be paid on the teachers' 'Common Pay Spine'.

The Basic Qualifications A widely recognised and demanded qualification for activity leaders is the Community Sports Leaders Award. This is a short course qualification administered by the Central Council for Physical Recreation. Many outdoor providers will require you to have a National Governing Body coaching award if you wish to lead specific sports activities. SPRITO can advise on individual governing body addresses by telephone,

alternatively a full list can be bought from the English Sports Council. Key contact addresses are given at the end of this note.

Play Provision

Of the 135,000 people SPRITO has identified as working in play provision 80% are volunteer playworkers, whilst many of the other jobs will be part-time and paid by the hour. There are an estimated 5000 play facilities within the public, private and voluntary sectors, and this number continues to increase.

After School Club / Holiday Playworker Based in a play facility, perhaps an indoor soft-play environment or adventure playground. The ethos of playwork is to facilitate play by providing equipment and facilities and ensuring health and safety, whilst intervening as little as possible in the play activities. Full time posts are limited, but local authorities do employ play development officers and play staff.

Private Play Facilities These are increasingly found in pubs and large shopping areas and there are a growing number of privately managed play facilities. Depending on the setting of the play area, jobs are more likely to relate to operating the facility rather than developmental work with children.

A paid sessional worker in either of the above environments is likely to earn up to £5 an hour. The supervisor or co-ordinator role may be paid on a salary basis, particularly in a permanent, after school club environment.

Working with Young People The Children Act 1989 requires all organisations charging for providing activities for children under the age of eight to register with the social services department of their local authority. A criterion for registration is that staff working with children are appropriately qualified. As there is no one recognised level of 'appropriate' qualification the interpretation of this will vary from authority to authority and you will need to clarify what qualification is required with your potential employer.

LOOKING FOR JOBS

Part-time, vacation and voluntary work

One of the keys to gaining full-time employment is to obtain enough experience to convince an employer that you are not just qualified but also experienced. Part-time, vacation and voluntary work can provide the key to this apparent 'Catch 22'.

Casual Work - Getting Started

Many employers in sport and recreation - particularly in large facilities, have a need for a continual supply of casual staff upon whom they can call at short notice. The most successful method of obtaining a breakthrough in this way is to visit a facility and speak to a duty manager. If you have the necessary qualifications and aptitudes for their facility your name will probably be put on to a casual staff list. Whilst this may not seem very promising at first, if you are available when needed and perform your job well, it is likely that you will obtain regular part-time work in this way. This method can also work in areas such as outdoor activities, fitness centres and playwork, often in smaller concerns.

Vacation Work

The busiest times for many sport and recreation providers are the school holidays. Many need more staff to cope with extra numbers or holiday schemes, so there is likely to be more casual work. Positions on holiday schemes are sometimes advertised in local newspapers shortly before school holidays. If you still have a number of years to study you may be able to obtain regular vacation work with one employer.

Voluntary Work

Whilst voluntary work does not have the advantage of being paid, it does provide very real experience. There are numerous voluntary sector employers within sport, recreation and allied occupations ranging from sports clubs, leisure, play and outdoor facilities to uniformed and other youth groups. Working with these organisations can provide you with experience in every sector of the industry from coaching and facility operation to playwork and activity leadership. You will need the same qualifications for voluntary employment as you will for paid employment.

Finding full-time employment

When to look

Vacancies can occur at any time, which is good news if you are not at first successful in finding employment. Only a very few companies in our industry have a yearly intake of graduates and you should be able to find out from your department or careers service if your university is approached directly. In these cases the employer will be aware that you are unable to start work until after you have completed your course. These posts may be advertised as early as October. At an operational level many vacancies are created by someone leaving a post although 'new' jobs may also occur. In either case the employer is likely to want someone who can start quite soon, unless they have adequate staff cover. Three months before you are available for work is a reasonable time to apply for a job - so it is probably worth beginning sooner - to get the experience.

Where to look

One of the keys to finding a job is looking for advertisements in the right places. If you wish to find work in your present locality, local media such as regional newspapers may prove fruitful, however larger companies are not as likely to advertise in local media. Those

companies that seek specifically to recruit graduates may approach your university department or careers service specifically. It is worth speaking to a careers advisor or lecturer to find out if any such arrangements exist at your university.

National Media

Many of the 'quality dailies' have specific 'graduate days' in which they carry advertisements targeted at graduates. Some of the larger leisure companies advertise in these.

Industry journals

As you may know, many people already working in sport, recreation and allied occupations read industry journals and these are therefore popular recruitment media. If you cannot access these through a careers service or library you may wish to subscribe directly.

- *Leisure Opportunities* A fortnightly classified magazine of general interest to the leisure industry. This frequently carries advertisements for commercial organisations (particularly in the fitness sector), contractors and local authorities. Address: Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 1DJ
- *Leisureweek* A weekly news and classified magazine again well read in the leisure industry and carrying a wide range of advertisements. Address: Leisureweek, St. Giles House, 50 Poland Street, London, W1V 4AX

Professional body appointment services

The Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management and the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management are two major professional bodies for the industry. Their membership consists both of practising professionals and students. Both provide an appointments service, the former mailing all advertisements to its members weekly and the latter every ten days. These are probably the largest source of sport and leisure industry vacancy advertisements.

Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management - Institute of Sport and Recreation

ILAM House
Lower Basildon
Reading
RG8 9NE

Management
Giffard House
36-38 Sherrard Street
Melton Mowbray
LE13 1XJ

Sport specific journals

If you are seeking to coach or lead activities in a specific sport you may find vacancies in the magazines relating to that sport. Very often the sports governing body will produce its own magazine, and give details of any others relating to the same sport. SPRITO will provide individual governing body addresses by telephone or alternatively you can buy a full listing from the English Sports Council.

APPLYING FOR JOBS

You may be aware of the massive expansion in HE and in particular the large number of graduates of sport related courses. This means greater competition for jobs. In order to make effective job applications you must market yourself to meet the needs of the employer. This requires you to understand the attributes that you have and how they relate to employers needs, and also the process of applying for jobs. The advice in this paper is based on Department for Education and Employment funded research among sport and recreation employers by the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Education and Sport and SPRITO

What do employers want and what attributes do you have?

When applying for a post you need to analyse the job information you receive in order to identify the needs of the employer. In most job descriptions employers will have outlined their needs. Some will also include a person specification, which is a checklist of essential and desirable attributes. However, some organisations do not produce effective application information, and it is up to you to analyse the advertisement and any job details in order to identify what their needs may be. In all cases you should try and find out as much as possible about the nature of the job and the company that you are applying to, if necessary by telephoning the company to ask for more details.

The Standing Conference/SPRITO research indicates that employers require from their staff at every level strong interpersonal skills, experience, and some technical expertise is also helpful. However, it is possible to elaborate on these requirements and match them to those that you as a graduate possess.

Often the hardest thing to do is to undertake a self assessment. However, you must be aware of and be able to promote the knowledge, skills and personal qualities that you possess in order to gain successful employment. Think about what being a graduate means not only in terms of academic attainment but also the skills that you have gained and how you have developed personally. The following list shows the types of skills and attributes you should have developed whilst undertaking your degree, either through the formal course studied, or extra curricular activity. You need to think about the experiences that you have had and how they will have developed these attributes.

Personal Skills

Although the most obvious thing you will have acquired is a lot of subject knowledge whilst undertaking your degree, it is important to realise that you have also undergone substantial personal development which will go a long way to meeting a key requirement of employers: interpersonal skills. You should be self motivated, independent and have initiative; you are used to planning and organising your time and working to deadlines. You probably will be a self starter and self motivated. However, these attributes should be balanced with interactive skills. You should have well developed communication skills - these are crucial for sport and recreation employment due to the need to deal with customers and staff. They include written skills such as being able to draft letters, write reports, summarise documents, write manuals, memos, press releases and research reports. They also include oral communication skills including the ability to undertake formal presentations, participate in group discussion, exchange ideas and have the ability to persuade others.

You should have the ability to work in teams in order to develop ideas with others and solve problems. You will also be able to move from one team to another and, where appropriate, be

able to lead teams. You will need to work with people who are familiar or new to you and with people at different levels within the organisation.

Knowledge

You will have gained substantial knowledge of your degree subject area. The most important aspect of your knowledge is the acquisition of a set of principles which can then be applied to a range of situations.

Intellectual Ability

The possession of a degree indicates a level of thinking ability in terms of being able to assimilate knowledge, critically analyse, solve problems and reflect on experiences. You may be able to bring new ideas and creativity to an organisation. These types of attributes are important in enabling an organisation to be dynamic, and able to develop and grow.

Willingness to Learn

The dynamic nature of the sport and recreation industry needs flexible, adaptable employees. You should be an independent learner who has the ability to develop personally and learn new skills in response to changing needs.

Other important attributes include planning and organisation, problem solving, research, analysis and assimilation of information, flexibility and leadership. Employers may also require certain technical skills such as first aid, coaching qualifications and IT, some of which may be integral to your course, but others you may have to pick up when extra-curricular opportunities occur.

Gaining Experience

It's never too early to start to gain experience. No matter what route you hope your career might take, you can be sure that all the work experience you get is of value. Leisure centres, health and fitness clubs and after school clubs for children are good sources of part-time employment and you will often be able to enquire directly at the site. Outdoor centres will have a high level of seasonal employment for vacation work, and the demand for people to run children's holiday schemes across the public, private and voluntary sectors will also increase during holidays.

When you have obtained vacation or part-time work you should keep a record of the experience, skills and abilities you are gaining. One means of checking this is by looking at the National Occupational Standards for Sport and Recreation (see guidance note on NVQs and National Occupation Standards) which give clear details of the competencies expected of those working in the industry. You will be able to find standards that reflect whatever work experiences you have and examine the standards that you will need to reach for those jobs to which you aspire. You will then be able to plan to obtain the training, experience and competencies that you still need to gain for future employment.

When applying for permanent jobs don't forget to emphasise your experience, including voluntary work - and show how this has helped you develop the skills necessary to the post for which you are applying. You may be able to get your previous employer to sign a statement of the skills and experience you have gained.

The above list of skills and attributes is by no means exhaustive and you may not have developed all of them whilst studying for your degree. The emphasis placed on them will vary from job to job and employer to employer. Rather than list them on CVs and application forms, give *examples* of where you have used and developed them.

The application process

Applications for jobs are usually via a CV or application form. Do not irritate employers by not following instructions: if a CV is asked for, send a CV; if an application form is provided, complete it. Do not send a CV with an application form if it is not asked for.

The Curriculum Vitae

A key point when writing a CV is to ensure that your personality comes through. A CV includes:

- *Personal Details*

Essential details that should be included are your first name and family name, an address where you can be contacted easily, your full telephone number and your date of birth.

- *Education*

You will need to mention O-levels/GCSEs and A levels. If you undertook a BTEC only give the main details. You should include the institutions that you attended, although the whole address is not necessary. You should also include the dates you attended in months and years. In relation to your degree state the title and provide details of your modules and the level at which they were undertaken, also mention any major case studies you have been involved with and the work contacts you have made. Prospective employers are often confused by different degrees. Pick out key features in your course that relate to important parts of the job description and/or person specification.

- *Employment*

Start with your most recent job first and include start and finish dates. Include vacation and part time jobs particularly if this is the only work experience that you have had. Break the job down into tasks, responsibilities and skills by identifying the job title, employer, what you did and the relevant skills that you developed. Relate the work experience to the key words that appear in the job description. If you have had lots of casual jobs you can group them together and give a summary of how they helped you develop in relation to the job you are applying to. If any of them were in positions of responsibility it is worth mentioning this.

Do not leave gaps in the dates in your CV - it leaves the employer wondering what you were doing at that time. Use even mundane experiences to your advantage, for example learning about the service industry at the bottom level.

- *Activities and Interests*

Employers are usually looking for a well rounded and balanced person. In this section include your recreational activities and also what you have done within the student community.

Again, positions of authority (e.g. club treasurer) should be mentioned, relate these to the development of personal skills relevant to the job. Don't forget you may be asked about your interests at the interview!

- *Additional Information*

Include any other qualifications that you have gained such as, first aid, coaching qualifications, foreign language skills, driving licence and computing skills.

- *Referees*

As a recent graduate include one academic referee and, if possible, a work related referee, but do not include a family member. Give an address and telephone number where they can be contacted easily and make sure you ask the referee's permission first. If you have travelled and only have references from work that you have done in another country ask these referees to write an open letter or testimonial on your behalf and include a photocopy of this with your application. Provide as many referees as the employer requests, two is the norm.

- *Personal Statement*

This is an optional section that could be placed prior to the section for referees. A statement about yourself and your aspirations can be quite effective. For mature graduates this might

include reasons for a change in career direction. Make sure the statement is precise and clear, so the employer knows what you want and what you feel you have to offer.

Presentation

The appropriate length of a CV is generally two sides of A4 and it should be word processed.

Covering Letter

A covering letter should be included with the CV. This personalises your approach to the employer and further enables you to sell yourself. It should highlight the most relevant aspects of your experience so that the employer is tempted into looking more closely at your details.

A covering letter should contain the following -

- The position you are applying for and where you saw it advertised.
- Your present work situation and relevant aspects of your experience, academic and work. Briefly outline how you have developed and how this matches up with the requirements of the job.
- What it is about the company/organisation that attracts you to apply to them and what you know about them.
- Brief pleasantries to finish with, for example, if selected I look forward to attending for interview.

Try to keep to one side of A4 and do not repeat exactly what you have said in the CV. Some employers prefer hand written covering letters, but is increasingly the norm to word process them.

Application Forms

Application forms can allow you less freedom in making your application and you should always follow the instructions. Make sure you read the whole form through first before putting pen to paper so that you are clear about how you will organise your information. Either photocopy the form or do a draft to see how answers will fit in the available space. You can either hand write the form or, if you are able, type it. If you use additional sheets make sure that you put your name on them and that you attach them securely. Choose the right size envelope to send the form so ideally it is not folded. Make sure that you photocopy your completed form so you can revise for your interview. Include a short covering letter.

An application form usually consists of the following.

- Factual information: e.g. name and address
- Academic work, employment and leisure activities.
- Supporting information: as with the CV you should try to give examples which demonstrate the skills you possess, which reflect the needs of the employer. They may also ask why you want the job and why should they select you. Here you should give evidence of suitability e.g. personal skills, experience, job knowledge.
- Referees (See CV)

Do not forget to sign and date the form if requested!

Covering Letter

This does not need to be as full as the CV covering letter. It should indicate the position you have applied for and the source of the vacancy, you could also briefly point out any unusual features of your application.

LEARNING AT WORK

Once you are in the workplace your employer should provide a comprehensive induction to the job and their working environment. There are a number of ways to 'induct' and this may be formal, for instance with a checklist of learning points, or informal, for instance 'shadowing' an experienced member of staff in the same role. Items that should be covered during induction include:

- basic health and safety and equal opportunities policy
- emergency procedures
- a tour of the facilities and meeting future colleagues
- an overview of the organisation
- appropriate clothing/uniform

Your obligation is to respond appropriately to induction so that you are a fully contributing member of the staff team in the required time scale.

The sport and recreation industry will continue to develop new technologies and new markets. Individuals must develop also if they are to ensure their continued employability and to progress in their career. At the very least you need to keep your skills up to date with the changing environment. You may wish to broaden your skills into new fields or develop further skills in your current field. There are a variety of options for such continuing professional development, including a number of professional bodies for different specialisms and a comprehensive S/NVQ structure. A list of professional bodies is included below and an Introduction to National Occupational Standards and S/NVQs is another of these guidance notes.

Your employer should provide basic training for your job role and hopefully development opportunities to prepare you for further responsibility. This may involve on the job training, in-house or external courses. Hopefully you will agree a personal development plan with your employer. If not it is a good idea to set your own realistic targets to aim for. Where your employer supports your training you should attempt to obtain a training format that is convenient for both yourself and your employer. Development can also be undertaken on your initiative, in your time and with your resources, to suit your needs. The options for learning and development are ever increasing, with more and more flexible learning methods to complement traditional evening and weekend courses.

When planning your development you should review the skills you already possess and seek to develop those which will meet your future employment needs.

USEFUL NAMES AND ADDRESSES

SPRITO, 24 Stephenson Way, London, NW1 2HD Tel 0171 388 7755

Sports Leadership

Central Council for Physical Recreation, Francis House, Francis Street, London, SW1P 1DE
Tel: 0171 828 3163

Sports Coaching (able to supply Governing Body Addresses)

National Coaching Foundation, 114 Cardigan Road, Headingley, Leeds, LS6 3BJ
Tel: 01132 744802

Professional Bodies

Fitness Professionals, 113 London Road, London, E13 0DA Tel: 0990 133434
(For those working in exercise and fitness such as club instructors, exercise to music leaders and personal trainers. Provides a regular magazine and a variety of courses and events.)

Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management, ILAM House, Lower Basildon, Reading, RG8 9NE Tel: 01491 874 059

(For those working in sport, the arts, and other forms of leisure provision. Provides a weekly mailing, runs variety of short courses and a structured project based qualification scheme.)

Institute of Sport & Recreation Management, Giffard House, 36/38 Sherrard Street, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1XJ Tel: 01664 65531

(For those working in sport and recreation management, coaching and development. Provides a regular mailing, a modular short course technical qualification scheme and a longer taught and assessed qualification scheme.)

The English Sports Council

16 Upper Woburn Place, London, WC1H 0QP Tel: 0171 273 1500

Lifesaving

Royal Life Saving Society, Mountbatten House, Studley, Warwickshire, B80 7NN
Tel: 0152 785 3943

First Aid

British Red Cross Society, 9 Grosvenor Crescent, London, SW1X 7EJ
Tel: 0171 235 5454

St Johns Ambulance, 1 Grosvenor Crescent, London, SW1X 7EF
Tel: 0171 235 5231

A STUDENT GUIDE TO NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS

The purpose of this guidance note is to provide an introduction to a work based approach to qualifications for students who are either contemplating, or already studying, for one of the many degrees which are related to sport, recreation and allied occupations. Many opportunities may occur either before going to University, or during time there, to work in the industry. It is now possible for all employees whether paid or unpaid, to gain credit and national recognition for their performance at work. This will not only enhance your employment potential, but also begin to integrate the skills, knowledge and understanding, developed on your course of study, into the workplace.

This framework of work based qualifications has been developed by employers in all sectors of British industry, under the guidance of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) and their sister body the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). Individuals can now gain either a part, or a full qualification by working over a period of time in the industry.

What are National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (S/NVQs)?

NVQs are based on National Occupational Standards (NOS) which prove that you have the skills, knowledge and understanding to do the job. Employers and industry practitioners have written the NOS and all employment interests across the industry have been consulted on their content.

NVQs are open to anyone, there are no entry qualifications, time limits or age restraints. You can get credit for experience and skills you already have. They are flexible, being made up of units which set out exactly what you have to do and how well you have to do it; and in many cases you can construct your own qualification by selecting the particular combination of units that matches your work situation.

The NOS cover all levels and aspects of employment across the whole spectrum of sport and recreation from facilities operation, supervision and management at one end through to coaching, playwork, and outdoor education at the other. There is almost certainly something in them relevant to both your interests and needs.

I will have a degree so how can they help me?

Your degree course is obviously your first priority. However, to complement this, assessment of any work experience against the National Occupation Standards allows you to prove you have the practical application as well. They are assessed in the workplace and offer a flexible, practical way of learning, which gives you the satisfaction of getting a nationally recognised industry qualification to complement your academic qualification.

Many employers now use NVQs to make sure that their employees have the skills and knowledge to meet their organisation's business needs. This means that whatever you decide to do in the future, getting an NVQ will help.

Want to get involved?

Because the concept is so flexible you can start to work towards an NVQ at any time: before you go to a higher education institution, during holiday periods or while you on your course. There are many sources of help and information, some of which are listed at the end of this guidance note

NVQs are only awarded by nationally licensed Awarding Bodies; in Sport and Recreation there are five:

City and Guilds; Giltspur Street, London. Tel. 0171 294 2468

Edexcel, Central House, Upper Woburn Place, London WC1 0HH. Tel 0171 413 8000

RSA Examinations Board, Westwood Way, Coventry CV4 8HS. Tel. 01203 470033

CACHE, 8 Chequer Street, St Albans, Herts AL1 3XZ. Tel. 01727 847636
 Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Hanover House, 24 Douglas Street, Glasgow G2 7NQ. Tel. 0141 248 7900

You can only start to be assessed once you are registered with an Assessment Centre approved by one of the Awarding Bodies as meeting their quality assurance requirements.

Improving Your Prospects?

- Take the initiative and contact one of the Awarding Bodies to discover the nearest Approved Centre convenient to you. As part of their registration and induction process they will develop an individual action plan with you so that you can embark on the route of your choice.
- When looking for part-time, or holiday work, you may want to find out from the employer:
 - will you be given training where needed?
 - will you get the opportunity to be assessed against National Standards?
 - will the skills you are using be nationally recognised?
 - will it give you a better chance of returning next year or next holiday?
 - will it give you an opportunity for full time employment?
- One measure of a good employer is the training and development opportunities that are available. Can you see progression possibilities? Will you get support from a mentor and will you get the chance to build towards a nationally recognised qualification based on the National Occupational Standards developed by the industry?
- Any credits that you achieve, you will be able to take with you and use together with any other evidence that you generate in a different job.

What do they look like?

There are five levels of NVQ ranging from Level 1 which consists of a varied range of work activities, most of which may be routine or predictable, through to Level 5 which involves complex tasks, and substantial responsibility. Part-time and voluntary work experience provide you with the opportunity of picking up lower level awards, as validation of experience to complement your academic achievements.

An example of a unit from the National Occupation Standards is attached as an Appendix at the end of this guidance note.

How much will they cost?

There is the old saying of "you get what you pay for". NVQs are not cheap qualifications, but they are unique in nature, being totally different from traditional awards. There are a number of quality controls in place and every Approved Centre has to be visited by their Awarding Body a number of times during the year.

Your employer may receive support from a local Training and Enterprise Council in which case being assessed against National Occupation Standards will be a part of your regular appraisal at work and will cost you nothing. It is possible that your higher education institution may be an Approved Assessment Centre for NVQs and gaining access to assessment in the workplace may be a course requirement - once again costing you very little, if anything.

Neither of the above may be available but you may decide the NVQ is worth pursuing. The current Government has placed great importance on the concept of life long learning and ongoing professional development. They are expected to announce various schemes to support such development of individuals in the near future.

Employment outside the Sport and Recreation Industry?

By being assessed against the National Occupational Standards and building your evidence towards an NVQ in Sport and Recreation, you are also being credited with a range of

transferable key skills that may make you 'employable' in many other industries. These include communication, application of number, information technology and teamwork; as well as problem solving and planning for contingencies. All of these are important parts of a CV.

The fruits of your work remain valid and you can transfer them to another work environment. You may even find that some of the units you have built up are also used in other qualifications in different industrial sectors.

Approved Centres - where are they?

There are around five hundred Approved Centres spread throughout the United Kingdom, including colleges and workplaces. There is bound to be one close to your home or higher education institution. Because they all have to meet the same quality criteria, you will follow a similar process wherever you go, this will start with a detailed interview to establish your own development plan and depending upon the outcomes of this you take it from there. All Approved Centres employ assessors who are current practitioners, individuals that understand and are expert in the skills you are developing.

Still need more Information?

If you would like to know more about National Occupational Standards and Scottish/National Vocational qualifications, or any of the above issues, please contact SPRITO, 24 Stephenson Way, London, NW1 2HD, tel. 0171 388 7755.

SPRITO is the National Training Organisation for Sport, Recreation and Allied Occupations and can provide the specialist information for this sector. Further generic information may be available from:

Careers Service

Training and Enterprise Councils

Local Enterprise Council (in Scotland)

Appendix: An example of a National Occupational Standard

Key Role B Provide suitable conditions for sport and recreation

Unit B5 Provide equipment for sport and recreation activities

About this Unit

This unit is about providing the equipment needed for sport and recreation activities. It is part of the Sport and Recreation NVQ/SVQ, Operational Services Level 2.

Evidence from this unit could also be used for units A1, B4, C2, C3 and D1 in the Operational Services NVQ/SVQ.

Who is the Unit for?

The unit is intended mainly for Sport and Leisure Centre Attendants, Fitness Centre Staff, Recreation Assistants and equivalent staff working at the same level in the outdoors. They should have training and experience in providing a range of equipment for a variety of activities and customers.

What Does the Candidate Have to Do?

The unit consists of three elements:

B5.1 Set up and take down activity equipment

The candidate has to set up a range of equipment safely and according to the requirements of at least five different sport and recreation activities. Depending on the type of facility, these activities may be indoors (for example, five-a-side football, aerobics, gymnastics or badminton), or outdoors (for example, climbing or canoeing). This element also covers taking the equipment down after use.

B5.2 Issue and check in activity equipment for customers' individual use

The candidate has to issue and check in the equipment which individual participants use (for example floats, rackets, balls, roller skates or life-jackets, skis, wet suits, climbing harnesses and helmets).

B5.3 Store activity equipment

The candidate has to store the equipment safely, securely and in the right storage area.

What Range Does the Candidate Have to Cover?

B5.1 and B5.3 cover the following types of equipment:

- equipment needing only one person to set up and take down
- equipment needing the candidate to work as a member of a team
- simple equipment
- complex equipment
- electrical and electronic equipment

B5.2 covers the following types of customer:

- individuals
- groups
- adults
- children and young people

Requirements and Guidance for NVQ/SVQ Assessment

What Does the Candidate Have to Prove for NVQ/SVQ Assessment?

The candidate has to prove that they can carry out all the elements, meeting all of the performance criteria **on more than one occasion**. They must be able to do so without supervision. Evidence of what the candidate does must come from working in a real work environment under realistic conditions. **Simulations are not acceptable.**

Range

They must show that they can set up, take down and store all the types of *equipment* listed for elements B5.1 and B5.3.

For element B5.2 they must provide equipment to at least three types of *customers* and deal with one type of *problem*. Any remaining types of range must be assessed by other means, for example, simulations, 'what if' scenarios, case studies and oral or written questions.

Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates must show that they possess all of the knowledge and understanding shown on the last page.

How Can the Candidate Get their Evidence?

The candidate should study the unit and integrate the standards it describes into their daily working lives. They should carefully check the knowledge and understanding and make sure they could satisfactorily answer any questions about these points.

They should then identify occasions when they will be preparing for, and assisting in, sport and recreation activities and ask the assessor to come and assess their work, knowledge and understanding.

Guidance for Assessors

The most reliable and efficient method of assessment for this unit will be to observe the candidate carrying out the elements and checking that they meet the performance criteria and range. The assessor should use oral or written questions to make sure the candidate has the knowledge and understanding listed at the back of this unit.

Explanations and Examples of Some of the Terms Used

The following are provided as guidance to candidates and assessors:

Approved procedures	<i>those provided or recommended by governing bodies, manufacturers, the organisation or by legislation</i>
Complex equipment	<i>activity equipment consisting of many parts, for example, fitness equipment or aerial runways</i>
Facilities	<i>the buildings, equipment and outdoor areas used for sport and recreation activities</i>
Efficient and effective	<i>getting the activity equipment set up and dismantled to the right standard as quickly as possible, without unnecessary effort or disruption.</i>
Electrical and electronic equipment	<i>activity equipment powered by the mains, generator or battery; for example public address systems, timing equipment, fitness testing equipment</i>
Items requiring a team to set up and take down	<i>for example, gymnastics equipment, large mats or sailing dinghies</i>
Items requiring only one person to set up and take down	<i>for example, badminton courts, lane ropes or an orienteering course</i>
Setting up	<i>making activity equipment ready for its intended use; this includes assembling (where appropriate) and laying the equipment out according to the requirements of the activity</i>
Simple equipment	<i>activity equipment consisting of only one or two components, for example, badminton nets</i>
Storage areas	<i>for example, store rooms, lockers, mobile stores, such as vans and trailers</i>
Taking down	<i>removing the activity equipment from use and preparing it to be moved and stored</i>

Element B5.1

The candidate must be able to:

Set up and take down activity equipment

Performance criteria

When doing so, the candidate must:

1. choose *equipment* which is correct for the activity;
2. handle and move the *equipment* in a way which prevents damage to the *equipment* and surroundings, and injury to themselves and others;
3. follow the approved procedures for setting up and taking down the *equipment*;
4. arrange the *equipment* so that it meets the requirements of the activity and all health and safety guidelines;
5. make sure the *equipment* is safe and secure when ready for use;
6. promptly and correctly identify any wear, damage or loss to the *equipment*;
7. deal with wear, damage and loss according to organisational procedures.

Range

This element covers the following range of equipment

- a) equipment needing only one person to set up and take down
- b) equipment needing the candidate to work as a member of a team
- c) simple equipment
- d) complex equipment
- e) electrical and electronic equipment

Coverage of Range for NVQ and SVQ Assessment

Evidence of what the candidate does

Candidates must show they can meet all of the performance criteria covering as a minimum:

- all types of *equipment*.

Evidence must come from setting up and taking down equipment for five different sport and recreation activities.

Element B5.2

The candidate must be able to:

Issue and check in activity equipment for customers' individual use

Performance criteria

When doing so, the candidate must:

1. provide equipment which is right for the activity and the individual *customers*;
2. make sure the equipment is in a safe and serviceable condition;
3. show the *customers* how to use the equipment correctly and safely;
4. solve any *problems* the *customer* may have with the equipment quickly and effectively;
5. issue and check in the equipment according to organisational procedures;
6. identify and deal with any damaged, missing or worn equipment according to organisational procedures.

Range

This element covers the following range of customers:

- a) individuals
- b) groups
- c) adults
- d) children and young people

and the following range of problems:

- a) customer not knowing how to use the equipment
- b) equipment not right for customer
- c) equipment breaking during use

Coverage of Range for NVQ and SVQ Assessment

Evidence of what the candidate does

Candidates must show they can meet all of the performance criteria covering as a minimum:

- three types of *customer*
- one type of *problem*

Supplementary assessment

The remaining types of range must be assessed by other means, for example simulations, 'what if scenarios', and oral or written questions.

Evidence must come from issuing and checking in equipment for five different sport and recreation activities.

Element B5.3

The candidate must be able to:

Store activity equipment

Performance criteria

When doing so, the candidate must:

1. promptly return the *equipment* to the correct storage area;
2. move and handle the *equipment* in a way which avoids damage to the equipment and surroundings and injury to self and others;
3. store the *equipment* safely and in a way which provides easy access to the items most frequently used;
4. leave the storage areas clean and tidy, and secure when unattended;
5. make sure all escape routes from the storage areas are clear;
6. complete all necessary records accurately.

Range

This element covers the following range of equipment:

- a) equipment needing only one person to set up and take down
- b) equipment needing the candidate to work as member of a team
- c) simple equipment
- d) complex equipment
- e) electrical and electronic equipment

Coverage of Range for NVQ and SVQ Assessment

Evidence of what the candidate does

Candidates must show they can meet all of the performance criteria covering as a minimum:

- all types of *customer*

Evidence should come from storing equipment for five different sport and recreation activities.

What Knowledge, Understanding, Values and Skills Does the Candidate Need?

The candidate must show that they know and understand:

Customer Care

- the importance of customer care
- how to identify and meet customers' needs for equipment;
- how to treat customers courteously and with respect when issuing equipment;
- how to explain to customers how to use individual equipment for at least five different types of sport and recreation activities;
- how to solve equipment problems on behalf of the customer;

Equipment

- how to set up and take down equipment, meeting all health and safety requirements, for at least five different sport and recreation activities;
- how to handle and move equipment safely, without damage or injury;
- what to look for when checking equipment for wear, tear and loss;
- the procedures for dealing with wear, tear and loss when they are identified;
- the procedures for issuing equipment to customers and checking it back in;
- how to store equipment safely and securely and according to the organisation's procedures;

Health and safety

- the importance of health and safety when providing equipment for customers' use;
- basic requirements of relevant health and safety legislation;

Teamwork

- the importance of effective team working when setting up and taking down equipment;
- how to work well as a member of a team when setting up and taking down equipment.

What Key Skills Could the Candidate Cover?

If a candidate successfully completes this unit, they could provide evidence for the following key skills:

Communications

Element 2.1 Take part in discussions

Element 2.2 Produce written material

Element 2.4 Read and respond to written materials

Working with others

Element 2.1 Identify collective goals and responsibilities

Element 2.2 Work to collective goals

APPENDIX 8

HEI Staff Pilot Documentation

**WORKING WITH SPORT AND
RECREATION:
A GUIDE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS**

SPRITO

**UK HIGHER EDUCATION
STANDING CONFERENCE ON
LEISURE, RECREATION & SPORT**

This is a product of Graduate Recruitment and Development in the Sport and Recreation Industry, an initiative funded by the Department for Education and Employment's Higher Education Project Fund

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INTRODUCTION

Knowing what industry needs from graduates

Recent research, conducted by SPRITO and the UK HE Standing Conference for Leisure, Recreation and Sport, has given clear indications of what sport and recreation employers require of graduates. Although a degree is an important signal of certain knowledge and skills, it is often not perceived by employers as enough for their needs. They are also looking for relevant personal/generic skills, valid experience and appropriate professional qualifications.

Designing courses for employment

It is apparent from the SPRITO/Standing Conference research that employers do not have a firm grasp of course structures, partly because they vary enormously, but also because of a lack of continuous contact with HE institutions. There are a number of ways by which such contact can be established and not simply through work placements. It is important that industry-relevant extra curricular opportunities are provided for students, e.g. first aid, coaching, ILAM and ISRM qualifications. It would also be helpful to broker relevant voluntary work, part-time work, and vacation work to help students gain relevant practical experience.

Helping students to sell themselves to industry

It is also clear from the SPRITO/Standing Conference research that students fail to record all their relevant achievements whilst undertaking their degree. It is important to employers to be fully informed about the abilities of potential graduate recruits. You can help students to recognise and record their personal skills development, additional qualifications and practical experience. Leaving this to students inevitably leads to them underselling their achievements. You can also supplement your Careers Service generic advice on job applications by helping your students to match their specific knowledge, skills and experience to both job and person specifications.

All experience is relevant!

Employers recognise a variety of practical experience. Systematic recording of the experience gained by students would help employers enormously - including not only work placements but also part-time work and vacation work, paid or voluntary. You could help your students to match their practical experiences against National Occupational Standards.

Improving employers' knowledge of the course

You can improve the information content of transcripts to make them useful to the applications process. Also, continuous working with industry will inevitably improve their knowledge and appreciation of what your course is achieving.

Developing new and continuous contacts with the industry

You can utilise existing employer networks, such as SPRITO members or regional arms of ILAM, ISRM. Continuous working with industry can take a variety of forms, including 'live' case studies, organisation-specific assignments, visiting industry speakers, minor consultancies using students, as well as placements and advisory committees.

Helping and using your graduates

Continued contact with graduates working in the industry has mutual benefits. On the one hand graduates welcome advice on specific job tasks and on their own development. On the other hand graduates are an obvious way of enhancing industry links. A course-specific alumni association will enhance the two-way benefits.

Need more information?

SPRITO and the Standing Conference have compiled the guidance notes that follow to help you improve your industry links and the employment prospects of your graduates. In addition to these, SPRITO has available:

- The full SPRITO/Standing Conference research report; covering the expectations of graduates and employers, entrance levels, skill requirements, graduate employment, graduate induction.
- National Occupational Standards.

For further details contact SPRITO, 24 Stephenson Way, London, NW1 2HD, tel 0171 388 7755.

CLOSER WORKING WITH THE INDUSTRY

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are increasingly providing courses which are vocational in nature and meant to serve the needs of employers. It is in both your and their interests to develop continuous working arrangements. For you this will enhance the credibility and industry relevance of your courses. For industry organisations, a closer working relationship with HEIs will help in a number of ways: principally in providing cost effective, expert help with operational or strategic management issues and problems; and also in helping recruit skilled and committed people for full-time, temporary or even voluntary work. For students the working relationship is likely to provide more practical experience to set alongside their academic achievements. According to recent research by SPRITO and the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport, employers seeking to recruit sport and recreation graduates are looking for more than just degrees - they are attracted by a more rounded graduate with appropriate practical experience.

There are a number of ways in which a working relationship with the industry can be established, including:

Placements

Students on sandwich courses are continually seeking placements for a variety of periods. This is an excellent opportunity for students to gain extensive experience at the workplace and integrate this with their academic work. The best placements not only provide the student with a good opportunity to learn about working in an operating environment, but also give the employer the opportunity to achieve specific tasks that may not have been possible otherwise. For further details of this important opportunity, see the guidance note on *Work Placements*.

Case study projects

'Live' case studies are excellent for achieving applied objectives for your courses and even if they go wrong they can be valuable learning experiences. It is very attractive to students for them to be given real tasks to do for real organisations, it provides an important external accountability, it looks good on a CV and it complements class room activity. Such case studies will typically be for groups of six to ten students, working for a defined period of time (anything from four weeks to four months), on a specific task for a sport and recreation organisation. They will normally cost little or nothing to the organisation financially (minor expenses only), with the main contributions from the organisation being initial consultations and briefing, some steerage during the case study work, and receiving a report back from the students on completion of their work. In this sense it is an almost risk-free arrangement for the organisation because for little or no cost there is a good chance that the students will come up with something useful. The production of written and verbal reports on the outcomes of the case study provide an excellent basis for assessment, even if it is group work. Examples of the type of work

that such case studies could cover are initial preparations for a lottery bid; market research for a potential new product or a new market; organising a special event or promotion; investigating internal communications within the organisation; assessing quality management in the organisation.

Individual projects

These typically take the form of dissertations, for which students normally have a period of between four months to a year. Dissertations can cover very similar topics to the group case studies, typically involving a strong research element, although they should be more focused because a dissertation has to be the work of one student. Focusing a dissertation on an issue or problem in one sport and recreation organisation is an excellent way of preventing a student from taking on something with an over-ambitious scope. It may also provide students with the opportunity for simultaneously qualifying for an ILAM award, if the dissertation is sufficiently work-based. As with group case studies, there are typically minimal costs to the organisation of co-operating with a dissertation student. The principal product for the student and HEI, however, is a dissertation rather than written and verbal reports to the organisation (although these may be arranged) - the dissertation will be written for an academic rather than a managerial purpose and this needs to be made clear from the outset to the organisation. As with case studies, however, there is a strong probability that the organisation will get something useful from such a project.

Assessment subjects

In order to give assessed work an applied orientation on leisure, sport and recreation degrees, assignments frequently require students to use specific organisations as a focus for their work. A common assignment instruction begins: 'For a sport and recreation organisation of your choice,!'. This is another very good opportunity for sport and recreation organisations to get specific tasks done, at very little cost and in a short space of time. Students, however, need assistance in approaching organisations - first impressions count - endorsement and promotion by the HEI can make a big difference to the initial reaction of the organisation being approached.

Work opportunities

The increasing number of sport and recreation students provide a ready labour force from which the industry can draw for part-time, temporary/seasonal, and voluntary work. Furthermore, students are increasingly interested in such work. The message should be getting through to students that practical experience is important. Another obvious incentive is that student grants have declined markedly in recent years, so they are more likely than ever to be looking for such work opportunities. This means that sport and recreation organisations are in a position to be more ambitious about recruiting part-time, temporary or voluntary labour - there is the opportunity for them to tap a skilled and committed reserve of labour in HEIs. You can play an important role in encouraging this

employment process by responding positively to approaches from the industry and actively promoting an 'agency' function to find your students relevant work experience.

Minor consultancy tasks

In addition to the variety of ways in which students can be attracted to work for the sport and recreation industry, many staff in HEIs are also increasingly committed to working with external organisations. There is little to distinguish applied research from consultancy and HEI lecturers are in a strong position to lead projects undertaken for local sport and recreation organisations, with or without student support. Such consultancy services are normally at very competitive rates, particularly if there is a clear 'academic spin-off' from the work in terms of materials for teaching or research output. Such consultancy work is unlikely to compete with commercial consultancies - it is much more likely to fall between their work and work the organisation would struggle to do with limited resources (typically time).

Make the first move!

Achieving a working relationship with the sport and recreation industry is too important to be left in students' hands. You have a vital role to play in promoting such initiatives as those above, and in doing so you are helping to promote a simple change in attitude in the industry - from seeing student enquiries as a *nuisance*, to viewing them as an *opportunity* for their organisation; from perceiving degree courses as academic and irrelevant, to viewing them as cost effective resources looking for work to do! It is important, however, not to sit back and wait for the industry to approach you. There are often perceptual problems, summarised in the negative attitudes expressed above, which require your proactive promotion to attack. Some HEIs have central agencies to receive enquiries about collaborative work from industry, which present a higher profile promotion to local industry, but less subject specific.

Encouraging correct, professional procedures by your students in approaching potential industry partners for their work, including letters of endorsement and promotion of the positive results to be gained by the organisation, will help to change negative industry attitudes to HEIs and their students. You have a vital role to play in maximising the continuous potential such a partnership can achieve.

Course design

The advantages of greater participation by industry in the delivery of HE programmes extend to a closer partnership in the design of such programmes. SPRITO/Standing Conference research findings make it clear that graduates entering the industry face ever greater competition for jobs, not only from other sport and recreation graduates but also from graduates from other disciplines who see the industry as a promising one. To give sport and recreation graduates the industry-specific competitive advantage that they should have requires HEIs to optimise the participation of industry in not only the

delivery of sport and recreation programmes, but also their design. Working with industry by means of the methods above will help to create the right environment for a partnership in designing programmes. The more formal participation by industry might take the form of representation by local sport and recreation employers in advisory committees for the programmes. Better still, if the working relationship with industry has matured to the extent that continuous partnerships with industrial organisations are evident, then industry representatives may become part of the internal course review process.

Working with graduates in the workplace

Another aspect of working with the industry which has potential is establishing a continuing relationship with graduates after they have got jobs in the industry. Such graduates are an important link with the industry because they will know better than anyone just how the work for their degree matches the requirements of the industry. This knowledge can be used to the HEI's advantage by developing systematic links with graduates employed in the industry. Such links are not only to the HEI's advantage - newly employed graduates may need assistance in their job tasks and also in planning their own further development on the job. HEIs are in an excellent position not only to advise their graduates, but also to help in the provision of continuing professional development opportunities, possibly in collaboration with professional institutes such as ILAM or ISRM.

WORK PLACEMENTS

Benefits

Including a work placement within a sport and recreation programme can have benefits for students, higher education institutions (HEIs) and employers.

A report by the CNAA (1984) cited by Brennan and Little (1996) suggested that placements had academic value as they enabled the practical application of knowledge and sharpened students' analytical and critical abilities. Placements also enable development of personal skills, maturity, professional attitude and self awareness. Brennan and Little (1996) identified the development of more specific personal transferable skills, such as interpersonal skills, communications, goal setting, self management and team work skills. Harvey et al (1997) suggest that placements help students to decide what they want (or do not want) to do after graduation and the placement may also enable the student to establish a future job with the placement provider.

The HEI also benefits from placements as they enable the development of a more meaningful relationship with sport and recreation organisations and a greater understanding of each others' cultures (Harvey et al). Knapper and Cropley (1985) also suggest that placements enable HEIs to make their curriculum more relevant to the demands of the work place.

There is benefit to the employer in that placements provide intelligent, objective and relatively cheap labour for employers, and students often perform work that may not otherwise be carried out. The students may also possess skills that members of the work organisation do not have such as marketing (Jones et al 1997). Placements enable organisations to screen students as potential recruits and reduce the risk of ineffective recruitment, particularly in the case of small and medium enterprises which may not have specialist recruitment personnel. Jones et al also found that the majority of placement providers had very positive perceptions of the students that they had taken on and of the skills they possessed which obviously helps to market HE to employers.

Designing Work Placements

Purpose and Objectives

When designing a work placement programme it is important to identify clearly its purpose and objectives. The CNAA (1991) review of sport and recreation courses identified placements as having three broad purposes.

- **Experiential and developmental:** students are provided with experience of work organisations and the placement contributes to the development of their personal maturity and understanding of work based interpersonal relationships. The placement also aids career choice.

- Integration of theory and practice: this enables students to understand the relationships between the theory provided by the course and its application in practice.
- Preparatory: the work placement acts as a preparation for the final level programme where students are expected to draw on work based experiences.

The purpose and objectives will clearly influence the nature of the placement, however these need to be set against the practicalities of providing the placement. Table 1 illustrates the different types of placement in relation to objectives of the placement.

Table 1: Spectrum of Work Placements

Organisational Form	Where?	How long?	Objectives
Day Release	Students undertake one day a week within organisation	One semester	Experiential and developmental.
Short Project	Specific assignment in workplace Work shadowing	1 - 5 months	Immersion into real work, may be responsibility under sheltered conditions
Sandwich Placement	A job or quasi job in a potential employment situation	6 - 12 months	Introduction to professional responsibility

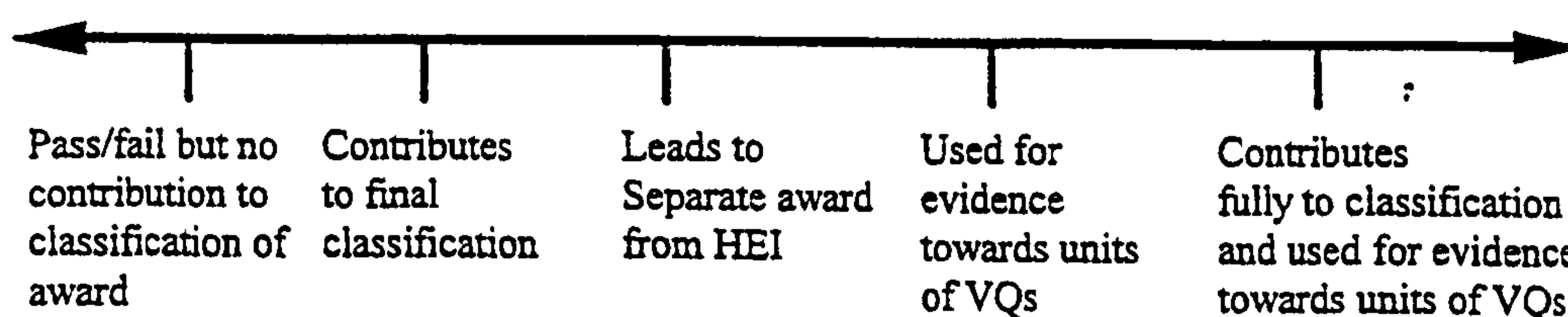
Adapted from Brennan and Little (1996)

In terms of the appropriate length of a placement Harvey et al (1997) suggest that longer placements are seen as preferable to shorter placements as employers "are looking for a return on their investment and staff time". Also longer placements are of more value for students who need to gain understanding of the organisation and who are also attempting to develop their skills.

Contribution to the Degree

It is important to consider how the work placement is to be recognised in terms of academic credit and the extent to which it will contribute to the final degree classification. The following model adapted from Brennan and Little (1996) illustrates the level of contribution the work placement can make to degree courses.

Figure 1: Status of assessment of work placement within overall HE curriculum.



Adapted from Brennan and Little (1996)

Assessment

There are a range of assessment instruments that can be used to assess placements. A placement log or diary is usually a requirement in which the students outline the key tasks and responsibilities they have undertaken. Often this is complemented by a report in which students evaluate their experience and reflect on the skills they have developed and their future development needs. Another method is where the student undertakes a specific project whilst within the placement and this is assessed by both the provider and HEI. Some institutions are incorporating National Vocational Qualification competencies into their assessment. The range of assessment methods is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Methods of assessing work based learning

Method	Useful for	Disadvantages	Comment
Direct observation of the student at work	Particularly useful for assessing competence for VQs, can provide evidence of teamwork etc.	Expensive, disruptive to workplace	Important to have a checklist of what to observe
Assessment of student's log book or work diary	Encourages self reflection as learner	Some doubt about validity	Needs to be established with interview to establish validity
Interview/interrogation at work.	Obtaining evidence for knowledge and understanding needed for work place tasks	Oral assessment can be subjective and less reliable	Sometimes workplace might need to be simulated
Surrogate assessment i.e. the assessor obtains views of others (managers, peers etc.)	Coverage of all work place tasks and performance	May be doubts about reliability	Cheaper than trying to observe all tasks
Student prepares a final report and then is assessed	Encouraging reflection and communication skills	Needs to be combined with other methods	Report should contain reflection on what has been learnt
Written or oral tests of the intended learning outcomes from the work based learning	Testing background knowledge and understanding	Lacks validity of direct observation	Some institutions will wish to include this method, if assessment leads to credit used for an academic reward.

Source: Little and Nixon (1995)

Brennan and Silver (1990) identify work based contracts as an effective method of establishing and assessing work placements. The needs of the individual and employer are diagnosed and the objectives of the placement are then identified as learning outcomes. There is an identification of the resources which are to be provided by the HEI and the employer, and a timetable of work is agreed. The HEI, student and placement provider agree on the evidence of achievement of the learning outcomes and the methods of assessment and criteria to be used. Once the learning contract is agreed it may be re-negotiated as work progresses.

Placement Support

The CNAA (1991) review of sport and recreation courses found some evidence of problems arising because employers and students were unclear about the purpose of the placement. The QSC (1990) supported this finding when they stated that students undertake placements without a clear understanding of the objectives and methods of assessment. The CNAA (1991) report suggested that employers should be given systematic guidelines about the placement. Students will also need preparation for self reflection and negotiating and managing their own learning. There will need to be support for students within the placement both to aid learning and to offer emotional support. Brennan and Little (1996) suggest a range of mechanisms for supporting learning.

- A checklist of competencies which can act as a prompt for students to learn and reflect on what they have achieved, how they achieved it and its impact on other aspects of learning.
- A critical incident diary where students initially describe an incident and then draw out the skills and knowledge that they have consolidated/developed.
- There should be an academic tutor who is a key point of reference within the HE institution but who can also act as a facilitator.
- A mentor within the workplace is central to the effectiveness of the placement. Brennan and Little (1996) identify the key functions of a mentor as:
 - educative - they enable the student to recognise their strengths and weaknesses, develop new and existing abilities and gain knowledge of work practices.
 - supportive - enables the student to explore how they feel about the work and their learning experiences, be valued as a person, let off steam, receive sympathy and praise.
 - managerial - ensures that the student recognises the boundaries of the working role, is able to operate within the team and organisation objectives and performs to the required standards.

Practical Considerations

A key practical consideration is the method of approaching the potential placement provider. This can range between two extremes of students being left to organise the placement themselves through to the HEI organising the placement for the students. It would appear that the most effective method is a partnership between the student and a placement tutor. The student identifies the placement organisation and supplies information about it and the initial contact may come from the tutor in the form of an information pack, the student's C.V. and covering letter and a further covering letter from the tutor. This enables the HEI to monitor who the students are approaching so that the organisations are not overburdened by student requests. However, it is also important to enable the students to develop their job application skills through drawing up CVs and covering letters.

In terms of the amount of notice placement providers prefer to have in order to organise placements Jones et al (1997) found that they prefer between one week and one month.

However, with increasing competition to get placements it is suggested that applications are made to organisations much earlier than this.

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TRANSCRIPTS AND THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO EMPLOYERS ABOUT THE COURSE AND STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

Transcripts are an under-utilised means by which accurate, authenticated information can be passed to prospective employers about the structure of the degree and the achievements of students. Most transcripts include details of the modules/courses studied and the assessment grades awarded. Most are produced centrally by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

However, there are many problems and limitations with transcripts which could be overcome with a little effort but a great deal of return to HEIs and their students. If these problems and limitations are overcome, transcripts and associated information could be a standard means by which HEIs and their students inform prospective employers about their achievements on degree courses.

The clarity of transcripts is generally poor, especially for non-academic audiences. Many transcripts have complex explanations of codes used to define modules, levels, and assessment marks/grades/classifications. To someone experienced in HE procedures they are fairly straightforward. However, for employers they are not easy to interpret. They need to be clarified in a way that doesn't lose important detail, to make them less a by-product of central administration records and more a product designed to inform external audiences, principally prospective employers.

Module titles and levels are not enough - they are often phrased very generally. Short descriptions of the module content can easily be appended in the form of appropriate extracts from the course handbook. Better still, a brief appreciation of the personal skills development associated with each module or group of modules would help to erode the perception of many employers that such personal skills have not been developed. This mis-impression is re-enforced by the emphasis of HEIs in recording students' achievements only in terms of knowledge areas covered, e.g. module titles. Other information of use to prospective employers is whether group work or work with industry was part of any module.

Transcripts are normally confined to formally assessed components of the course. They need to be complemented by an audit of other achievements. Additional qualifications may include, for example, first aid, pool bronze, life-saving, professional qualifications. Work experience may include voluntary or paid work, with a variety of responsibilities of relevance to a career in sport and recreation.

The information to complement a transcript must be collated by individual students. However, the effectiveness of this process can be enhanced considerably by HEI departments taking a lead in stimulating students to keep such records, and providing a structure and opportunities for updating. Delegation of responsibility for transcripts to individual departments may enable substantially more information to be included with the formal specification of marks.

Rather than attempt to reform and extend centrally produced transcripts, the most feasible improvement would be for departments to produce transcripts and associated records for students as a matter of course rather than responding to an occasional request. Departments could then encourage students to use the transcripts in their job applications, to inform prospective employers with an authenticated, standard, but above all *helpful* document. Such a systematic record would also help the students to sell their achievements and it would help academic staff when they write references.

The 'bottom line' in this guidance note is to think of the employer trying to make sense of your course. They need all the help they can get and you have a vital role in providing this help.

[This guidance note was prepared after investigation of transcripts produced by 17 UK HEIs.]

NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS AND S/NVQs IN SPORT, RECREATION AND ALLIED OCCUPATIONS

Introduction

This guidance note provides an introduction to new developments in vocational education and training that are being driven forward by employment interests. Employers are increasingly looking to recruit individuals who have practical skills and it is very important that HE graduates obtain these skills. Graduates are important to the industry as they bring with them a dimension of extensive knowledge and understanding which is valuable, but more so when it is supported by practical application.

Among the diverse aims of higher education institutions (HEIs) is the need to develop students for the world of work. The workplace is changing rapidly and with it both the development needs of students and the requirements of employers. HEIs have generally maintained good relationships, and in some cases partnerships, with local/national employers; new developments in vocational education and training offer the opportunity for HEIs to strengthen their links with industry.

National Occupational Standards and S/NVQs

In recent years British industry has embraced an initiative which uses a revolutionary approach to qualifying the workforce through work based assessment. The notion of competence is becoming a very real part of life and employers are increasingly looking to employ individuals who have demonstrated they can do the job.

This new national framework of work based qualifications has been developed by employers from all sectors of British industry, under the guidance of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) and its sister body the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). Individuals, either paid or unpaid, can now gain either a part, or a full, qualification by working over a period of time in the industry.

A considerable investment has been made by employers in the Sport, Recreation and Allied Occupations Industry to develop National Occupational Standards for all sectors of the industry. The standards cover all levels and aspects of employment across the whole spectrum of sport and recreation from facilities operation, supervision and management at one end through to coaching, playwork, and outdoor education at the other. Written in outcome terms which are expressed in plain English, easily understandable with little duplication, they are presented as a national statement of competence against which employers can judge the performance of their staff. They form a useful mechanism for measuring objectively an individual's development and they provide the structure to develop company training strategies. Many employers now use national standards to make sure that their employees have the skills and knowledge to meet the organisation's business needs.

National Occupational Standards are often regarded as the same as National Vocational Qualifications, but this is not the case. NVQs are comprised of particular groupings of National Occupational Standards. The Standards themselves are a very valuable resource for a variety of uses within the workplace, for example: appraisal, developing job descriptions, creating individual training plans, integration in to the daily operation of the

service provider. They are assessed in the workplace and offer a flexible, practical way of learning, with the satisfaction of achieving a nationally recognised industry qualification.

For the first time an employer can put together a description of the right employee for a particular role and can then identify where their current employees do not match up, creating a training plan to utilise valuable and scarce training resources to meet the needs of individual worker, which also addresses the business needs of the organisation.

Where does Higher Education fit in?

National Occupational Standards are fast becoming the basis for human resource development in the workplace but they are written in outcome terms. Anybody who does not match up to them would need to undergo training to develop the necessary skills and understanding. Industry cannot develop all its employees without assistance from other key players. There are around 430,000 individuals in paid employment in sport and recreation with around a further 1.5 million volunteers: a huge market!

There are five levels of NVQ ranging from Level 1 which consists of a varied range of work activities, most of which may be routine or predictable, through to Level 5 which involves complex tasks, and substantial responsibility. The underpinning knowledge and aspects of problem solving and contingency planning become increasingly demanding as you move up through the levels. In addition the new standards capture a range of transferable key skills including communication, application of numbers, information technology and teamwork; as well as problem solving and planning for contingencies.

HEIs can contribute in a range of ways, directly or indirectly, to the delivery of national standards and S/NVQs:

Partnerships

Most HEIs regularly review and refine their relationships with industry. The opportunity now exists to develop bespoke training packages to meet the needs of individual organisations and enable staff to achieve a nationally recognised standard. The employer may be able to access support funds to expand their training and development budget if their employees are working towards S/NVQs.

The outcome specification of the standards often hide the huge potential for the development of training and support materials, as well as courses to support individual achievement in the workplace - innovative approaches are possible as long as they facilitate the achievement of the specified outcomes.

Higher Education Coursework and Materials

The framework of National Occupational Standards can provide a useful starting point for the review of existing course content and materials. By enabling individuals to achieve the national standard, HEI's can ensure that they are meeting the needs of industry, particularly their partners, and their graduates have as good a chance as any of gaining employment on completing their degree course.

New modules may be developed, or courses restructured. If the degree is of vocational intent, then the opportunity may be taken to revisit partnerships with local industry, to

provide students with extensive periods of placement in the industry, gathering their evidence against the National Occupational Standards.

Although most 'vocational' degrees already offer the opportunity to work in industry, National Occupational Standards now make objective assessment of the time spent in industry possible, even allowing access to Scottish/National Vocational qualifications.

Direct Involvement

Become an Approved Centre

NVQs are only awarded by nationally licensed Awarding Bodies; in Sport and Recreation there are five:

City and Guilds; Giltspur Street, London. Tel. 0171 294 2468

Edexcel, Central House, Upper Woburn Place, London WC1 0HH. Tel 0171 413 8000

RSA Examinations Board, Westwood Way, Coventry CV4 8HS. Tel. 01203 470033

CACHE, 8 Chequer Street, St Albans, Herts .AL1 3XZ. Tel. 01727 847636

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Hanover House, 24 Douglas Street, Glasgow G2 7NQ. Tel. 0141 248 7900

Approved Centres are responsible for providing assessment opportunities in the workplace within a quality framework established by the Awarding Body. To become 'approved' the HEI must be able to provide a range of assessment sites which reflect a proper work related environment - they can be on or off campus; they can be through links with local employers. Some HEIs have already followed this route where they wish to enable their own staff, in sports facilities, to gain nationally recognised qualifications. It is possible to generate income from the local TEC - students can then be assessed in the workplace for S/NVQ purposes. Some employers who wish to assess their own staff may not have the resources to become an Approved Centre on their own, but it is possible in partnership with HEIs these work places may then be extended to HEIs' students.

Become linked to an Approved Centre

If the HEI has no interest in becoming an 'Approved Centre' they may establish links to a local or national Approved Centre in their region and be able to provide assessment sites. An example is an HEI working in coaching that is a satellite assessment site for the National Governing Body, which is an Approved Centre for one of the Awarding Bodies.

Alternatively the HEI may concentrate on providing training and education for those candidates who require further development before they achieve the national standard.

Provide Specialist Training and Development

An HEI may develop a specialist niche in training for either a whole S/NVQ or units within a range of S/NVQs. One example from the Playwork area relates to a Diploma in HE which contains specialist training input at a high level and then the candidates are offered the opportunity to be assessed in the workplace. Recruitment is national rather than local.

Still need more Information?

There are many possibilities for HEIs to get involved in National Standards and SNVQs. The examples in this guidance note are drawn from practice in the field, but there are other possibilities. Please let us know if you are aware of other activities which we can publicise as good practice.

If you would like to know more about National Occupational Standards and Scottish/National Vocational qualifications, or any of the above issues, please contact:

SPRITO, 24 Stephenson Way, London, NW1 2HD, tel. 0171 388 7755.

Further generic information may be available from:

Careers Service

Training and Enterprise Councils

Local Enterprise Council (in Scotland).

GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT IN THE SPORT AND RECREATION INDUSTRY: A STUDY OF STUDENT, GRADUATE & EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aims and introduction

This research was undertaken as part of the SPRITO and UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport project "Graduate Recruitment and Development in the Sport and Recreation Industry", supported by the Department for Education and Employment Higher Education Project Fund. :

The objectives of this first phase of the project were:-

- to study the perceptions and expectations of current undergraduate students about the sport and recreation industry and the nature of employment;
- to study the experiences of graduates currently employed in the sport and recreation industry, to establish the extent to which their skills have proved relevant to, and have been utilised in, their employment;
- to identify recruitment policy and practice of employers within the sport and recreation industry with regard to graduates;
- to study employers' perceptions of graduates' skills and their relevance to the workplace.

The industry

The sport and recreation industry is a significant employment sector within the UK, directly employing an estimated 400,000, plus a huge army of volunteers in excess of 2,000,000. In 1991 the industry generated £8.86 billion in the economy and is a vibrant and steadily expanding sector.

Employers in the industry have a demand for practical, operational skills in the majority of their staff. In addition, a large number of those working in the industry are involved in the development and education field.

Industry related higher education

Sport and recreation is one of the fastest expanding and most popular disciplines in Higher Education (H.E.) currently. In the last 10 years the undergraduate field has grown rapidly from a few sports science and sports studies degrees to the current position of 150 degrees operating in 68 H.E. institutions. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) (1996) state that there were 5,232 undergraduate students in sport, leisure and physical education related courses in 1994/95.

Within H.E. there has been a move towards linking education more closely to work as was stressed by the 1987 White Paper 'Enterprise in Higher Education'. This suggested that undergraduates should develop competencies and aptitudes that are relevant to the work place, particularly through personal transferable skills.

Research Methods

The primary data gathering consisted of: a questionnaire survey of 1996 final year sport and recreation undergraduates; a questionnaire survey of sport and recreation graduates of 1993, 1994 and 1995; a postal survey of sport and recreation related employers; and structured interviews with a sample of those employers.

Undergraduate survey

1,586 questionnaires were sent to students from 19 providers of sport and recreation Higher Education courses. Overall 584 questionnaires were returned, a response rate of 37%.

Graduate survey

For the graduate survey 1490 questionnaires were sent to graduates from ten H.E. institutions providing courses in sport and recreation. Overall 251 questionnaires were returned, a response rate of approximately 17 %.

Industry survey

The industry questionnaire involved a postal survey of 1,000 employers within sport, recreation and related fields asking them to list the numbers and job roles of graduates within their employment. 517 employers responded to this survey, of which 270 employed graduates. Some of the research was within local authorities in England and was undertaken in consultation with the Local Government Management Board.

A structured interview was performed with a 10% sample of the employers who had returned questionnaires. The interview examined employers' perceptions of graduates in the workplace and their current recruitment, induction and development practices.

Results

Undergraduate survey

Whilst studying for their degree 44% of students also worked part time, 75% of these students were employed in service industries and 41% were within sport related areas. 48% of the sample had undertaken work placements as part of their course.

The students identified a wide range of skills, the main skills gained were communication, computing, presentation, organisation, writing skills, time management, social interaction and research. Those students who had undertaken work experience as part of their H.E course were aware of a greater number of vocationally relevant skills than those without work experience.

79% of students were aiming for employment in sport and recreation. The main types of jobs they were considering were teaching (35%), sports development (29%), leisure management (27%), coaching (20%), fitness instructing (16%) and marketing (8%). The students were allowed to make four choices therefore the figures do not add up to 100%. The main types of employer they expected to work for were local authorities and educational organisations, the commercial sector was also fairly well represented.

Students who wished to access a job in sport had higher expectations of the level at which they would enter compared to those who wanted to enter other areas of employment: 17% expected to enter at shop floor level, 22% at junior manager level and 33% expected to gain posts as trainee managers.

The skills the students identified that employers in the sport and recreation industry require were social skills such as communication, social interaction and leadership, reflecting the fact that the sports industry is part of the service sector where 'people' skills are considered important. In relation to the knowledge required, more of those who had undertaken work experience suggested that knowledge of the industry was important compared to those who have not gained work experience. These work experience students recognised the need for specific knowledge of the area of work and that theoretical subject knowledge is less important to employers. As expected those who had chosen sport as an area of employment felt that employers would want specific sporting knowledge such as individual sports and physiology.

In terms of the appropriateness of the knowledge gained from the degree course approximately 45% of those students who aspired to sports related jobs felt that the courses provided all or most of the knowledge that they would need in employment. However over half stated that they had only gained some of the knowledge required. In terms of appropriateness of skills the findings were fairly similar to those covering knowledge. The main area that the students identified as needing further development was work related experience and knowledge, communication and social interaction.

The most popular method identified for developing these skills was on the job training, with professional courses also popular. There was a fairly high number of students who wanted to undertake Masters courses. Students identified that the main career

information that they needed was about what skills, knowledge and qualifications they required to enter the industry.

Graduate survey

Communication, coaching and leadership skills were mentioned more by those who had undertaken work experience than those who had not. Computing, research, social interaction, time management, teamwork and analytical skills were mentioned more by those without work-experience in their course. The skills gained by graduates contain transferable, vocationally related skills; however the non-work experience graduates specified what may be termed more 'academic' skills.

During their degree courses many graduates gained other qualifications: 50% gained governing body awards at leader's level, many undertook a range of leader's awards, 22% accrued qualifications in lifesaving and 13% in first aid. In addition to academic study 40% had undertaken H.E. organised work experience and 68% had paid work before or during their degree, half of these jobs were in the service sector.

Overall 82% of the graduates were in employment, 19% were P.E. teachers and 36% obtained other sport related jobs. Most common were fitness instructors (9%), sport and recreation managers (8%) and sports development officers (7%).

The majority of graduates were employed by local authorities, however 29% had jobs within the commercial sector. Of sport and recreation jobs, 87% were full-time and 64% were permanent. In terms of actual employment entered and the level the graduates had expected to enter, many more are employed on the shop floor than they expected. They also did not appear to move in large numbers into management the longer they were employed.

Of those who did not gain employment in the sector 19% were not interested in working in sport and recreation and 12% did not wish to enter it because of poor pay. 37% had tried to enter the industry but could not get jobs.

Comparisons between sport and non-sport jobs concerning the skills the graduates actually used illustrated that transferable skills such as communication, organisation, social interaction and teamwork are relevant to any area of employment. In terms of knowledge used there are obviously major differences as this tends to be more specific to the sector, apart from general business and management knowledge.

In relation to the appropriateness of skills and knowledge, as expected the sports employed graduates felt that their course gave them more appropriate skills and knowledge than graduates not employed in the sports sector.

Of the graduates employed in sports jobs 84% had undertaken further courses. The main course was the PGCE which 14% had done, however these graduates were not in teaching jobs. The other main courses were first aid (10%) and sports therapy (7%). 13% had done in-service, vocationally specific training, but very few had undertaken professional courses such as ILAM and ISRM.

The graduates felt that they needed to develop industry specific and finance knowledge as well as management skills. 42% identified the need to undertake professional courses, 20% suggested Masters but the majority, 70%, specified on the job training

Approximately 50% of graduates had undertaken induction programmes in their first job and 38% of those employed in sport had their own staff development programme.

Many graduates are currently looking for other jobs, few intend to stay in their present post for 3 years or longer. The main reasons for wishing to leave within 3 years were that 23% of sport employed graduates were looking for promotion, 13% felt that they were not challenged and 7% because of poor pay.

Comparisons between undergraduates and graduates

The comparisons illustrate similarities in the perceptions of students and graduates in the sport and recreation sector, particularly in relation to skills they have gained and the skills that they need to develop. A key issue was that 79% of students stated that they aimed to enter sport and recreation related employment and 55% of graduates actually obtained work in this sector, including 19% P.E. teaching. Another important difference was the high entry expectations of the students compared to the reality of the jobs that the graduates were employed in.

Employer survey

Sport and leisure centre operators / local authority leisure provision had the widest diversity of job roles and opportunities for graduate recruitment. More sport and recreation related graduates are found in this employment sector than elsewhere. However, there was also a large incidence of recruitment of graduates with unrelated degrees. Many are employed as recreation assistants and leisure attendants, not on the basis of their degree but because this is an attainable entry point to the industry with appropriate qualifications such as the pool lifeguard.

Outdoor education, training and recreation often employ qualified teachers, thereby boosting the number of graduates employed in this sector. The aims of the organisation influence their recruitment, for instance those working with young people at risk may require a social/youth work background, whilst those in the corporate sector may require a management background. The most popular degree possessed in this sector was 'Outdoor Education'. Some employees also held degrees in a discipline of leisure management, whilst youth and community work degrees were seen as desirable by some employers. Many employees held teaching degrees in other specialisms, and others who would be employed on the basis of governing body qualifications and experience, held unrelated degrees.

Playwork provision is largely in the public and not-for-profit sectors. Many playwork providers operate only in school holidays and employ their largest number during the summer holidays, frequently employing current students.

There is no degree specific to the playwork sector, so for employers wishing to recruit a graduate with a relevant degree it is definitely a case of a best fit choice. Many of our sample in full time playwork employment (playscheme managers, play development workers) held degrees in youth and community, teaching and social science. Due to the seasonal nature of much playwork employment, many playworkers were students gaining experience during vacations before entering full-time employment, rather than graduates. In many cases the degree courses of seasonal playwork employees were skill/performance related (e.g. art and drama) rather than industry related.

The SPRITO Industry census reveals that 72% of *health and fitness* clubs employ less than 10 people, which greatly restricts employment and progression opportunities within the sector. There is an increasing number of health club management companies operating chains of fitness centres within hotels and country clubs, yet still only 4% of operators employ more than 50 people. Fitness suites in local authority leisure centres are increasingly recruiting fitness specific staff, and branding of fitness facilities is increasing amongst private sector contractors. Local authority contractors, and larger health club chains are more likely to employ graduates than the majority of smaller, privately owned fitness centres.

The smallest incidence of graduate employment is in the health and fitness sector due to the large number of small operators who do not have scope for regular recruitment and progression. Where graduates are employed, our sample shows that the degree most frequently held is sports science, followed by physical education and recreation management.

Other qualifications/experience specified

Many employers in every sector, but in particular health and fitness and outdoor operators, specified various governing body and other professional awards as pre-requisites to employment. Furthermore a key factor in all sectors was the possession of prior experience.

Perceptions of graduates within the workplace

The view of most employers was that the technical ability of graduates in general was poor. This was due to the fact that university courses did not cover the technical aspects of recreation management. Employers' views varied as regards personal abilities such as teamworking and communications skills of graduate employees. Most respondents stated that the major factor in this was the personality of the individual employee. Positive and negative comments were made with regard to interpersonal skills, some suggested that the communication skills of graduates were well developed through their education. This was a significant factor in recruiting graduate employees, as report writing skills became important at a middle management level, and often those who had been promoted from an operational level had not received training in this area. Others believed that some

graduates had problems communicating appropriately within the workplace, examples being: difficulty in preparing for and expressing themselves at interview and completing official documentation.

Most employers were of the opinion that graduates were keen to train and learn both to compensate for their lack of experience and also because they were used to doing this, however a minority of employers expressed a negative view that graduates were unwilling to learn as they felt they had completed their learning at university.

It was not felt that the content of degree courses provided extra skills to an employer, but that the process of studying for a degree could develop useful skills, in particular with the increasing presence of information technology within the workplace.

In relation to loyalty to employer some employers, particularly within sport/leisure centres and health and fitness clubs, expected graduate employees in operational roles to try to move on within two years. Others who did provide comprehensive training for recent recruits hoped that graduate employees would stay in order to make this investment worthwhile. It was felt that the provision of such training often enhanced the loyalty of the employee. The opportunity for progression within the organisation was however a cause for concern.

Recruitment, induction and development procedures

39 of the 53 employers interviewed used a person specification as part of their recruitment procedure. Many of the person specifications concentrated on personal qualities rather than qualifications through statements such as the applicant must be keen and enthusiastic.

Many employers experienced a large number of poor applications along with those of good quality. This raised concerns about the effectiveness of the original advertisement in ensuring appropriate applicants. Problems experienced were poorly presented applications and applicants not fulfilling the conditions required. Some employers felt that whilst many had good paper qualifications they were unable to demonstrate sufficient linked experience at interview. This also related to those who had recently gained national governing body qualifications without substantial experience. This inexperience often led to an inability to perform well at interview.

All employers interviewed claimed to operate some form of induction for new employees. These varied greatly in formality and in time taken. A common factor in all sectors was time and resource limitation and the need to have staff on the job as soon as possible. The smaller the operation the more urgent was this situation.

Staff development

Twenty one respondents had either a company development plan or appraisal system of which six were linked to obtaining recognition as an Investor in People. The main restrictions on offering the ideal scenario for training provision were time to release staff

to train and money to pay for training. There was however substantial variation regarding staff between sectors, due to the differing nature of employment within each sector.

Conclusions

Several issues emerged from the research. A fundamental concern might be that only 55% of graduates gained employment in the sport and recreation industry, including 19% who were PE teachers.

A key factor appears to be a lack of awareness among some sport and recreation students of the need for interpersonal skills for employment within the sport and recreation industry. They do not appear to be able to communicate the qualities that they have to prospective employers, thus employers perceive that graduates do not possess such skills.

The students also seem to have high expectations of the level of entry. Those who employ graduates indicate that it is often for the skills they have that can be used in future employment, however it seems that they need to progress up the organisation in order to use those skills.

Graduates obtained extra qualifications that are relevant but they did not appear to gain relevant experience to support them whilst in H.E.. Therefore it would appear that large numbers of students possess relevant awards, but what they need is experience.

Also technical qualifications are important, for example first aid certificates, however these are often difficult for students to obtain if they are not employed in the industry. Many of those who have been successful in entering jobs in the sport and recreation industry have gained work experience and specific qualifications like lifesaving and first aid. An issue raised is whether or not it is appropriate for H.E. courses to be offering such specific skills or can more effective training be provided by the employer in terms of specific technical skills.

Finally there seems to be no single, fundamental reason for the low percentage of graduates who obtain employment in this sector. There are several possible factors involved: that there are too many graduates for the jobs available; the students and courses do not market themselves effectively to employers; employers do not target recruitment specifically, students have some unrealistic expectations and some misunderstandings of employers requirements; and H.E. courses need to consider including some basic technical skills in their courses if their main aim is to prepare students for employment in the sport and recreation industry.

APPENDIX 9 MONITORING PROCESS FOR EMPLOYERS

Objectives:

- to raise awareness of the benefits of employing graduates among employers;
- to inform about the content of sport and recreation related degrees and the skills gained by graduates;
- to stimulate a reaction to the project pilot materials which will inform the development of permanent guidance materials and dissemination mechanisms.

Sample

200 employers within the sport and recreation industry.

Procedure

Promotional leaflets with a direct response cut-off slip mailed to 200 employers.

The cut-off slip will be used to monitor the reaction to the leaflet.

Those returning the leaflet will be mailed the full guidance pack with a review questionnaire enclosed.

Follow up

Should the response to the mailing fall below 10% (20 respondents) telephone calls will be made to non-respondents to find out why they have not responded. These people will be asked directly if they wish to receive the guidance pack.

Evaluation

The questionnaire responses to both the leaflet and the full guidance pack will be used in the evaluation. Telephone interviews will be used to obtain more in-depth views.

LEAFLET RESPONSE FORM

I found this leaflet (Please tick as appropriate):

- very informative
- quite informative
- uninformative
- other (please comment)

- very interesting
- quite interesting
- uninteresting
- other (please comment)

- very well presented and easy to read and understand
- quite well presented and quite easy to understand
- badly presented and difficult to read and understand
- other (please comment)

I would suggest the following improvements to:

content: _____

style/tone _____

presentation: _____

MAKING THE MOST OF GRADUATES: A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____ Organisation _____

For the sections of the Guidance Pack that you have read, please mark on the scale of 1 - 5 shown below how useful and how clear you find each section:

The benefits of employing graduates	Very useful	1	2	3	4	5	Useless
	Very clear	1	2	3	4	5	Unclear
How to recruit a graduate	Very useful	1	2	3	4	5	Useless
	Very clear	1	2	3	4	5	Unclear
Categories of sport related courses & the skills & attributes developed	Very useful	1	2	3	4	5	Useless
	Very clear	1	2	3	4	5	Unclear
Contact addresses for courses	Very useful	1	2	3	4	5	Useless
	Very clear	1	2	3	4	5	Unclear
Job descriptions & person specifications	Very useful	1	2	3	4	5	Useless
	Very clear	1	2	3	4	5	Unclear
Working with Higher Education Institutions	Very useful	1	2	3	4	5	Useless
	Very clear	1	2	3	4	5	Unclear
Making placements work	Very useful	1	2	3	4	5	Useless
	Very clear	1	2	3	4	5	Unclear
Off to a good start	Very useful	1	2	3	4	5	Useless
	Very clear	1	2	3	4	5	Unclear

Was any information missing from the Pack that would have been useful? _____

Do you feel the Guidance Pack could be improved in any other way? _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

Please return this form to SPRITO by fax: 0171 388 9733
 or by post: SPRITO, 24 Stephenson Way, London, NW1 2HD
 Any queries? For further information telephone 0171 388 7755

APPENDIX 10 STUDENT MONITORING PROCESS AND INSTRUMENTS

SPORT, RECREATION & ALLIED OCCUPATIONS - HOW TO GET
IN

STUDENT EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to evaluate your response to, and opinion of, the leaflet and guidance notes provided for your institution by SPRITO and the UK HE Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport. This is part of a pilot study that aims to provide careers materials for students on sports related courses to improve the effectiveness of their employment into the sport and recreation industry. By completing this questionnaire you are helping to improve the process.

Please complete the questions as honestly and fully as possible, all information that is given will be treated confidentially.

1. HE Institution _____

2. Course Title _____

3. Year of Study _____

4. Did you receive a promotional leaflet? Yes No

5. Did you read the promotional leaflet ? Yes (go to 5a) No (go to 5b)

5a. If YES, how helpful was the promotional leaflet?

Very Helpful					Unhelpful
1	2	3	4	5	

(go to Q6)

5b. If NO, why did you not read the leaflet? _____

6. Did you access the student career guidance notes?

Yes (If yes go to Q7 over the page.) No

If NO, please state below why you did not access the student guidance notes.

(Please finish here and return the questionnaire to your tutor, thank you for your co-operation)

QUESTIONNAIRE CONTINUES OVERLEAF FOR THOSE WHO ACCESSED THE STUDENT GUIDANCE NOTES.

7. On the scale of 1 - 5, shown below, indicate how useful you feel the guidance notes are.

(Please ring the appropriate number)

V. Useful					Useless
1	2	3	4	5	

8. Were any of the notes particularly useful? YES NO
(If no please go straight to Q9)

If YES, please state below which notes were useful and why.

9. Were any of the notes particularly useless? YES NO
(If no please go straight to Q10)

If YES, please state below which notes were useless and why.

10. Do you intend to take any action in response to these guidance notes?

YES *(Please give details below of the action you intend to take)*

NO *(Please state below why not)*

11. **Is there any other information on careers in sport that you would like?**
(Please state below)

Please return this questionnaire to your tutor and thank you for your co-operation.

Instructions for Administering the Student Career Guidance Leaflets and Files.

In your pack you should have received 100 promotional leaflets and 4 student career guidance files.

1. Place the student career guidance files in an accessible place for all students on the sports related undergraduate degrees. This may be within a department resource room, on short loan in the library or within a careers library. It is important that they are placed where it is possible to monitor the number of students that use them. A copy of the notes is also included on disc so they can be placed on your student network, if this is possible. If you do not have a student network at your institution the disc could be lent out to students who want to print out their own copy. The disc does not have to be used if this will cause difficulties in administration.
2. Distribute the Career Guidance Leaflets to all sports studies students. Also, please ask staff to inform students, during lectures and tutorials, how to access the guidance files.
3. During week beginning Monday 24th November please administer the evaluation questionnaires. The questionnaires must be given to all sports undergraduate students and time must be made available during lectures to complete them. Please ensure that questionnaires are returned to the tutor within the lecture. Do not hand out or allow students to return the questionnaires outside of the classroom situation as this could result in a low response rate.
4. During weeks beginning 1st/8th December Sue Minten or Peter Taylor will visit your institution to undertake focus group discussions to obtain qualitative feedback on the guidance notes. One focus group of ten students is required for each year. The group must only include those who intend gaining sport related employment on the completion of their studies (this does not include those who wish to become PE teachers) and should be fairly representative of the range of students on the course, e.g. gender and age balance. The discussion groups should last for approximately 45 minutes. I would be grateful if the groups could be assembled by yourself prior to the focus group visits it should contain those who have accessed the guidance notes.

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Appendix 2
Student Survey

**UK HIGHER EDUCATION STANDING
CONFERENCE ON LEISURE, RECREATION
AND SPORT**

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS SURVEY.

This survey is part of a research project undertaken on behalf of the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport, of which your institution is a member. The project was commissioned by the Department for Education and Employment with the aim of enhancing co-operation between employers and Higher Education to enable more effective employment of graduates. By completing this questionnaire you will help us to analyse the expectations of students in relation to employment after completing a degree course. It will also give employers a greater understanding of your needs and expectations. The findings will also be fed back to those responsible for degree course development.

Completed questionnaires will be treated with anonymity so please answer questions as honestly and fully as possible.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Project Officer: Sue Minten
SPED
Liverpool Hope University College.
Hope Park
Woolton
Liverpool
L16 8ND

E Mail: sminten@lihe.ac.uk.

11. Please list the full titles of all the subjects/modules that you have undertaken during the final two years of your current degree course. (If you are part time please include modules for the final two years equivalent)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

12. Did your course include a work experience element/module?

Yes No (go to Q14)

13. Please state the organisation you worked for and the role that you had during your work experience.

Organisation _____

Role. _____

14. Please list the skills you feel that you have developed during your degree programme (i.e. personal, technical and practical skills).

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

FUTURE CAREER

15. Are you considering employment in the area of sport and recreation after you have graduated?

Yes

No (Go to Q17)

16. Please identify the type(s) of job you are considering in sport and recreation.

17. What (other) areas of employment are you considering (i.e. non sport)?

18. What type of employer do you aim to work for?

(Please rank your choices, i.e. 1 = the most appropriate employer, 2 the next appropriate, etc. N.B. You do not have to rank them all, only those that you are considering.)

Armed Forces

Self Employed

Charity

Large Commercial/ Private
Business (>250 employees)

Educational Organisation

Medium Commercial/Private
Business (50-250 employees)

Emergency Services (e.g. police)

Small Commercial/Private
Business (<50 employees)

Local Authority

Other

(please state) _____

19. Did you select a local authority, medium or small commercial/private business in Q18?

Yes

Please state reasons for selection

No

(Please State reasons for not selecting these types of organisations.)

20. At what level do you expect to enter employment?

(please tick the appropriate box)

'Shop floor'/customer face

Junior Manager

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Trainee Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> | Middle manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Supervisory | <input type="checkbox"/> | Senior Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
- (please state) _____

21. Please list the knowledge and skills that you feel employers would require for the type(s) of job that you have identified in Q16 to Q20.

Knowledge

Skills

22. To what extent do you feel that your degree programme has given you the appropriate knowledge to perform the job(s) that you have identified in Q16 - 20? (Please tick the most appropriate box)

- All of the appropriate knowledge
- Most of the appropriate knowledge
- Some of the appropriate knowledge
- None of the appropriate knowledge
- Don't know

23. To what extent do you feel that your degree programme has given you the appropriate skills to perform the job(s) that you have identified in Q16 - 20? (Please tick the most appropriate box)

- All of the appropriate skills
- Most of the appropriate skills
- Some of the appropriate skills
- None of the appropriate skills
- Don't know

24. What knowledge and skills do you still feel that you need to develop to meet employers' requirements for this type of job? (i.e. that have not been sufficiently developed on your degree programme.)

Knowledge	Skills
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

25. How do you think such knowledge and/or skills could be developed?

Professional Courses (e.g. ILAM & ISRM)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Masters Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
On the Job Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (<i>please state</i>)	_____

26. Do you feel sufficiently well informed about what the employers you have identified in Q16 - 20 want from you?

Yes No

27. Do you feel sufficiently well informed about what you would be doing in the employment you have identified?

Yes No

28. Please state what further information you feel you need about the potential employers/employment that you have identified in Q16 -19.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In analysing the results of this questionnaire you will be treated with anonymity. However, we wish to do follow-up research about the employment areas that you actually enter. It would be of great help to this research if you could fill in your name and address below if you do not object to being contacted for this follow-up research. Obviously, this information will remain confidential and will not be passed on to any other organisation or used for any purpose other than this research. However, if you do not wish to be contacted again please return the **completed** questionnaire as specified but leave this page blank.

Thank you for you co-operation.

Name: _____

Address: (please give an address that we will be able to contact you at after you have graduated)

If you require any further information about this project please contact Sue Minten at the address given at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Appendix 3

List of HE institutions that took part in the student survey and response rates

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Institutions who took part in phase 1 student survey and response rates.				
	Sent	Returned	Response rate (%)	How distributed
Bolton Institute of HE	31	19	61	Pigeon holes
Bournemouth University	32	8	25	Pigeon holes
Cardiff Institute of HE	130	50	38	Given to individual tutors for completion after lectures
Cheltenham and Gloucester Institute of HE	100	25	25	Pigeon holes
De Montford University	150	32	21	Pigeon holes
Leeds Metropolitan University	40	26	65	After lecture
Liverpool Hope University College	76	76	100	After lecture
Liverpool John Moores University	80	16	20	Mail
Manchester Metropolitan University	60	12	20	Mail
Roehampton Institute of HE	110	44	40	Pigeon holes
Sheffield Hallam University	60	4	7	Pigeon holes
Staffordshire University	120	27	23	Pigeon hole
Thames Valley University	22	13	59	Pigeon holes
University of Brighton	40	20	50	Pigeon holes
University of Luton	90	76	84	After lecture
University of Northumbria	60	36	60	Given to individual tutors for completion after lectures
University of Ulster	40	27	68	Given to individual tutors for completion after lectures
University of Wolverhampton	120	48	40	Given to individual tutors for completion after lectures
Warrington Collegiate Institute	50	26	52	After lecture
Totals	1411	585	41	

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Appendix 4
Graduate Survey

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**UK HIGHER EDUCATION STANDING
CONFERENCE ON LEISURE, RECREATION
AND SPORT**

GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

Dear Graduate

This survey is part of a research project undertaken on behalf of the UK Higher Education Standing Conference on Leisure, Recreation and Sport, of which your former institution is a member. The project was commissioned by the Department for Education and Employment with the aim of enhancing co-operation between employers and Higher Education to enable employers to match skill requirements against those offered by graduates.

By completing this questionnaire you will help us to analyse the experiences of graduates in relation to employment after completing a degree course. It will also give employers a greater understanding of your needs and expectations. The findings will also be fed back to those responsible for degree course development.

All information that you give will obviously be treated confidentially and with anonymity so please answer questions as honestly and fully as possible.

Please return the questionnaire in the stamped addressed envelope provided before Tuesday 25th June. Thank you for your co-operation.

Project Officer: Sue Minten
SPED
Liverpool Hope University College.
Hope Park
Liverpool
L16 8ND

Tel: 0151 737 3035
E Mail: sminten@livhope.ac.uk.

Please tick the appropriate boxes to answer the following questions.

1. Age: 21-26 27-35 36-49 50+
2. Sex: Female Male

YOUR (FIRST) DEGREE COURSE

3. INSTITUTION _____

4. COURSE NAME _____

5. DEGREE TYPE BA B.Sc. B.Ed. Other _____
 (Please circle) (please state)

6. Part-time Student Full-time Student

7. Year of graduation _____ Degree classification obtained _____

8. Please list the main components of your degree course, i.e. module titles.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

9. Please list the skills that you feel that you developed as part of your undergraduate degree programme (i.e. personal, technical and practical skills).

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

10. Did you obtain any other qualifications whilst undertaking you degree?
 Yes No (go to Q12)

11. Please state the qualification obtained and tick the appropriate box whether each qualification was organised by your institute or yourself.

Qualification	Organised By:	
	Institute	Yourself
i _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Did your course include a work experience element/module.

Yes No (go to Q14)

13. Please state the organisation you worked for and the role that you had during your work experience.

Organisation _____
 Role _____

14. Whilst undertaking your degree were you in either part time, full time, permanent or temporary employment, not including work experience.

Yes No (go straight to Q16)

15. Please list the jobs that you had below.

YOUR EMPLOYMENT

16. Are you currently employed? Yes No (go to Q.18)

17. What are you currently employed as?

Current Job Title	Employer Type (see table below)	Length of Employment	Part time/ Full time	Permanent/ Temporary.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

EXAMPLE

Job title	Employer Type	Length of Employment	Part time/ Full time	Permanent/ Temporary.
<i>Sports development officer</i>	<i>LA</i>	<i>1 year 3 mths</i>	<i>FT</i>	<i>Perm</i>

(Please use the following codes for employer type.)

Armed forces: <i>AR</i>	Local Authority: <i>LA</i>	Medium Commercial/ Private Business (50-250 employees): <i>MCB</i>
Charity: <i>C</i>	Self Employed: <i>SE</i>	Small Commercial/Private Business (<50 employees): <i>SCB</i>
Educational Organisation: <i>EO</i>	Large Commercial/private Business (>250 employees): <i>LCB</i>	
Emergency Services: <i>ES</i>		

18. Have you been employed in any (other) post since graduating?

Yes No (go to Q20)

19. Please write details of any paid part time, full time, permanent and temporary employment since graduating in the table below (*most recent first & using key from Q17 for employer type.*)

Job Title	Employer Type	Length of Employment	P.T/ F.T	Perm./ Temp.	Reason for Leaving
I. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
II. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
III. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
IV. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
V. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

20. If a substantial amount of your work since graduating has not been in sport and physical recreation please state the reasons below.

21. At what level did you expect to enter employment after graduating?
(*please tick the appropriate box*)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 'Shop floor'/customer face
(e.g. recreation assistant) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Junior Manager
(e.g. supervisor) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trainee Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> | Middle manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Specialist Role
(e.g. Sports Development
Officer, coach, instructor) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Senior Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Other
(<i>please state</i>) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

22. Please list the main knowledge and skills that you have had to use within the jobs that you have undertaken since graduating.

Knowledge	Skills
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

23. Do you feel that your **current job** uses **all** the main skills and knowledge that you gained during your (first) degree.

- Yes (*go to Q26*) No

24. What knowledge and skills, that you gained on your degree, do you feel have not been fully utilised.

Knowledge	Skills
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

25. Overall, to what extent do you feel that your degree programme gave you the appropriate knowledge to perform the job(s) that you have undertaken since graduating? *(Please tick the most appropriate box)*

- All of the appropriate knowledge
- Most of the appropriate knowledge
- Some of the appropriate knowledge
- None of the appropriate knowledge
- Don't know

26. Overall, to what extent do you feel that your degree programme gave you the appropriate skills to perform the job(s) that you have undertaken since graduating. *(Please tick the most appropriate box)*

- All of the appropriate skills
- Most of the appropriate skills
- Some of the appropriate skills
- None of the appropriate skills
- Don't know

27. Have you undertaken any further education and/or training since graduating?
(Please tick the appropriate boxes and fill in further details)

Masters degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please State title _____
Post grad. diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please State title _____
Professional Qual. (e.g. ILAM & ISRM)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please State title _____
Short Course(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please State _____ _____ _____
In-service training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please State _____ _____ _____
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please State _____ _____

YOUR EXPECTATIONS

28. What knowledge and skills do you feel that you still need to develop to meet current and future employment needs?

Knowledge	Skills
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

29. How do you think such knowledge and/or skills should be provided?

Professional Courses (e.g. ILAM & ISRM)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Masters Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	S/NVQ	<input type="checkbox"/>
On the Job Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please state)	_____		

30. Did you undergo an induction programme in your first permanent, full-time job.

Yes No *(go straight to Q31)*

Did you feel it was a valuable experience?

Yes No

Please state the reasons for your answer.

31. Within your current job do you have a staff development programme set out for yourself.

Yes No (go straight to Q33)

If yes, what does this development programme involve and how effective do you feel it has been?

32. How long do you envisage staying in your current job? (*Anonymity guaranteed, please answer as honestly as possible*)

Currently looking for another post	<input type="checkbox"/>	Between 3 to 5 years (<i>go to additional information</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Between 6 to 12 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 years plus (<i>go to additional information</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Between 1 to 3 years	<input type="checkbox"/>		

33. Please state why you intend to leave within 3 years.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In analysing the results of this questionnaire you will be treated with anonymity. However, we wish to do follow-up research with regard to the career development of graduates. It would be of great help to this research if you could fill in your name and address below if you do not object to being contacted for this follow up research. Obviously, any information will remain confidential and will not be passed on to any other organisation or used for any purpose other than this research. However if you do not wish to be contacted again please return the completed questionnaire in the stamped addressed envelope provided but leave this section blank.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Name: _____
Address: _____

If you require any further information about this project please contact Sue Minten at the address given at the beginning of the questionnaire.

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Appendix 5

List of HE institutions that took part in the graduate survey and response rates

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Institutions who took part in Phase One graduate survey and response rates.

	Sent	Returned	Response rate (%)
Bournemouth University	75	12	16
Cardiff Institute of HE	265	55	21
Liverpool Hope University College	145	28	19
Liverpool John Moores University	178	28	16
Manchester Metropolitan University	130	40	31
Roehampton Institute of HE	125	20	16
Staffordshire University	251	56	22
University of Northumbria	83	12	14
University of Ulster	115	17	15
Warrington Collegiate Institute	123	26	21
Totals	1490	294	20

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Appendix 6

Aide Memoirs for Focus Groups

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GRADUATE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE SPORT AND RECREATION INDUSTRY

Focus Group with staff

Aide Memoir

1. Introductions: Names, area of responsibility
2. How prepared are the students for the workplace:
 - sport & general
 - course related considerations: skills, knowledge experience
 - personal consideration: expectations, CV, job search, applications, experience/knowledge of the structure of the industry
3. Do lecturers/tutors have any responsibility to the external workplace in both the design and operation of the course.
 - objectives of the degree
 - generic skills, eg. Interpersonal, IT
 - sector specific skills and knowledge
4. How do you actually help students prepare for the workplace - department/careers
5. Reactions to the materials from the project.(Students & staff)
 - is this type of information a priority for tutors
 - relevance
 - content: appropriateness, useful/less, incorrect, anything left out
 - design
 - distribution timing & method

GRADUATE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE SPORT AND RECREATION INDUSTRY

Focus Group with students

1. Why did you undertake the course?

- objectives - influence of career prospects as against other prospects
- career aspirations

2. How prepared do students feel they are for the workplace

- importance of a degree
- course related considerations: skills, knowledge, experience
- personal considerations: expectations, CV, job search, applications, experience, knowledge
- what differentiates them from non-graduates

3. Job Search

- are they looking for jobs? If so, how, if not, why not?
- timing and nature of job search
- what help do they get, either from department or from careers service

4. What help do they require to help them prepare

- guidance materials
- in-course help i.e. in structure, content and delivery of modules
- extra-curricular opportunities

5. Reactions to the promotional leaflets and guidance notes to students

- relevance
- are these a priority
- content: appropriateness, useful/less, incorrect, left out
- design
- timing and method of distribution

Appendix 7

Aide Memoir for Case Study Interviews

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Aide Memoir: Graduate Employability Interview

What their present job entails

Their course

- main areas of study
- appropriateness to the current job
- strengths and weaknesses of the course
- motivation to do the course in the first place
- work experiences before and during college

Their job

- attitude towards the job
- job performance
- future aspirations

The organisation

- organisation's attitude towards graduates
- effectiveness of utilisation of the graduate
- Induction and training

Aide Memoir: Employer /Colleagues/Staff

The Job

What the graduate's job entails.

Requirements of the job

Perceptions of Graduates

Before employing/working with the current graduate

After employing

Reasons for perception of graduates

Experiences of graduates

Views of HE Sports Degrees

The Graduate

Their performance in the job

Induction and training

Individual's own background

Appendix 8

Example of the coding process

- 8.1. Transcript coding frame
- 8.2. Example of transcript for Sports Development Unit
- 8.3. Example of Sports Development Unit Case Study Coding Frame

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Appendix 8.1.

Codes used for all interviews in all cases.

What the respondents do

- Skills 1
- Knowledge 2
- Tasks 3
- Do they need a degree 4
- General Nature of the job 5

The course

- main areas of study 1
- appropriateness to the current job 2
- strengths of the course 3
- weaknesses of the course 4
- motivation to do the course in the first place 5
- work experiences before and during college 6

The job

- attitude towards the job 1
 - what would they like to be doing in their job 1.1
- job performance
 - strengths 2
 - weaknesses 3
- future aspirations 4

The organisation

- Organisation's attitude towards graduates 1
 - Influence of the degree in progressing 1.1
 - Attitude towards specific degrees 1.2
- Effectiveness of utilisation of the graduate 2
 - Management style 2.1
- Induction 3
- Training 4
- Recruitment and selection of staff 5

Attitude to themselves

- Self image 1
- Change during the course 2
- Why they think they got the job 3

What the respondents do

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8.2 Example of transcript for Sports Development Unit

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27th August 2002: Saira Evans

I: Can you just describe to me what your job entails, what you actually do?

S: OK, senior sports development officer, basically overall line manager of the sports development unit within XXXXXX, more of a management position, bit more paper shuffling than on hands work and just overseeing all the development and implementation of the strategy, council strategy, any of the strategies that fall into our hands I'm responsible for reviewing and proofing, grants, a lot to do with sports grants available both in XXXXXX and Sports Council and just basically maintaining existing partnerships and developing new ones.

I: So when you talk about implementing the strategy do you have any input into the strategy itself?

S: Yes

I: What sort of?

S: Well the strategy was initially developed last year, in quite a rough draft format, which we've still got and I need to review that now for the 1st of October. No pressure, you know I'm off for three weeks on holiday but never mind. I do get an input into it. I mean its basically, its pretty much set as standard but its just now looking at, we've had a bit of a shuffle around with the sports development department. Looking at how their work programmes are going to relate into the strategy. So I have to look at everybody else's work programmes and feed them in and make sure that we are working together.

I: Right. You said you managed staff, how many staff do you have to manage?

S: At the moment, cos I've obviously come into post, there's a sports development officer, when the disability sports Cymri officer comes in that will be the second person and then from April onwards I'll have another four which is the Dragonsport coordinator, swimming development officer, and football and rugby so it will be six.

I: And then beneath them you have all the casual coaches?

S: Yes.

I: Do you actual recruit those staff, are you part of the recruitment team?

S: Yes I do. I'm part of the interviewing programme, haven't been as such yet because they came in before I got the post, but with the disability one, yes I will be and if we have any others in the future, yes.

I: I'll come back to that, if I can in terms of your views on recruitment. Can you just quickly run through if you have a typical day, the typical things that you do on a very basic level.

S: Get up about. LAUGHS

I: Once you get here.

S: It is basically a lot more paper work, obviously the staff come to me if they've got, their work programmes I have to, they are coming in now with their work programmes. We also have a **** performance thing which we have to work together on, this kind of thing. Its more delegation than anything, its great.

LAUGHS You'll say oh look mail shots, there you go. But it's more sort of ensuring working with the partnerships and the council and different users just to ensure that any information that comes in is dealt with properly and a lot to with grants, community chest, that type of thing.

I: So it is just really paperwork?

S: Overseeing all the applications that come in before they go through, you know sort of, narrowing it down, sieving through everything before it is passed on really.

I: So very much a desk job.

S: It is now yes.

I: OK. There's a couple of things I want to pick up on. The first one you said was a lot of delegation. Have you had any training or development on how to delegate?

S: No.

I: You've just sort of picked it up for yourself.

S: I'm just very good at it.

I: Right. I was going to say do you think your good at it?

S: I think its one of those things that you learn, you have to be, especially now in this job, I mean I am young to be in this job, and you have to be quite confident and the other development officers are older than you and more experienced, they've been doing it for longer, then you have to make sure that your authorities there and the respects there. You can't go barging into an office and say I want you to do this for me. You know, its about people skills more than anything. While yeah you could get trained on it you could get somebody who came in and needed training because they haven't got the confident approach or you could get somebody who is overconfident and goes in and is a bit too sort of abrupt. You just need to find, I mean I am learning as I go along, but I would rather do it and maybe make a few mistakes a long the way and learn from it than spend all day in a training session.

I: And, can you just talk me through how you got to the position you are now, in terms of after you graduated how did you work to this position?

S: When I was in NWIHE I was working in Plas Coch Leisure Center since it opened and only was a recreation assistant but only because you couldn't, as a duty officer you had to be fulltime and that's as far as you could go. But I was also assistant manager of a shop and worked managing a stable yard so management experience wasn't related in the field but it has come from different areas. So when I left I carried on with the jobs I had, with three part time jobs, which I'm glad I did cos they give you a lot more experience and then this job came up, I finished and graduated in July, and then this job came up in end of November/ December time I think cos I had the interview just before Christmas and they told me the week before Christmas that I got the job. So it was quite quick.

I: Yeah. Again just a couple of things just to remind myself so I don't lose the thread. Were you just doing your rec assistant job until that November time?

S: I was doing, yeah, I was doing that, I was also working, managing a hunt yard, a local hunt yard in Trevor and I was also working as an assistant manager in a shop.

I: So there were three?

S: I was doing about 60 hours a week, I mean Christ, but I have always had an involvement with hockey and that's something which I'm still involved with. The Welsh hockey union, I've coached in so the development, although I haven't worked as a development officer, very often you'll go for a job and they'll say I want three years experience, well you can't always get the three years experience, so the experience that I'd had wasn't strictly sports development but it was from the range of things that I had done. And it worked.

I: You talked about the management skills and how they transferred as well. Taking that on a bit then. Why do you think you got the job?

S: Um. What it, to be perfectly honest with you I didn't think I would I didn't go for the job thinking I would get the job. I went for the job because em, somebody else looked like they were going to get it so we didn't feel that they were the appropriate person so I thought I would give them a run for their money, which worked, but basically I did disability sport for 18 months bit less than 18 months, that has been the most challenging, that is far harder than this job. This job is a lot of work that was only part time, but it was one of the most challenging jobs because of working with the, such diversity of people, facilities and sports it not just sports specific or age specific or. Em so I did have quite a lot of experience from that, and then, I basically, I mean, you have to read up about things don't you, keep in touch with things, its something you learn in university as well, your used to going to the library and sitting down with a book or the internet as it is now and having a research and look through things, you know I did a bloody good presentation.

I: So you did a lot of preparation?

S; I didn't actually I did it the night before.

I: But you knew where to look?

S: Yes. Well this is it, it was, its not so much knowing where to look its knowing how to put things together to come across confidently enough which is a lot of peoples, you know they asked for a 10 minute presentation, you give them a ten minute presentation. The other candidate went on a bit too much and it was quite a weak presentation whereas I talked about you know Best Value, the management implementations, development strategies, monitoring, everything em, from a management point of view because obviously I'd picked it up through working but also you learn to be confident again through uni haven't you. Now when I was in university I used to have to stand up and do, especially with dissertations, and I'd be shaking and I'd be bright red. Well from doing that, although you wish you could do anything but that then it puts you in stead for the future cos you have to do it, you have to stand up so.

I: And you mentioned confidence quite a bit then.

S: I have a lot of confidence, I mean I went in there and I was confident. But the reason I was so confident, I mean I am confident in myself I have to do it a lot, but I don't have to I actually volunteer to do a lot of presentations whether its for dragon sport tutoring, sports ability or disability sport, I do nutrition with the Welsh rugby so I've always done those. Em, and that gives you a lot of confidence to stand up but if you don't go in there with the confidence then how are you portraying yourself across. If you go in as sports development or play scheme worker its different, your talking about a management position. You've got to be that kind of person, so.

I: We've jumped around a little bit there, if we can go, I'm going to come back to your job, but if I can just look at the course now and whether that was helpful or not to you. First if I can just get you to talk about what your main areas of study were. I know it was fairly broad based anyway, but what did you tend to specialize in?

S: Em, I had my first year in Luton.

I: Oh right, I didn't know that.

S: So in Luton it was very much a lot of physiology, which was my strongest point em, physiology, psychology and a lot of kind of fit for business type work. Nothing really, oh and research methods, em LAUGHS I must never do that again. But there was nothing like the context and environment or sport and society, we didn't touch on any of that and when I came to NWIHE, its very much John's field isn't it.

I: Yeah.

S: Very much sport in society. You told me to be honest.

I: No I know, don't worry he's never going to here this. I won't tell him about it.

S: And context and environment and they were the most two boring subjects that I have ever studied in my life.

I: Did you go back to first year at NWIHE?

S: No I went straight into second year. I had tops marks from Luton so went straight into second year. But funnily enough I had an interview, I don't know, I had an interview at John Moores, I had an interview in NWIHE on the same day and I went to John Moores and yep fine you've been accepted you know, love to have you in the second year, went to ***** to NWIHE, and they said yep fine love to have you, and I'd always wanted to go to John Moores, all the way through I applied at first through UCAS didn't get in and I chose NWIHE LAUGHS. People still say to me why? I don't know I really don't know, because, partly because in Luton you had 400 people in my year. In NWIHE, I'm from Pembrokeshire I'm from smaller schools you know, em in my year there was like 55 of us and at the time I thought that's fantastic because its nice small knit and it was small. Looking at facilities there weren't any when I was first there, you know, it was very much we were guinea pigs at the starting off stage. John Moores, well established university if you look at the degree and people say John Moores and NWIHE, you compare them people are going to go to John Moores even with job applications and that type of thing. But something told me to go to NWIHE and I'm glad I did because I wouldn't necessarily be here now, you know I stayed up in North Wales. But I did enjoy it it was nice having small numbers but the downside is there weren't enough modules to incorporate everybody's interest because they were working with such a small group, whereas if you had 400 students you can justify putting on so many different subjects. So I would have liked to have specialized a bit more.

I: Down the physiology route?

S: Yeah, really. I mean I never wanted to be a physio but physiology was my strongest point, but we didn't do sports development either, we didn't you know, nothing that sticks in my mind now that I use except for the old CCT and bit of, well it wasn't Best Value then it was CCT. Other than that it wasn't really.

I: That was the question I was going to ask. Is there anything, obviously knowledge wise and your saying, not a lot really?

S: There's not really. I mean I've always, I've tried to think of that you know people say you should have a degree well I'm thinking well, why? Why should I employ someone with a degree with no experience as opposed to employing someone who hasn't got a degree but they've got three years experience. And that's where the question starts coming in. I mean from my point of view great you know sorry cos I had a degree, but I did have quite understanding of things em, but you could easily stand up against someone, the only reason you're not given the job is because you haven't got a degree then you have got to start asking, you do really I think, from an employer's point of view, you need to know what modules they've covered, because if I'd done a degree in Sports Science and all I'd done is science how is that relevant? Yea I know I could warm up and cool down and what you should eat and drink and all the rest of it, but how is that developing sport from our point of view? So it is nice to know, it would be nice to have look when you send off your CV or application form these are the modules I've covered. Some people put them on I always put my dissertation down, because if they what to see a level of work that's what I'd like them to look at. Its top level isn't it. Em but again mine was in physiology em other people sometimes they get a list of what they studied, its great because you can think well they've covered that and they've covered that well that should work quite well. The other thing is if we do employ them or they do get to a level ask them. If you've got an interview you'd say like what did you cover in that topic and if they didn't listen and they didn't pay any attention then you can tell, you know. So I think now, looking at the course now, there's not just sports science its sports and exercise management and you know all the different strands em which you know its quite annoying sometimes you think, I'd really have liked to do that, but then again.

I: Which one would you have done if you could have, now you know what the course is like?

S: Whilst I did obviously sport physiology I actually really enjoyed psychology em but psychology and the development of sport not sport in society as such but looking at how to set up clubs how to access grants, em how to maintain volunteers, you know cos I've linked that type of structure and from the coaching brilliant, and coaching studies since that that would have worked well. Cos I did coaching studies but it could have done with that little link.

I: And that would suit your job?

S: Yeah

I: When you started the course, why did you do, I mean going back to when you went to Luton why do sport?

S: Why did I do sports science? Because, don't laugh at this, cos they didn't offer interior design.

I: LAUGHS

S: LAUGHS Its not funny

I: Sorry

S: Honestly I got my results and all I wanted to do was interior design, I did sciences in school and English and maths and wanted to be a vet but that was out the picture and I really wanted to interior design and I really wanted to do a degree,

it was something that I wanted to do for me but they didn't offer it. But they do now. I have thought about that one.

I: You should have been born a few years ago. I mean now.

S: But, now so I chose, and I don't know why cos I hated sport at school.

I: Alright.

S: I did my coaching, I didn't mind coaching but I hated playing sport in school and yet I was, looking back at it I was involved with a lot of sport but em, particularly hockey.

I: Did you have any views that you wanted a sport career.

S: No.

I: Did you have any idea of what career you wanted?

S: Not until probably the end of the second year I knew I wanted to go into sports development.

I: And what made you think that.

S: I think I can remember sitting it might have been, actually it might have been at the beginning of the third year. It was the beginning of the third year em cos I remember whose dining room I was sat in, at the house you know, student house. Em I was doing research in something, I'm not sure exactly what it was but I can remember thinking then sports development that's where I want to go.

I: Was it influenced at all by the course or anything you studied or did it come from outside?

S: I think, to be honest with you, I think it came from outside cos while I was in the course, I was playing hockey with ***** there was a girl there Angie Lewis and she was a sports development officer for ***** there was also Gareth Jones who I know from hockey, he's a senior sports development for ***** and then Michelle Daultry who was disabilities for *****, you know. Because you actually linking in with people who are involved and working in the sports center you start thinking well actually you know you've got to look at salaries at the end of the day, you have, and I enjoyed my coaching. I thought I don't want to go into physiology or anything like that really, physiotherapy. Didn't want to, no way was I going to work in a gym. LAUGHS I was not going to go down that line, I don't know, I just thought well decent salary at the end of the day you know and I would actually quite like to do that, so. Never once thought I would be here now.

I: As quickly as that. We'll come back to that in a minute. I forgot to ask when we were talking about appropriateness of the course, I talked about knowledge asked you about knowledge. What about skills, you've mentioned presentations and that helped with the interview and the job. Any other skills, general skills, as opposed to specific sport ones.

S: Um, PAUSE, the confidence is one of the main factors, the ability to be able to read things, because before that I've got a concentration span of a gnat and, I have LAUGHS, and um which is great, and before that, which is why I've got so many piles of paper.

I: Its just like my desk.

S: No, before that it used to be you'd read something, you wouldn't really read it, you'd just be reading it you know, but researching and its not like school, its just proper researching, um, and it our year a long time to get everything right with referencing and all that sort of stuff, because again guinea pigs, people trying, Jackie kept drumming it into us. But I'd still get it wrong. But you have to actually read things and its not just once, you know twice or three times and take that on board and that's the way that you learn things. But being able to use resources, em just, I don't know, you just, you start developing especially I did one of the own learning type of modules.

I: Independent study

S: Independent study. Unfortunately I didn't do it as well as I would have liked to I didn't get as good as mark as I would have like to, em I did an equestrian study, I did it over a period of weeks, video cameras and all the rest of it. But through doing that you begin to develop a bit of initiative about things and you think, or creativity, you know, I mean I can sit here with, and start, and Mark was in here earlier with dragon sport and said right what are you going to do in the next three years and ideas are just coming, they just flow out, and he's like where have you got all these ideas from and they just come and that's from thinking about things and you have to have some sort of, not imagination as such, but some sort of development structure inside, to get the ideas out, um. Other than that.

I: I mean there's quite a lot there.

S: Yeah.

I: I mean, to help you think about it in a little more depth, how do you think you have changed from one when you went to Luton and going into the university and when you graduated. Before going into this job. Did you change?

S: Em, PAUSE, not an awful lot really, I don't think cos I lived on my own for a long period since I was quite young so I have had to grow up very quickly and I went to university and even in Luton the first years are supposed to go out and drunk every night, and I didn't. I mean I went out, went out with my friends quite a bit and I had a job up there, but it just, student life's great, don't get me wrong, but I just didn't need to prove anything by going out and getting drunk every night. You know I'd rather sort of work being an independent student as well I had to support myself and so first year I didn't really change, I probably grew up a bit from the fact that I was in Luton and it's a long way away, but I didn't go home anyway, you know there's not a lot there really. Em and coming to ***** obviously you meet a whole new group of friends that you have to learn how to deal with different people. And living with other students can be quite tricky, but no I just grew up a bit more, matured a bit more em, that's about it really. Didn't change an awful lot.

I: Ok. Em, ok that covered most of the course. I'll ask you this anyway even though we've covered it, it just gives me a sort of a clear answer. Strengths and weaknesses of the course. Again.

S: I don't want to put the course down too much.

I: This is for me, no one is going to hear it.

S: Em. Strengths, one of the main strengths was that there was an intranet thing so that you could get all the notes down from there. One of the weaknesses was the lecturers, and although I've got all the respect in the world for Jackie, John you

know, there was only really Jackie and John I had. There were a couple of others em, I can't remember their names that how much they stood out. It's the way that they, there should have been a monitoring process of how they were lecturing us because some of them I thought what is the point of going to that lecture, you don't learn anything. I might as well get the notes and spend an hour on my own at home for two hours and teach myself. While you try and attend, and most people didn't because they were hung over but, while you try and attend every lecture, but if you don't feel motivated to go what's the point in going and your sat there and your bored you know. I haven't I needed, I haven't got the attention span to sit there awake for two hours, I need to be interested and instead nnnnnn. Its when they just use the OHP, well I can read that at home, well OK I can ask questions but I wasn't one of those people who asked questions maybe I would now because I've got so much more knowledge and I'm a lot more confident now em,. Other strengths, I mean there was saying that though there was good support teachers there. If you needed help there were those people around that you could go to. The resources could be stronger, we were the first year and so they've got a lot more now, from the library point of view there was hardly anything there. They did develop the actually loan idea in the office, but how many people have got the books out. You know its getting hold of the books. Em facilities as well were a weakness now they've got a human performance lab, that was developing as we were there, third year it was great em, second year it was a bit sort of iffy.

I: They gradually built it.

S: Yeah I mean now you know its probably a very, very strong course, a very good course em I still, I still do recommend it to people because it's a nice, *****'s nice, people think its rough but its not rough, as long as you don't ask for it, its like anywhere isn't it. It's a shame, the other thing, it is a shame that they haven't got university status, because that does go quite a long way. You know people say where did you go and you say oh Cambridge and Oh right there, you say NUIHE and their like where?

I: And do you get that response when you say that.

S: Not up here obviously, I just say *****, then I don't even bother saying NUIHE, well its explaining it, you just say I went to ***** and people know where ***** is and they presume there's a university there and its oh alright you know ***** uni right.

I: I does actually look that their about to get it.

S: Good cos that will help, and it will help everybody the lecturers, the students, ***** town itself.

I: And hopefully even you when you can say I went there.

S: Yeah

I; Um, OK. Moving on to your job. We've started exploring, talking about it already, em can I ask you why, I've jumped around which is fine its just it confuses me sometimes. What would you say your attitude is towards your job? Do you like it in other words?

S: Yes I do like it.

I: Why?

S: Em PAUSE, cos its, its challenging, especially this one cos you know its new, but its rewarding at the same time because your working with members of the public, you might not like the members of the public in Rhyll but you know it is challenging. If you can, when I was working in disability sport I actually gained four and a half grand of extra income from people to spend on facilities and you can do things like that. You can do things like that you can do whatever you want to do your helping other people em, you learn a lot, you meet a lot of people you know, it's a very good strong network here. We're a young team but we're building up I mean. I'm one of the youngest, but em, but hopefully I can help them. Is nice to know I can help other people, cos of that, even if they been doing it longer than me they, you know, my boss obviously saw something in me that is going to grow up with me and mature with the job, so. PAUSE. Mm its not bad you know. LAUGHS It could be worse. Plus I wanted a full time job so this ideal.

I: Do you think you'll stay in this industry area?

S: Yeah, yeah I do. I mean I wouldn't go back to a leisure center, I wouldn't ever manage a leisure center or anything like that because you, I just, I couldn't, I wouldn't get any motivation out of it. At all. This is motivation, I mean David will say the same thing, the next step up is his office, basically, and he said I want to see you there in a few years time, so why should I leave? I've got a perfect opportunity to develop myself here now, you know I'm lucky enough to get this job and obviously I can work up and its nice to know that there are routes. The only thing is when your stuck in a job and you cant see any progression at all, that's when you start getting bored and thinking, I don't want to be here anymore.

I: But you can see a clear progression. What about beyond his job?

S: Then I'll just retire LAUGHS, no I mean, I've got ideas, I've got like em, I've thought, I've contemplated moving, my family live in New Zealand so I've contemplated moving there and developing some things over there because there's a big market area for sort of amusement parks, you know that type of idea, leisure parks. Um and the lands cheap you know. I mean if get to that position where I've got something behind me then I'd like to go and do private freelance, if not then by the time I get there it will be another step up it may be sort of head of leisure centers or.

I: Can you see a pathway to there?

S: Yes

I: And you can see that is attainable.

S: Yes. Whether I would want to do it, I might go back to ***** LAUGHS. Yeah.

I: How well do you think you are doing in your job, I've got a flavour anyway as we've been talking.

S: Em, so far so good, so far its pretty, first place it was a case of here's a stack of paper work and off you go, and David's supportive, but he's off at the moment. Em but there's so many, I mean I've got, you know I always so you know, you meet on the way up who you meet on the way down. You don't fall out with people and there's such a good network of people I know across the whole of Wales and into England. Its from meeting them at different conferences, of knowing them before I moved up here cos I've lived in so many places. If I'm ever stuck I just pick up the phone and ask for help, you know you should never be, you should never not do that its, it doesn't matter how high up you get there's always, you know you always need help with something. But its OK, I've got a lot on my plate like I said, we

haven't got a disability officer, I'm still covering that, I can't just let it go. Em and once we've got a new officer in there but, no I'm managing.

I: So what would you say your strengths are in your job?

S: Well their not organization. LAUGHS No this is just, its not that bad actually. Em strengths, firstly I've got the initiative to get on with it to go out there and get what I want. Whether its with work or not with work. I've got a bit of the imagination to foresee where I want XXXXXX to go, what to achieve and what I want everybody to achieve as a team, but people still to talk to people and communicate em, yea it was just being, I don't know, being bright really. Having a bit of intelligence and, finding, if I read something I don't understand I look it up or I'll ask somebody, I'm not, I'm only the same as them but at the end of the day I'm jut in a higher position. I've got to remember that.

I: And what would you say your weaknesses are, that you need to?

S: Its, I can't get up in the morning, LAUGHS, em, PAUSE, I don't know.

I: Anything you think I need to develop, I need to.

S: Well I told someone off for the first time last week. I was pretty good at that, so that, I was pretty worried about doing that but I was quite good at that so, that was alright. Its just knowledge, I mean my main weakness is I'm young and its gaining knowledge not only knowledge of XXXXXX, cos I've only lived here for two years anyway but the knowledge, sports development is so diverse it changes everyday, they bring in new things, new contracts, and its just, its like, you know, I've been asked to do the strategy, if they'd ask me that four months ago I would have been like, Oh my god what do you mean I've got to do, you know but so if I get stuck I'll ask somebody or I'll have a go basically so. Weaknesses, my main drawback is my age and lack of knowledge, but I'll get that.

I: Do you feel you need to go and do any more training or development courses or?

S: Not from scratch, I was saying to Dave, I'd like to do some top up training. I think everybody should in the department and that's something that I'm actually looking in to. We all have every six months half day training day, or you know every twelve months just to make sure we're on the same level. Whether it's the grants, the budget, some of us have got budget training coming up, whether it's a communication skills, how to present something or anything. I do think if you need it you ask for it. I've obviously got to review everybody's needs, if I think they need it I'll suggest it. If they've got a reason that they don't, fine.

I: Do you have an appraisal system?

S: We do. We have em, six monthly review system. At the moment obviously Dave's been doing that so.

I: So you'll have to

S: I'll take it on.

I: And do you feel confident about doing that?

S: Yes.

I: Will you have enough training, as appraiser training?

S: Em, I think it is available, but what I'll probably do, what we tend to do is I'll shadow Dave. Not saying that he's doing everything right. The thing with Dave and I is, I mean we've come to blows on it before, if I don't agree with something Dave says I'll say it, and it's not cos I'm looking for an argument because I believe, not everybody's right about everything you know, and so it's a good relationship because we can give each other feedback.

I: That's brought on nicely to my last area is this thing about the relationship between other people. Do you think that they have any attitude towards you as a graduate, any views about you because you are a graduate. Has anything ever been said. To you or?

S: Nothing, I mean, I can, I know of instances that have happened across Wales with other people where they've been picked on basically by their managers. Dave hasn't got a degree and he'll be the first one to say that you know, well he's like well I haven't got a degree, so what. I'm here cos I worked to get here, and yeah he might have got there later than I'll get there but I don't think you can justify that as I've got a degree therefore I'm better. I don't, I really don't think it works like. It will get to that point that so many things are on offer now it will get to the point where the old school system will go out and all these diverse degrees will come in but at the moment it's still the case when hang on I've done seven years experience in this therefore I am more qualified than you and it is still true em, I mean there's a couple not in Sports Development, there's a couple in **** and they are like a bit. Em and they have got a problem and you can tell they have cos I've come in, I've got sort of 20 year old, sort of graduate got a job, and **** and people are going to get peeved off with that because they are sitting there thinking well why haven't I gone up there. Well because you haven't gone out and got it. You know, no one else, I went for the job, you didn't. Well either you're happy in your job, in which case you should have no quarrels with me or you don't think you're right for the job, so somebody who had a problem then it would be addressed and so on.

I: So do you think is a degree seen as positively, negatively or it just doesn't have any impact at all?

S: It's going towards the positive side, I mean if I had a stack of paperwork, you know interviews here application forms, then I would look through them all and find oh degree, degree, degree, and even if it's not a relevant degree it shows a line of commitment, you've done three years and they've done it successfully and I think that's important as well cos that is, more than anything that is what a degree shows. To be honest with you I don't think it matters that much what field it's in as long as they have done three years, four years of study and they have stuck at it then it's like their committed we'll give them a go. We'll train them up to how we want them and we'll give them a go. It is positive in that respect, um, I don't think it's negative in any respect at all. It is positive but on the other side we need to look at that person as a person not just as a degree. You know have they come out of that degree and learnt something or have they just do it because mum and dad have told them to do it. You need to sort get, that's by an interview process obviously, get them to do a presentation and that's where you can see how they come across.

I: When you said you would look at those who had done a degree would you, would they take precedence in a short list against anybody who has just got experience? How would you short list?

S: It really depends on the person. If someone's got a degree in sports science and they had a first and their dissertation is in sports development practice then I would think wow, hang on that's a hell of a person. They've got a first for a start.

I: Would it matter where they got it from?

S: No. I don't think it would, because I come from NWIHE and people are like, oh NWIHE where was that, you know its not a case of Oh well we're not going to do ***** its only one or two people in my year, no one person in my year got a first so it's a 2:1 great you know. But I would look at the person if they had a first and or they had re sat a year, I mean ok if they had re sat a year they have got the commitment, or have they got to do because it's a case well if I don't do it I'm not going to get a job, you know if they've done three years of a degree and have got a third and someone here who's done three years experience of sports development and they've covered this then I don't think you can prioritise not without looking cos its just such a wide range.

I: So you would be looking at the individual application and all the elements t that application.

S: I mean if you've got a degree in ***** LAUGHS

I: Do you have quite a specific person specification.

S: There is a person specification.

I: That you would tick off anyway.

S: Yea, and they get sent that as well, so, it will have things like Welsh language desirable but not essential then you get whether its interview material or not. And that's also as important, cos you can go, you can come straight out of university, if you've never applied for a job before and you haven't got that copy you don't know what to work against. You might write down what you thinks good but you might not write down that you've had any personal skills, or you know you've done this and this and they'll think oh you haven't got it and they'll just simply write you off.

I: So your looking at matches as well then.

S: But I do think people should get a copy of that and.

I: Yea, how effectively do you think you are being utilized in terms of the skills and knowledge you have.

S: Um, a lot. Basically they're getting every penny out of me. LAUGHS No um, I mean your never over worked, at the end of the day David's a fantastic line manager. He's very relaxed, you wouldn't, if you cross his path you know about it, if your not working you'll know about it but if you sort of following, if you work to a work programme , your doing everything that is asked of you he's fine with it. If I, you know, if I phoned up tomorrow I was sick or something or too tired he would say ok as long as you get the work done and he wouldn't expect you to do, you wouldn't have to sit here from quarter to nine to five o'clock and not move with half an hour lunch, he's quite happy for you to get up to have a break, have a cup of tea you know do what ever you want. Its nice because its relaxed, you don't feel pressure, I mean you still get pressurized, you still get the stress but that's the job. You get that with anything.

I: But you feel your using your skills and your knowledge to the fullest level.

S: I'm learning something new everyday, which is great, so that at the end of the day if I decide I want to move to New Zealand or want to move to Pembrokeshire I'm taking all this with me. I'm not leaving it with XXXXXX its mine, you know.

I: Um and last little bit, cos I know you have got t get off. Have you had an induction? In either of your jobs.

S: LAUGHS What was that?

I: Induction

S: Oh right, em well it was, the toilets are down there, fire escapes down there em. No that is something that we will, Dave has said he's thinking about, he's useless. That's something that I have been asked to look at from a point of view of people coming in em, you basically get introduced to everybody, and this time I was going to work with Mark and Mark in partnership with Sports Council, when we have meetings we bring that up where's his induction? Especially for his type of job, it's nine months without a officer now and he's got to take over. Em, no all I basically got shown was where the photocopier was. It was honestly and that was it. And I've complained about that and I have brought that out cos like I say I'm not a wallflower. I was then, I'm not now.

I: I've talked about training but is there any structure in terms of looking at your training and your development?

S: Yes. On our development review we will actually jot down where you are, what you personally think you need to do yourself, for example I think I need first aid I haven't got first aid. I was going to do a diploma, a management diploma . But I'm not now cos I'm here. I was going to do that before to get obviously to. I could have done things like that, I was going to do my masters through work and part fund it through work and start this year in sports development, but I don't feel now. I would still like to do my masters but I don't feel its an essential point where I am now, not putting extra stress on. If I get to a point and I'm quite high up and the work load gets easier, I wish, then I might say I'd really like to do my masters now.

I: Would you do that for enjoyment rather than.

S: Yes. Before I would have done it for both, enjoyment and career prospects but now I've got here I'm, well before I felt a bit dead end. It was part time, it was disability its very hard to sort of get out of and get a full time job. I thought how can I improve my career prospects, I know I'll do a masters and I'd done the. So they obviously felt they wanted me, and they would have funded it.

I: And they would have funded it.

S: They would have funded it maybe not all of it but part funded it. Which is an investment obviously for them em now I'm not paying for anybody's LAUGHS. Don't even ask for it cos I've got no budget. So they will have to wait. That's the other thing is budgets. We've had to cut back big time this year so while I would love that everyone was in training. We try and get as much, like last year I did visual awareness training with a lot of staff and while you may never use that there may become a time when somebody is visually impaired and you have to use that and I'm confident that the staff did. Like first aid, like managing budgets you know that, there's a budget training day coming up as well so we're trying to fit it to budget.

I: Last question. Is there anything you'd do differently in terms of the course or the job.

S: Go to John Moore's No LAUGHS. No I wouldn't em, in terms of the course, if I could go back to uni, I would have dropped anything to do with context and society, oh I hated it. I kind of wish I had taken psychology and the distance

learning one I wish I had not lost that video tape. If I hadn't I would have got a better mark and cos I wanted a first and I wasn't far off a first but I was like high sixties but its not the point. And you get a 2:1 and its like oh I got a 2:1, but its not the point I wanted a first and I feel that those things that I should have pushed what I was better at. You know, em but and the other thing then they didn't offer, now they have the coaching courses and you get all these qualifications. I went out and did my own and funded my own. I got NVQ's I got BHS courses I got hockey, coaching. That should have been as part of the degree, I mean what are we paying for, you know, its like at the end of the day. I know it is now, that would have helped a lot. Luckily I had the initiative to go and do it which a lot of us did and we're the ones who got the higher marks and will go somewhere em, but.

I: Last, just to pick up on what you said which is interesting, you saying you wanted a first, was that for your own personal motivation or because you felt more likely to get a better job.

S: Oh no, no personal. Oh yea that's what I wanted, but I didn't get it. Mind you the third year I worked, and first year I worked and second year I didn't work.

I: Do you know that happens a lot.

S: Yea, I can imagine, I worked but not, you know I got the stuff done and I got 60's but I should have been working and I should have been getting, but at the same time you live don't you, you know its about life its not about being a boffin and LAUGHS

I: It's a balance isn't it.

S: Yea

I: That's great, is there anything that you wanted to add that you think I haven't covered that you are desperate to say?

S: No, no I don't think so.

Appendix 8.3.

Example of Sports Development Unit Case Study Coding Frame

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Coding Framework that combines all the codes and associated themes from all the interviews in the sports development case.

Code	Theme	No in case	Quotes
What Present job entails			
Skills/attributes (1)	Administration Supervision Strategic Analysis Obtaining grants Developing/maintaining partnerships Developing work programmes Recruitment Delegation People skills Confidence Planning Coordination Implementation Handle pressure Gregarious Political Monitoring Finance Sponsorship Learning Updating	G1 LM G1 G1 G1, C G1, C G1, SG1 G1 G1 G1, LM G1 LM LM LM LM LM LM, C LM LM LM LM, C C C C	<p>Basically overall line manager of the sports development unit within Denbighshire, more of a management position, bit more paper shuffling than on hands work and just overseeing all the development and implementation of the strategy, council strategy, any of the strategies that fall into our hands. I'm responsible for reviewing and proofing grants, a lot to do with sports grants available both in Denbighshire and Sports Council and just basically maintaining existing partnerships and developing new ones". G</p> <p>Its about people skills more than anything. While yeah you could get trained on it you could get somebody who came in and needed training because they haven't got the confident approach or you could get somebody who is overconfident and goes in and is a bit sort of abrupt"G</p> <p>"If you don't go in there with the confidence then how are you portraying yourself across. If you go in as sports development or play scheme worker its different, your talking about a management position. You've got to be that kind of person." G</p> <p>We've got a seven, eight strong team of both generic/ specific officers within the department and we're evolving that new role that Saira's got so that she's responsible for initially generic programmes, planning, coordination implementation etc, but over the next 12 months she will develop the role into a managerial line as well, with support from me so she will have initial line management then for the other six sports development officers within the department. Really trying to take away some my flat line management, em which has become almost an unmanageable process and her background and her experience so far through the work she's done with us part time, led us to believe that we could evolve that post with her as the key catalyst to it. LM</p> <p>You know they have got to be able to handle the pressure, they're gonna be in the face of the participants whether they are children or adult whatever they might be, they have got to deal with a range of very broad and diverse subject matters from generic sport to specific sport to disability issues whatever that might be. They have also got to deal with confrontational issues where a parent might be very disappointed that their particular child has not been selected for a center of excellence or an elite programme, at the same time</p>

	Communication Patience Management skills	C LM, C LM, C	they're gonna get a lot of stick from school teachers who feel that their under pressure. So they have got to be able to handle that and it is a pressurize environment but I think part of that process, as I say gregarious character, able to handle areas of confrontation, able to deflect and deal with confrontation in a way that is managed, and a managed process that allows the participate, the parent, the schoolteacher, the general enquirer, to understand the pressures that we are under as a department, the pressures that sports development is trying to solve and be party to. They need to understand the political will, that we are driven by. LM But you know again its about though a willingness to sort of be open to learning. Accept that the industry changes, it evolves enormously and as long as your receptive to that and your not stuck with your head in the sand I think that as people we can develop into what we want to be. I think that's the great thing about this industry it will allow you the chance if you want to take it and if you want to go back and learn, but you can't ever in my opinion come out of university, come out of your own learning environment, whatever it might have been, whatever level and say that that's enough. Because the minute you think you've learnt everything is the day you should get out because it does change and it changes dramatically and we're faced with lot and lots of political pressures from all sorts of areas whether its central government or our own local members and we have to be reactive to that and we have to be in the know, and as I say there are thankfully a lot of resource material out there that will provide us with that information. LM Working in sport development, especially in the side, that job, things change and its not silly to say, change on a daily basis, they change the goal posts on a daily basis so you really, really need to be clued up, constantly, constantly, constantly reading up on what's changing, what's not changing. LM The big secret is speaking the spiel, if you can it's a great thing. LM
Knowledge (2)	Sports development Funding grants Sports strategies Best value Specific sports	G, LM G, C G G SG	
Tasks (3)	Manages unit Line Manager Developing work plans Implementation	G, SG, LM, C G SG, LM SG, LM	I'm directly answerable to Saira so she basically manages the whole sports development programme on a generic level and obviously I have my certain parts that I manage but Saira sort of oversees everything and deals more, she's trying to get away from the hands on and leave that to me, so its more with the meetings and that type of thing. SG Saira's done a work plan for the next six months until April so its just basically implementing that and

	of plans Monitoring	SG	carrying on with the work that's been going on so its just sustaining the different initiatives and trying to get up to date and just monitor everything
Do they need degree (4)	No	C	Well you've got to be bright to be in that position, but again the flip side of it is if you use your common sense or are willing to learn I should imagine that somebody could do that job. C It would have a great input into the job as well as it does show that being, having an academic background I think it does benefit the job without a shadow of a doubt but also from the other side, the flip side is that grass roots really working your way up and understanding how people at the very bottom work. C
Reason (LM)			
Gen nature of job (5)			
Their Course			
Areas of study			
Appropriate			
Strengths	Information gathering Confidence Concentration Researching Assimilating Learning Initiative Creativity Sports dev module Report writing Communication skills Presentations Coaching Event management Organisation Knowledge gained Ability to	G11 G111, SG, C G G G G G G G SG SG SG SG SG SG SG SG LM	<p>“You have to read up on things don't you, keep in touch with things, its something you learn in university as well, your used to going to the library and sitting down with a book or the internet as it is now and having a research and look through things”. G</p> <p>“You learn to be confident again through uni haven't you. Now when I was in university I used to have to stand up and do, especially with dissertations, and I'd be shaking and I'd be bright red. Well from doing that, although you wish you could do anything but, that then puts you in stead for the future cos you have to do it, you have to stand up”. G</p> <p>the confidence is one of the main factors, the ability to be able to read things, because before that I've got a concentration span of a gnat G</p> <p>“that it used to be you'd read something, you wouldn't really read it, you'd just be reading it you know, but researching and its not like school, its just proper researching” G</p> <p>But you have to actually read things and its not just once, you know twice or three times and take that on board and that's the way that you learn things. But being able to use resources, em just, I don't know, you just, you start developing especially I did one of the own learning type of modules. G</p> <p>But through doing that you begin to develop a bit of initiative about things and you think, or creativity, you know, I mean I can sit here with, and start, and Mark was in here earlier with dragon sport and said right what are you going to do in the next three years and ideas are just coming, they just flow out, and he's like where have you got all these ideas from and they just come and that's from thinking about things and you have to have some sort of, not imagination as such, but some sort of development structure inside, to get the ideas out</p>

	challenge	LM	<p>G</p> <p>I wasn't one of those people who asked questions maybe I would now because I've got so much more knowledge and I'm a lot more confident now G</p> <p>"only from the sports development module, but even that you know, I don't think unless you did an actual degree in it, in sports development, I don't think in any university just one module was going to help you. Cos it's quite a lot different from, basically its just out of a text book isn't it, it's the theory out of a text book which obviously it has to do with it but its not, in real life situations it's a lot different. It gave me an understanding of the concepts of sports development and before I and obviously even though I've got a good sporting background and things, I didn't even know sports development actually existed before I went to university anyway so it sort of opened my eyes to that" GS</p> <p>I mean obviously going to university helped me write the reports and that type of thing. SG</p> <p>Communication more so with sort of adults and peers that type of thing. Obviously, I am a confident person when it comes to doing, speaking to the public or whatever I think university helped me a lot there SG</p> <p>doing the presentations, especially sort of in the auditorium, that helped me a lot, especially coming into sports development because you have got to be able to get up and do things like that and I think also with coaching, cos I hated, I'd never done coaching before and I hated doing the coaching, you know like with Kay and things. But she saw the improvement of me from when we started the module, and then coming here and knowing I had to do it, but knowing I wasn't being supervised by a lecturer who was marking me put me at ease. Obviously it helped me later on and also the event management module we did. That was quite good you know with different events that we organized and even with just organizing a tournament or whatever or organizing the sports awards. Just little things that I wouldn't have thought of before that we picked up in that module. SG</p> <p>I suppose professionally it has given me more confidence definitely, I used to hate doing presentations, I used to worry the night before, but now its like a normal thing for me to do. SG</p> <p>Even during the course you could see that they were thinking, yeah well ok that's good but what if, and that's what I think the courses are now doing. I think the evolution of the university courses themselves are saying to these characters, look don't be frightened of challenging what's going on. LM</p>
Weaknesses	Lack of choice Not being able to specialise Needed to know No placement	G G G SG2 LM	<p>"looking at how to set up clubs how to access grants, em how to maintain volunteers, you know cos I've linked that type of structure and from the coaching brilliant, and coaching studies since that that would have worked well. Cos I did coaching studies but it could have done with that little link." G</p> <p>I know that they're not in the sort of sport industry but a lot of them did four year courses with a year</p>

	Diverse Lack of career advice More business Management knowledge	SG SG LM LM	<p>placement and that's what I would like to see Wolverhampton and other universities do is a year out, even six months something like that, some sort of placement in the workplace G</p> <p>I always think that's one of the hard things with a sports course anyway you know, it is so diverse SG</p> <p>I think there needs to be an area where they actually get physical placement. LM</p> <p>I think that's a critical thing. That they get that because it actually raises their awareness again, it makes them understand the issues, we talk about delivery and implementation etc. But I think, how the hell you teach someone sports development solely for three years, you know I could probably do it in six months, the process. Its not, for want of a better term it isn't rocket science, its quite a simple process but one that can be evolved into really being a successful programme or programmes whatever it might be. LM</p> <p>I think that, I think sports development courses need to really look at their whole content issue, I think there needs to be, there still needs to be the balance of theory but I think there needs to be a harder more thorough understanding on the practical delivery, on the implementation. One of the things that the kids say to us when they come is that they never realized how much paperwork there is for sports development, you know. LM</p> <p>If there was one point on sports development that really I think could change and evolve for course content its more business background, more understanding that its not just about a paper chase an administrative thing but is a real understanding of the accountancy and practical elements of finance LM</p> <p>But again you know whether courses in the future take the students down an understanding of management as part of sports development because most of the guys that I work with at my level with different authorities now, have come from sports development. So whether that's something that the aspects of managing a sports development unit can be part of the course content in the future, that's a critical factor as well. LM</p>
Motivation	Not originally sport Hated school sport but involved in sport Unsure career choice Wanted to be a	G G G SG	<p>Not until probably the end of the second year I knew I wanted to go into sports development. G</p> <p>I just thought well decent salary at the end of the day you know and I would actually quite like to do that, so. Never once thought I would be here now G</p>

	physio		
Work ex			
Job			
Attitude/experience of job	Worked beyond job	SG	Dave put me on as like assistant sports development officer and then paid, I worked full time but he paid me part time wages. I thought that was great cos I was getting the experience, I didn't mind working for nothing really, well not working for nothing but and then just from that its basically grown SG
What like to do	Higher level work	SG	I think the only time when I was, I think its more about the, coming on to the side that Saira's probably going to be covering such as doing more, reports as such you know for maybe, probably internal bodies but also externally as well, like the strategies and things like that. That type of thing would push me you know that's something that I would have to work at doing. It would be like going back to university really doing the reports and having to research. I enjoy doing those as well, researching and things, but at the moment I've got my jobs to do and I do them and its not really a hassle just more about time management more than anything. SG
Strengths	<p>Delegation</p> <p>Confident</p> <p>Preparing presentations</p> <p>Initiative</p> <p>Imagination</p> <p>Intelligence</p> <p>Willing to ask</p> <p>Disciplinary skills</p> <p>Understanding of SD</p> <p>Strong</p> <p>Character</p> <p>Deals with confrontation</p> <p>Coaching experience</p> <p>Worked way up</p> <p>Articulate</p> <p>Positive</p> <p>Challenges</p>	<p>G</p> <p>G, SG, C</p> <p>G</p> <p>G</p> <p>G</p> <p>G, SG, LM</p> <p>G</p> <p>G</p> <p>SG, LM</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p>	<p>"I mean I am learning as I go along, but I would rather do it and maybe make a few mistakes a long the way and learn from it than spend all day in a training session." G</p> <p>"Its not so much where to look its knowing how to put things together to come across confidently" G</p> <p>firstly I've got the initiative to get on with it to go out there and get what I want. Whether its with work or not with work. I've got a bit of the imagination to foresee where I want Denbighshire to go, what to achieve and what I want everybody to achieve as a team, but people still to talk to people and communicate em, yea it was just being, I don't know, being bright really. Having a bit of intelligence and, finding, if I read something I don't understand I look it up or I'll ask somebody, I'm not, I'm only the same as them but at the end of the day I'm just in a higher position. I've got to remember that. G</p> <p>Well I told someone off for the first time last week. I was pretty good at that, so that, I was pretty worried about doing that but I was quite good at that so, that was alright. G</p> <p>I think she's got all the skills that she needs to be able to do the job. I think, I think the management skills will come in time through experience but yea. SG</p> <p>she's quite a character, a very strong character capable of dealing with occasional confrontational processes but dealing with them in a managed way so we're very much building the role around her. It was a role that we knew that we would have to bring to the department, we would need to change our structure internally because of the pressures on me in other aspects, but it was very important that the character could fit the role</p>

	<p>Innovative team work Communication</p>	<p>LM C</p>	<p>as well as the role being molded to the character and that's what we are doing we are evolving that process with her now because we saw her as being the key person to do it.</p> <p>LM</p> <p>you know we need to always realize that we're basically being paid for everybody else's hobbies and we have to bear that in mind, you know that we are there to be knocked, we're there to be criticized and Saira's got the character to deflect that and to turn it into a positive, and she's got the ability to do that from her own background and experiences. LM</p> <p>I genuinely think that it comes from a very basic understanding, you know everyone of my sports development team here and including myself as their line manager now, have come from a background of having worked at grass roots. You know I've been out there coaching I've been coaching for ten, twelve years now. I know that Saira's background has been a very proactive coach both in the equestrian arena and also in the hockey programmes that she does still at Plas Coch. She then went on, or was while still at college undertaking work as a part time leisure attendant within a leisure center complex so she's beginning to broaden her background and understanding of the needs of the participant, of the things that effect sports clubs, of individuals of associations. The voluntary sector is a massively complex process and by working as a grass roots coach within a club or association environment you begin to understand that and the complexities of it and the problems that they face. Down to little things like well, where do we book facilities, how can we afford to book facilities, how can we draw in grant aid to help us to do that. So by working at that level and then progressing through that sort of ladder of development as an officer you really do understand the problems that the clubs face at grass roots, and your very aware that when someone comes to you and says 'well look we want to do this number of coaching but we can't find a coach, we need to do this number of hours of development but we can't book facilities'. You can appreciate that and you can help them address it in more innovative ways than they perhaps can deal with.</p> <p>She's not prepared to just accept it because its written down she wants to know why we do it that way, she's very innovative in the way she tries to approach things, and she's prepared even at this sort of very early period in her sports development career to challenge the concept of what sports development is trying to do and more importantly how its doing it, and rightly or wrongly I can only really say that that's come from an awful lot of the teaching she's had within the college environment because this is only her second job and previously she's worked very specifically in disability. So she is challenging everything and she's perhaps been given that from her course content, to say well because its there is great but is that the answer, go out there and question it and see if you can evolve it and be innovative with it and she's capable of doing that.</p> <p>LM</p>
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Weaknesses	<p>Organisation</p> <p>Age</p> <p>Lack of specific knowledge</p> <p>Abrupt</p> <p>More organise</p> <p>©</p> <p>Need more coaching quals</p> <p>C</p> <p>Short Fuse</p> <p>Gets frustrated</p>	<p>G</p> <p>G</p> <p>G</p> <p>SG</p> <p>SG</p> <p>SG</p> <p>SG</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p> <p>LM</p>	<p>I mean my main weakness is I'm young and its gaining knowledge not only knowledge of Denbighshire, cos I've only lived here for two years anyway but the knowledge, sports development is so diverse it changes everyday, they bring in new things, new contracts, and its just, its like, you know, I've been asked to do the strategy, if they'd ask me that four months ago I would have been like, Oh my god what do you mean I've got to do, you know but so if I get stuck I'll ask somebody or I'll have a go basically so. Weaknesses, my main drawback is my age and lack of knowledge, but I'll get that. G</p> <p>because she does challenge things she then gets frustrated quite quickly if people don't understand why she's challenging things or their not switched on to that area of work. She does, she does sometimes publicly share frustration, em, but that's a thing about maturity as well, you know she's a young girl in a very senior post and she's got that because she thoroughly deserves it as I've touched on and she has to learn, and sometimes when she's in with me and says 'I need to do so and so, so and so' I say ok fine but do it with an understanding of the other people's side of that argument, you know when you go out there be gentle on them. She wants to just sometimes take the sledgehammer to crack the nut and that's a learning curve for her as well because she's now in a management side and she needs to understand how to develop that role and that range of experience will come and we'll obviously give her guidance and training for that as well which is clearly something that they can't give them in college's and universities, and we appreciate that, that's our role, and that's the only side that I would say, sometimes she does get frustrated. She wants things to move quickly, she wants to develop the programmes that she's responsible for, she wants immediate management of the whole sports development team. And that's again, its part of her character and makeup that is driving that and she understands that she has to show empathy to problems and she has to sympathize with people's difficulties in perhaps not working at her speed, or coming along at a different rate and a different understanding and she's gonna have to develop that side of her understanding of management as well. LM</p>
Aspirations			

Why got job	Experience Confident Similar to the boss Character Knowledge of SD Challenged	SG SG SG LM LM	<p>Like if you can pick out similarities between you and someone else its obviously going to draw you to that person more I suppose SG</p> <p>when she sat down stairs, there's not many people that have thrown me off my seat when they've been interviewed, she did that. That's about her character, I said we did buy Saira's character in a big way because she was just wonderful, very articulate, very bright, very positive, above all else she brought a huge understanding of sports development, having never been a sports development officer, which was critical, but the biggest thing for me within everything that she told me in her first interview and she's done it in the subsequent interview for the senior post, she's prepared to challenge you. LM</p> <p>they came to their interviews and actually expressed that they knew what to do. OK all be it perhaps in some rudimentary crude term initially because they were very new to what we were after but their the first two to have done that. LM</p> <p>Saira and Caroline are here because they sat in front of me at their interview and Saira in her first interview as disability officer, I'd never met her, and yet as I say I was knocked back on my seat for the very first time by somebody who was prepared to question my questions and that had never happened LM</p>
Organisation	Positive Character most important Need for a mix of backgrounds Did have a negative view Need development	G, SG LM LM LM LM	<p>I don't think its negative in any respect at all. It is positive but on the other side we need to look at that person as a person not just as a degree. You know have they come out of that degree and leant something or have they just do it because mum and dad have told them to do it. G</p> <p>Mark Roberts who was the original SDO he didn't have a degree. It was always something that was commented on about because of you know of his basic intelligence and you know and his basic just writing skills that type of thing and then when Jamie came in he didn't have a degree either you could tell like, no offence to him but he would write a report or whatever and it was awful you know punctuation, grammar everything was just dreadful and you can tell. I think a lot, I think sometimes there's stigma with sports development people don't really understand how much work goes into it and they just think you're a, as I said before, a glorified coach really, but I think he realizes you know from not having those skills and what have you. So it is something that you need. SG</p> <p>I'm a firm believer, and I say this with no disrespect, but I'm not, I'm not really gonna be drawn in by qualifications. Sports development by its very nature and leisure in a broader sense, is very much dependent on the character, and I really do believe that the character's that we are looking for within our sector of leisure it is critical that they are gregarious for a start off. LM</p>
Attitude to grads (1)	Graduates lack implementation & management	LM	

<p>experience</p> <p>Learn from them.</p> <p>Benefit</p>	<p>LM</p> <p>C</p>	<p>I think that there's a critical mix in there. You know I say I come from that background, a couple of my guys come from that background, and when I say guys I'm not referring to males I'm referring to either sex. LM</p> <p>there's people there with a mixed background, whether it's swimming, football, rugby, whatever it might be, and that diversity is, I really believe gonna help the department develop itself and to really be able to continue to challenge sports development. LM</p> <p>I've interviewed many candidates in the past that have been degree qualified or HND and then their evolving into the degree through that further education process, and for the first time with these two, their the first two characters the pair of them together that I've seen that have actually come to the table with an understanding of sports development, and not just a written understanding or a theoretical understanding they've come with, the fact that they've tried even in a very small way to turn that into practice within a voluntary role, be it club, leisure center whatever it might be, whereas others have brought me to the table the theory. Well, I won't shift too far from the fact that I really genuinely believe in the nicest possible way we could actually teach monkeys to deliver sports development but can we actually recruit, train people and educate people and I keep reflecting back on this and we'll probably hear this a million times on this tape, you need people to challenge sports development, it should never be the same, it has to evolve and it has to go on. LM</p> <p>I'll give you a local authority problem, is that we don't have the resource levels whether it be human or financial to bring a graduate in and then give the time to develop that graduate. LM</p> <p>. I think in fairness to them you do, you know you're bringing them into the real environment of sports development or leisure development, whatever they actually particularly work in and I think in fairness to them in order to aid their development very quickly into that role, you've got to spend some time with them, you've got to help them evolve into that early process and that would be wrong of us to expect them to do anything different. I mean I genuinely believe and I think that we might have mentioned this last time casually the one thing I would love to do here, and I have raised this with senior officers and managers, is I would love to put a bursary in place so that when that I character leaves college we could offer them 12 month placement and then I really do feel that we would set them on their way then, through that understanding and learning in a gentler environment without that pressure from day one. We could set them in place then to go off then and be successful at interview because they've had that 12 months with us. We would only ever keep them for 12 months because we want the next person to have another chance as well, but I think that 12 months of background understanding and real understanding of actual development, actual delivery and management would make a huge difference. LM</p>
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			<p>Very much so. Yea, very much so, because we would be, if other authorities or other private providers could get into a similar set of role we would be interviewing people with a very clear understanding of delivery of sports development and that's the bit that is always missing, the management and the delivery. You know, they understand the process, they understand the theory, you need the hard evidence that they actually deliver for you very quickly and that's the difficulty, say the term, and I know that it's a term that is used lightly you know, at the moment their having to hit the floor and run and that's difficult, you know not every person can do that so we were lucky that our two could. LM</p> <p>I enjoyed working with him because he was a very, very bright boy and that had its advantages cos he had a great development background, he had worked within development and I feel that he was a bright boy as well so it mixed really well together and I feel yes with him being a graduate it was a great benefit to me cos I learnt so much off him but then again with Dave I learnt so much off Dave on a daily basis cos he's exactly the same as me, he's worked his way up. C</p> <p>I have no doubt that they can have a great input, it's like, going back to my colleague he was a very, very bright boy but a graduate so there's no doubt that they can, it can be a very, very positive thing, not only for themselves but also the knowledge that they can pass on to others, definitely I think that it's a great asset. I wish I had something like that but again it was a case of 'don't need that when you were young', but if I could roll it back now I would have that, I would do that because I think that I personally would say that it is a great benefit to the individual. C</p>
Degree influence on progression (1.2)	Move up more quickly Experience still important	G	<p>he might have got their later than I'll get there but I don't think you can justify that as I've got a degree therefore I'm better. I don't, I really don't think it works like. It will get to that point that so many things are on offer now it will get to the point where the old school system will go out and all these diverse degrees will come in but at the moment it's still the case when hang on I've done seven years experience in this therefore I am more qualified than you and it is still true G</p>
Attitude toward specific degree (1.3)	Difference in institutions Type of degree doesn't matter Misunderstood Seems to be overall	G, SG, LM LM G SG LM	<p>John Moores, well established university, if you look at the degree and people say John Moores and you compare them, people are going to go to John Moores, even with job applications and that type of thing". G</p> <p>You know people say where did you go and you say oh Cambridge and Oh right there, you say NEWI and their like where? G</p> <p>To be honest with you I don't think it matters that much what field it's in as long as they have done three years, four years of study and they have stuck at it then it's like their committed we'll give them a go. G</p> <p>It really depends on the person. If someone's got a degree in sports science and they had a first and their dissertation is in sports development practice then I would think wow, hang on that's a hell of a person. G</p>

	improvement Content better at NEWI impacted on recruitment	LM	<p>know if they've done three years of a degree and have got a third and someone here who's done three years experience of sports development and they've covered this then I don't think you can prioritise not without looking cos its just such a wide range. G</p> <p>You feel like your degree wasn't as good as what the degree from Birmingham was going to be SG</p> <p>people that haven't been educated tend to think more so because obviously most people would know someone who was on a course when they were at university. SG</p> <p>The great thing about that is that all three of them come from different colleges or university backgrounds, so if that's a thing that is happening and being reflected across the UK then that to me is really positive, because its not just a local change, its probably a national change and that's really good. LM</p> <p>, I think if you take a clean sheet of paper people will always tell you that John Moore's has always got this fabulous background and its history and particular now on its coaching sciences and sports sciences side its recognized as probably the lead college or university in the UK. Its done that through its links with the football association and it is working in a very high, authoritative level. LM</p> <p>My understanding from Saira is that she didn't have that much information about the Sports Council for Wales, she knew of them because obviously it was reflected in the course content but she got told about sports development and that was important, and Caroline similarly. Caroline I feel interest enough, Wolverhampton have not told Caroline as much information as Saira got out of NEWI there is a difference there, and that's reflected in the roles that they are now undertaking because Saira is more advanced on the sports development knowledge than Caroline was and they both did sport sciences. So the content element is higher at NEWI on sports development than it clearly is at Wolverhampton at the moment LM</p> <p>that clearly Saira's course has, she's got a lot more out of her course than Caroline got out of hers, and I think that reputations will change because if the public awareness raises alongside the quality of the course at NEWI then it will put itself in a league where it can compete with those big universities, because what we're saying is that there's been a quality outcome from our point of view, that's for sure. LM</p> <p>"I did disability sport for 18 months, bit less than 18 months, that has been the most challenging, that is far harder than this job. This job is a lot of work, that was only part time, but it was one of the most challenging jobs because of working with the, such diversity of people, facilities and sports". G</p> <p>its challenging, especially this one cos you know its new, but its rewarding at the same time because your</p>
Utilisation (2)	Challenged in previous job Challenged	G G, LM2	

Saira not challenged in previous job	SG	working with members of the public, you might not like the members of the public in Rhyll but you know it is challenging. If you can, when I was working in disability sport I actually gained four and a half grand of extra income from people to spend on facilities and you can do things like that. You can do things like that you can do whatever you want to do your helping other people em, you learn a lot, you meet a lot of people you know, it's a very good strong network here. G
Not used to potential C	SG	I'm learning something new everyday, which is great, so that at the end of the day if I decide I want to move to New Zealand or want to move to Pembrokeshire I'm taking all this with me. I'm not leaving it with Denbighshire its mine, you know. G
Will need more challenge	SG	I do now that she's been put into this job, when she was disability officer, I mean obviously she did a good job, but you know disability isn't her field as such. She went into the job as sort of minimum knowledge on you know, that's the thing, its not just about sport its about knowing the disability and obviously is very wide ranging subject. Like you've got disabilities within the disability and all that sort of thing and I think that as hard for her and obviously working part time was another thing that was stifling her probably a little. So I think coming into this post, I think it is right for her. SG
Big jump	SG	I mean I just find everything quite easy to do, I'm not nothings pushing me at all, its just I do it and that's it. I don't, I always thought about before actually getting sort of like a proper job, you know you'd come to work and you know stress and thinking about work all the time and what are we going to have happen the next day. I was thinking about my Dad's quite high up and you know he gets stressed and had to work long hours and away a lot and things like that and I always imagined, maybe cos I've been brought up with that type of thing I wanted it to be like, cos I do like to push myself. I never have really felt like I've been pushed to my potential as such. SG
		I mean there's probably a lot more that I can learn but its just being pushed I suppose. I need something to. I mean I like, I don't get up in the mornings and think Oh God I've got to get to work or anything like that I do enjoy coming into work and I enjoy the work that I'm doing but you know how long for, you know what I mean. SG
		I mean she has recognized that it is a big jump from what she was doing previously to now being very much in the face of the politics. LM
		I think if that's their specific area of industry that they want to work in, yes. What we tend to do here though is we actually stretch them beyond sports development, because we evolve their work programme quite

			<p>quickly in so much that we give them, if you like, individual management responsibilities. LM</p> <p>its very, very diverse what you can do, so I don't think its gonna particularly bore people if they can get into the practical areas of work and then its up to us as the employer to give them the additional challenge and we do that here. LM</p>
<p>Management style of organisation (2.1)</p>	<p>Developmental Supportive Good relationship Allowed to get off with things Gives responsibility Aware of career development Learning approach</p>	<p>G G, SG G SG LM LM LM, C</p>	<p>my boss obviously saw something in me that is going to grow up with me and mature with the job G</p> <p>The thing with Dave and I is, I mean we've come to blows on it before, if I don't agree with something Dave says I'll say it, and its not cos I'm looking for an argument because I believe, not everybody's right about everything you know, and so it's a good relationship because we can give each other feedback. G</p> <p>I mean your never over worked, at the end of the day David's a fantastic line manager. He's very relaxed, you wouldn't, if you cross his path you know about it, if your not working you'll know about it but if you sort of following, if you work to a work programme, your doing everything that is asked of you he's fine with it. G</p> <p>he said 'you know six months, a year down the line you know you would be ready for that type of job'. SG</p> <p>the reigns have been let off sort of thing. I mean I've never, you know Dave knows me and he knows that I can do the job and he's always happy with what I've done and he says that you know. 'There's not any need for me to be breathing down your neck you know just go and do anything and if you've got any problems come and see me'. Which is good because I don't need anyone. I think I've a little bit of worry with Saira because we're in the same office and because she's never been a manager before I'm just wondering how its going to go, whether it will affect us. I don't think it would or should do but I don't like the thought that she's going to be having to check on me all the time cos I don't need to be. From her point of view she thinks maybe as a manager that's what she should be doing not that she needs to. I don't know obviously its only early days at the moment so we'll see how that goes but. SG</p> <p>Each of them here has got another key area of work that they do for the benefit of the service and whether that's looking at databases for coaches, whether its looking at specific coach education programmes. Caroline's got responsibilities for every bodies generic coach education so, if the football guys need a sports coach UK programme they'll link in through Caroline. So we give them an added extra that they are individually responsible for. LM</p> <p>In addition to that we also challenge all of them to manage their own budgets, so their responsible for budget management. LM</p> <p>We'd like to think that through the process that we try to provide Sue within the public sector that we've</p>

			<p>developing officers that can go on to do what I've done. I was basically a generic, I was a football development officer then generic and now principal officer so you know hopefully we can evolve people along that line. LM</p> <p>We've got graduates, we've got people who worked their way up, Dave and myself, but I feel that everyone put, you know, everyone works together and it's a great thing as well because we are learning off each other everyday and that's a great thing as long as we're learning, isn't it. LM</p> <p>all I basically got shown was where the photocopier was. It was honestly and that was it. G</p>
Induction (3)	Poor Informal Thorough	G, SG LM LM	<p>A bit of a mish mash, obviously I had the initial induction, you know fire escapes and toilets and all that type of thing. Never really had a proper induction within the office I mean I think I know probably Saira will have told you, the training we have had internally has been awful, non existent really so then you know its basically learning, asking find out for yourself how things work and whatever which I think it wouldn't have done a lot for me if everyone was told right bang, bang, bang this is it, because everyone probably has their own little ways of doing things and there is probably a simple way, but you know things like that really. SG</p> <p>I spent quite a bit of time in the first week, ten days of her new appointment with Saira talking about existing programmes, reviewing where we are now, reviewing the status of the department the budget issues. So I guess on a fairly informal casual way we've sat for a good few hours like we are now talking about the current status of where we are with sports development, what we need to do in the next six months, how we're going to manage that out, what we need to consider for next year. So we've done all that type of stuff, I've also spent some time explaining to her the methodology she needs to develop on the management side and how she needs to put an arm round some people and give others a bit of a telling off and to learn all that side of the process LM</p> <p>she had quite a thorough induction. I felt she did anyway to the authority because its our responsibility to do that. She was obviously moving from a neighboring authority, she needed to know the geography, the logistics, how we operate the processes within house as it were, but I think that she will feel some frustration that the partner in the disability post didn't bring to the table an induction specifically to disability sport. LM</p> <p>Caroline on the other hand has had a greater induction, because with turning her around completely to what she's doing, so I think she's ok she seems very settle in what she's up to right now. LM</p>
Training (4)	Structured scheme Fund courses	G, SG, LM, C G	<p>I'd like to do some top up training. I think everybody should in the department and that's something that I'm actually looking in to. We all have every six months half day training day, or you know every twelve months just to make sure we're on the same level. Whether it's the grants, the budget, some of us have got budget</p>

<p>Limited resources More training Ineffective review Lack of funding ILAM good</p>	<p>G, LM SG SG SG LM LM</p>	<p>training coming up, whether it's a communication skills, how to present something or anything. I do think if you need it you ask for it. I've obviously got to review everybody's needs, if I think they need it I'll suggest it. If they've got a reason that they don't, fine. G</p> <p>Before I would have done it for both, enjoyment and career prospects but now I've got here I'm, well before I felt a bit dead end. It was part time, it was disability its very hard to sort of get out of and get a full time job. I thought how can I improve my career prospects, I know I'll do a masters G</p> <p>That's the other thing is budgets. We've had to cut back big time this year so while I would love that everyone was in training.G</p> <p>what I've been thinking about it recently, not worrying about it but you know you get used to you into a sort of lull I suppose. I'm thinking of going to do night course at the moment. Go back to Llandrillo College and just do some sort of course like once a week that type of thing. Maybe a management. SG</p> <p>Oh yea we have development, well I've had one since I've been here and it, nothing ever came from it. Cos at the time myself and Saira were both anted to do like management courses knowing that there may be a possibility of, but nothing happened SG</p> <p>Times has gone by, funding as well and probably time out the office and whether its, I mean probably for myself and Saira you know it would have been good for her to have it now but its for our own personal development as a, you know for us to move on rather than benefit Denbighshire Council which I don't know if that came across or not in that but I think funding more that anything. SG</p> <p>That's one of the problems that we do face, I don't know whether that is different in the private sector I couldn't say, but we're under great pressure, we're non statutory services and I know that your aware of all of that, we're limited on what budget elements that we can bring in. Therefore that has a reflection on what time existing officers have actually got to give to development, for induction purposes, ongoing training, whatever it might be. So again we've been very fortunate with the characters that we've got that they could hit the floor and run and that was critical to us as well, and I think that's the point that other authorities albeit in an informal way is that they don't have the capacity to bring a graduate in to then spend time helping them to develop into that particular role. Nine times out of ten when someone leaves the sports development team we need someone to be able to pick up that role and run with it because of the resource pressures that we are under and I think that's where authorities have a difficulty, they don't have an officer that can give dedicated time to bring that person on. LM</p>
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			<p>: We've got to work that on an ad hoc basis and again I can share this with you because of the particular difficulties as a department that the budget places on us, again sharing an element of honesty we've got around about £200, £250 per member of staff, for their full training programme. Go back three years we had nothing, there was no training in the department at all, so now we're managing to put some of that back in place. They identify, the way it works is that we ask them to identify their perceived training needs, whether that's in house on IT courses, whether it's in house in budget training, whatever it might, on specific management skills courses, or whether it's external and they are going off to do things with the various sports councils, with ILAM or ISRM, whatever it might be we ask them to bring to the table their perceived training needs. That process is done through an annual staff development review which occurs each November and they then identify in that November review their training requirements for the following financial year and that allows us to plan ahead with a budget commitment to it as well and they accept at the moment that for various constraints they might only do 30, 40, 50% of that training programme. It's then up to them to say which they feel is the most important aspect. So we do, we are conscious that in order to get the best out of them we've got to continue to help them develop and that's from a fairly thorough identification of training needs, but then as I say, we have got some problems in delivering all of that right now, but we are hoping to be able to develop that in the coming years. LM</p> <p>We tend to work with ILAM more than anybody else, I feel ILAM is very fair in its views and it does give views but their ones that we can share or dismiss as we choose. It's got a great training programme, I mean I've been involved in the ILAM diploma programme myself in years gone by, and I think that's a fantastic asset to the whole industry. Their other on going training for their CPD programme is first class. The only point I'd make about that is that it's far too expensive and I think that they've got to review that. Whether they ever will or not I don't know, but I think when you get notices of training courses that the guys get excited about and then the training fee is £130 it's almost impossible when again you've got budget constraints and that's very difficult. It will mean that they can only do two courses a year with the current budget. That's a frustration. I think their information support is first class, we get, I mean you can see the stuff I keep, you know, invaluable, absolutely invaluable the support material you can get from them. And what we tend to do now and more recently through the staff development reviews we've identified 5 or 6, 7 people, whatever, have identified the same training. ILAM have come into us and provided that course in house and we've be able to actually put other people on it in a far more beneficial way to us and them financially and get the training done. So ILAM have been really helpful with that as well. I think that it's critical that the guys understand that those types of bodies, whoever it might be have a big part to play in the industry and have a very big part to play in the development of their careers and I think they ignore ILAM or ISRM or anyone else at their own peril to be honest. I think their a big player and you know you certainly look at most of the vacancies advertised, a lot of the employers nowadays are asking for an ILAM diploma or membership, so I think people will say well yeah if you've got that your up to speed, you know what's going on in the industry</p>
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			and your being made aware of the changes and I think their critical to what we do. ILAM to be honest are our main source of information, we don't get much chance to get out of Derbyshire nowadays LAUGHS so we depend on ILAM. LM
Recruitment & selection			
Attitude to themselves	Feels undervalued		Cos I don't want to stay at, obviously I am quite money orientated within what I want to do but I suppose most people are. I think people lie when they say their not. Perhaps their millionaires already and they don't care but. You know obviously its weird because now I'm seen as like Caroline Sports Development Officer started a couple of weeks ago and that's like my initial start data whilst I see I started like over a year ago. Not in an official capacity or anything like that but you know I've learnt a lot of things. SG
Self Image			
Change during course			
Why got job	Placement		
Perceptions of Grads	Not always appropriate	G	"I think from an employer's point of vies, you need to know what modules they've covered, because if I'd done a degree in sports science and all I'd done is science how is that relevant". G
	Jealousy	G	they have got a problem and you can tell they have cos I've come in, I've got sort of 20 year old, sort of graduate got a job, and **** and people are going to get peeved off with that because they are sitting there thinking well why haven't I gone up there. G
	Shows commitment	G	if I had a stack of paperwork, you know interviews here application forms, then I would look through them all and find oh degree, degree, degree, and even if its not a relevant degree it shows a line of commitment, you've done three years and they've done it successfully and I think that's important as well cos that is, more than anything that is what a degree shows. G
	Age issue	SG	
	Graduate identity undermined by unemployment	SG	I think that because we're the youngest in the department and there is quite a big age gap between some people. I mean sometimes I don't know how seriously people take me but I just think the way I came into the job you know, do people look at me different cos I think it. I mean I don't really like talking about having to be on the New Deal and all that sort of stuff because I think it detracts from my degree and it makes people, I mean I'd think 'Oh she mustn't have been that intelligent or she it must be a bit of a rubbishy degree if she couldn't even get a job after it'. And just I think the whole stigma of being on the dole and being on the New Deal is something that I try and avoid talking about, then other people in the department will bring it up. Like when work experience people come, oh Caroline got in this way. You know I don't mind as long as I can say my side of the story to them because it's a bit more complicated than just 'well she couldn't be bothered
	Challenging	LM	

			<p>getting a job, went on the dole you know and this is how she came about it'. Cos that's how it probably could come out and sound. SG</p> <p>But I think as soon as I make my move to my next job I think that's something I can put behind me now cos it still lurks over me. Cos obviously because I've been here, like I've been here for over a year now and obviously I've been at different capacities but I've still been dealing with roughly the same people, mainly sort of leisure centers and things like that. So their, I don't know what their perception, I mean I get on with them all well and you know they don't have any problems with me but I sometimes wonder you know, I wonder what they think of me because I was brought on first on all and was introduced as work placement you know, and then I've, and obviously I don't get to talk to them as much so they may not know that I've got a degree or what have you. SG</p> <p>There will I'm sure in the future be differences, they need to challenge each other before they challenge the concept of sports development and I think we've got that again, the broad background of staff that will allow us to do that but, I think their settling into the understanding that yea its great to have new ideas, people fresh from college will challenge what they've always done and that's good. LM</p>
Effect of doing degree			
General perceptions			
Reasons for			
Experiences of grads	Challenge others	LM	<p>Yea, its funny to say that actually, because having just said in the previous statement that I'm not always sucked in by qualifications, and the reason I say that is we've got a couple of guys in here that left school having done CSE's there was no GCSE's, O'levels, A'Levels, they didn't get round to doing it and yet their fantastic officers because they've again worked at grass roots, but what I am seeing particularly with these two characters that we have got now, which is Caroline and Saira. Their understanding is far broader and what they are able to do from, I mean it is clear, I keep coming back to this, it is clearly part of the way they are being taught at college, they are challenging what's happening with sports development. They do question the political programmes that are being thrown at us, the greatest thing we're getting issues over with at the moment is that how sport is meant to resolve or help the issues of crime. Fine it can have a part to play but at the end of the day sports development officers are not social police officers either. I keep saying to my guys, you know we say it Saira and Caroline particularly, their questioning the role we're meant to be playing in that, whereas other officers who haven't been through that degree programme, who've not had the teaching to challenge the concept as much as Saira and Caroline are doing, lack that sort of drive in that area. So now there is a slight change, you know, because I, I'm always happy to be honest about this, I've got no degree,</p>

			<p>I've come from a grass roots source, and I've really sort of, I've gone back to college since then, I've taken some time at Carnegie and studied some of their and studied some of their modular programmes and been part of he programme up there so I've leant to challenge it obviously myself through that process, but I can see the difference now. Clearly course content does make them question things, those who've come from the poor coaching, the sports coach background are not got that understanding of how to do that. What is interesting is that Saira is now challenging those same people in this very early stage to say 'well why do you do that?', 'well we've always done it' 'well Ok so is it right?'.</p> <p>"People say you should have a degree, well I'm thinking why? Why should I employ someone with a degree with no experience as opposed to employing someone who hasn't got a degree but they've got three years experience" G</p>
Differences non grads (6)	No difference More Challenging	G LM	<p>Yea, its funny to say that actually, because having just said in the previous statement that I'm not always sucked in by qualifications, and the reason I say that is we've got a couple of guys in here that left school having done CSE's there was no GCSE's, O'levels, A'Levels, they didn't get round to doing it and yet their fantastic officers because they've again worked at grass roots, but what I am seeing particularly with these two characters that we have got now, which is Caroline and Saira. Their understanding is far broader and what they are able to do from, I mean it is clear, I keep coming back to this, it is clearly part of the way they are being taught at college, they are challenging what's happening with sports development. They do question the political programmes that are being thrown at us, the greatest thing we're getting issues over with at the moment is that how sport is meant to resolve or help the issues of crime. Fine it can have a part to play but at the end of the day sports development officers are not social police officers either. I keep saying to my guys, you know we say it Saira and Caroline particularly, their questioning the role we're meant to be playing in that, whereas other officers who haven't been through that degree programme, who've not had the teaching to challenge the concept as much as Saira and Caroline are doing, lack that sort of drive in that area. So now there is a slight change, you know, because I, I'm always happy to be honest about this, I've got no degree, I've come from a grass roots source, and I've really sort of, I've gone back to college since then, I've taken some time at Carnegie and studied some of their and studied some of their modular programmes and been part of he programme up there so I've leant to challenge it obviously myself through that process, but I can see the difference now. Clearly course content does make them question things, those who've come from the poor coaching, the sports coach background are not got that understanding of how to do that. What is interesting is that Saira is now challenging those same people in this very early stage to say 'well why do you do that?', 'well we've always done it' 'well Ok so is it right?'. LM</p>
Perception of status (7)			
Knowledge of	Son did sports	SG, LM	

HE Sports Degrees	degree Understand academic skills Doesn't know	LM LM	
Perceptions of Org			
In general (1)			
What grads could do (1)			
Individuals own background			
Education	No degree NCF courses Coaching quals	LM LM C	
Experience	Prior relevant experience Whilst at NEWI pt rec assistant, assist manager of a shop, stable yard manager. After – pt disability sports development manager Hockey coach Funded courses Undertook courses Difficulty getting job Started from	G SG SG LM, C	<p>“Although I haven't worked as a Development Officer, very often you'll go for a job and they'll say 'I want three years experience, well you can't always get the three years experience, so the experience that I'd had wasn't strictly sports development but it was from the range of things that I had done, and it worked". G</p> <p>I went out and did my own and funded my own. I got NVQ's I got BHS courses I got hockey, coaching. That should have been as part of the degree, I mean what are we paying for, you know, its like at the end of the day. I know it is now, that would have helped a lot. Luckily I had the initiative to go and do it which a lot of us did and we're the ones who got the higher marks and will go somewhere. G</p> <p>I have basketball and netball and I have different NCF courses and sort of CSLA and PACESETTERS SG its just a matter of me going out and getting them because I've got the knowledge in coaching. SG</p> <p>so I was applying for, even working in gyms doing exercise and fitness and that sort of thing and they were just saying you know 'you've got the qualifications but we know that you are not going to stay with us too long, you're over qualified' so they wouldn't give me the jobs and I was going for sort of higher jobs, mainly in sports development, different things, and they were just saying 'well you've got the qualifications but you haven't got the experience'. So I mean either way I couldn't win SG</p>

	non sport & worked way up PT coach to start with	LM, C	
Jobs	Placement		
Aspirations	Career pathway Wanted something in sport	G SG	This is motivation, I mean David will say the same thing, the next step up is his office, basically, and he said I want to see you there in a few years time, so why should I leave? I've got a perfect opportunity to develop myself here now, you know I'm lucky enough to get this job and obviously I can work up and its nice to know that there are routes. The only thing is when your stuck in a job and you cant see any progression at all, that's when you start getting bored and thinking, I don't want to be here anymore. G
	Didn't know how hard it would be to get job.	SG	I spent three years doing my degree I'm not just going to go for any old job I wanted to get a job in my field SG
	Didn't use advice available	SG	I didn't, to be honest I didn't really think about it. I didn't realize how difficult it would be to get a job. I sort of knew, I enjoyed the sports development and I knew sort of roughly where I wanted to be so, I never really, I couldn't even tell. Where was it, in the library? SG
	Move up in SD	SG	. But my wage would be more as a sports development officer in another authority so I want to obviously, I mean I could move on and still be a sports development officer and it would be quite a substantial pay rise for me but then you know, but then your going to be a sports development officer. The only way you can move is sideways to either being sports specific or go to another authority that maybe pays a bit more but your still doing the same sort of thing. So I need to get the qualifications, maybe, sometime I think well what's the point because I had the qualifications before and it never really got me anywhere that way but I suppose now I'm in the market now so maybe if I do do a management course I'll have the experience of sports development and they'll see I've done the course and maybe they'll let me in that way. SG
	Not stay in LA	C	I don't think I'd like to stay with a Local Authority, I think I'd probably want to go, well you know, mmm, probably not someone like Sports Council either, but a body, an outside side body, that type of thing. SG
	Do sports science degree		

Appendix 9
Write up Case Studies

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This appendix provides a write up of the four case studies of graduate transition into the work place. The individual case studies are:

- Case Study 1: Voluntary Sector Tennis Centre
- Case Study 2: Local Authority Leisure Pool and Gym.
- Case Study 3: Local Authority Sports Development Team
- Case Study 4: Private Sector Health and Fitness Organisation.

The background information to each case study and the individuals interviewed can be found in Chapter 8.

Each case study is structured using the following framework to identify the main themes.

- The nature of the job
- Appropriateness of the graduate's degree to the job.
- Performance of the graduate within the job.
- Utilisation of the graduate by the organisation.
- General perceptions of graduates within the organisation.
- Induction and training processes within the organisation.

1.0. CASE STUDY 1

Organisation: Voluntary Sector Tennis Centre

Graduate: Alison

Title: Tennis Centre Manager

The Nature of the Job

1.1 Alison's job as manager is at an operational level and the tasks she undertakes relate to managing the day to day running of the centre. These are:

- organising staff rotas
- direct management of staff
- dealing with the public
- overseeing cleaning and maintenance
- ordering supplies
- the design of promotional leaflets
- resolving day to day problems.

1.2. Alan describes Alison's role as:

“She's responsible for all activities to do with the tennis centre, with the management of everything from seeing the cleaning done to ordering supplies to taking an overall management role responsible, reporting to the directors through myself”

1.3. There are some small elements of the job that are more strategic such as:

- planning of future events
- establishing partnerships with other organisations to develop tennis
- finding sponsorship.

1.4. However, when Alison is asked if she has any input into the strategic locate it external to the graduate, as a synthesis of the inter-relationship between the nature of the graduate, job and employer. direction of the centre and long term planning she replies,

“Not really that’s usually the board of directors, they have overall control of the centre and where it’s going. That’s everything just the day to day running of the centre and the upkeep of the centre.

1.5. In the last sentence of the quote she emphasises the operational nature of her job using the term “that’s everything” perhaps suggesting she wants or could do more. She also has very little freedom in terms of finances and must go to Alan for authorisation on any spending over £200.

1.6. Andrew, who is manager of the fitness suite and a graduate, also describes Alison’s job as operational. He explains the main part of her job as “overseeing staff” and also states: “but she does dead sort of menial tasks which everyone else does here”. Interviewees were asked if they felt that a degree was needed to do the job, all six responded that it was not. Geoff, the Chair of the Directors, illustrates this in his description of his approach to recruitment:

“If we got two people came for a job here and one had a degree and one didn’t and I thought one could do the job better, i.e. Angela Anderson type of thing, the one with the degree would have no influence whatsoever”

1.7. Despite Andrew’s job having a requirement for a degree he felt that there was no need for one in practice and implies this is because of how they are managed within the job:

“If I am honest knowledge wise you don’t have to be a graduate to do either job because your not given that, your not given that responsibility to use your degree, so if you for example, had work based experience of being supervisor you could quite easily do either job to be honest. It’s not a case of having the degree you don’t have the opportunity to use it.”

1.8. Amy also feels that a degree is not necessary based on the fact that the previous manager did not have one and only had qualifications from the local FE college:

“the first manager we had when we came here he wasn’t a graduate, he had been to Yale and he was very good at the job, and its not to be honest the level they are working at maybe they don’t need to be graduates, cos I

feel that, em, I feel that some of the people here are wasted, the graduates to be honest.”

1.9. Ann also mentions that the previous manager did not have a degree and like Andrew, suggested that the way the job was currently structured and managed meant there was no need for a degree as the place ran itself. Conversely, she also feels that there is scope to develop the job to improve the performance of the centre stating, “you can see now its dead in here”. Andrea also identifies that there are opportunities stating, “I think there’s more room for the role to develop”. She goes on to list the areas for development: “Eventually I would like to see it looking at planning ahead, looking at ways we could sort of get money or encourage businesses to get involved”.

1.10. Amy also implies that there is scope for developing the job and using the graduate skills to improve the performance of the centre:

“With so many different facilities opening up and around then you might need to go a bit further up the line and then you know they will probably need to call in the graduates to bring in their knowledge.”

1.11. Alison is very clear that there is much more scope within her job and listed a range of projects that she would like to do to improve the performance of the centre. These were:

- developing a health and safety plan,
- a child protection strategy,
- introducing computerised systems
- improving the usage of the centre through analysing usage figures
- undertaking a survey with customers to identify how the centre could be used more effectively.

1.12 All interviewees were asked what skills were required to undertake the job of manager. Table 1.1 overleaf summarises the skills identified. Two key issues that emerged from this question were, the difficulty people had in listing skills and attributes, and there was a lack of a clear consensus over key skills/attributes.

Alan, Alison's line manager, mainly identified interpersonal skills. He relates this attribute to team work as illustrated in the following quote: "getting people to work as a team is fundamental in any organisation and particularly in a small one". He also outlines the need to supervise and oversee people as being important and emphasises the operational nature of the job: "then you see its getting things to work, you ask people to do a thing one day and you have to assuming they've done it you have to check that they have done it."

Table 1.1: Perceptions of skill requirements of the Tennis Centre Manager's job.

Skill/attribute	No.	People who identified the skill/attribute
Interpersonal	4	All except the fitness suite manager & catering manager
Supervisory	4	All except Tennis Development Officer & Catering Manager
Stock control	3	Graduate, Chair of Board, administrator
Sponsorship development	3	Graduate, Sports Development Officer, Catering Manager
Planning	2	Tennis development officer, catering manager
All below mentioned by one person		
Graduate		Evaluative, sensitive to others, intuitive.
Chair of Board		Team building, delegation, rounded person, sporty image, ability to control staff.
Tennis Development Officer		Self motivated, negotiation, research, firm but fair, coaching skills, playing ability, strategic skills, flexible, networking.
Fitness Suite Manager		Keep distance from employees, communication, organization, IT
Administration Officer		Initiative, problem solving, customer care.
Catering Manager		Administration

1.13 Interpersonal and supervisory skills are the most frequently mentioned attributes required for the job and are identified by four people in total, including Alan. With regard to interpersonal skills: Alison tends to emphasise verbal communication and the need to relate to customers; Amy also stresses the need to relate to customers and also staff; Andrew emphasises communication with staff; whilst Andrea recognises the need to be able to relate to anyone from staff, customers and people from other organisations.

1.14. A point to consider is the fact that Alison is not as able to break her job into as broad a range of skills as Alan and Andrea, suggesting that they have a greater awareness of the nature of the job. Despite being prompted several times the other interviewees could not deconstruct the job into a list of skills needed for the actual job. However, all the participants in the case study describe the attributes of the job in relation to the description of a whole person, a typical sort of description is made by Alison herself in relation to the question on what sort of skills are needed:

“you need to be outgoing, but you don’t need to be too overpowering, and you need to be able to lift them, and sort people out cos you need to see where, you need to know why they aren’t happy and what to do. Em you just need to be very aware of what’s going on around you but you need to see what’s going to happen before it actually happens”.

1.15. A key issue regarding the nature of the job that needs analysis is whether or not Alison’s job is appropriate for a graduate. That is to say does it need graduate skills and knowledge or could someone without a degree perform the job as effectively? Initially the answers from the interviewees, including Alison herself, were that to do the job there was no need to have a degree suggesting that it is not a graduate job. The fact that the tasks described are predominately operational seem to support this. However, all the interviewees, with the exception of Alan, the Chair of Directors, went on to suggest that there is more scope within the job to improve the performance of the centre. These views stemmed from perceptions that the centre was under performing and that there was increasing competition. This issue of expanding the scope of the job will be discussed further in the section on graduate utilisation.

Appropriateness of the Graduate

1.16. Alison obtained a BSc (Hons) Sport Science. Within the course there was a core of compulsory modules which Alison believes created a broad foundation of sport science knowledge and skills. Students also had a choice of optional modules that mean the graduates from the course have some skills and knowledge that are different depending on their choices. Alison chose modules in sport

management, outdoor pursuits and psychology. A criticism she had was that her degree was too broad:

“We touched on all different subjects and areas that we didn’t really narrow down into any particular area which would have helped me cos, mind you in a way its left options open but I’m still floating round not sure what I want to do”

1.17. Alison indicates that the content of her degree was not generally relevant to her current job, with the exception of a module she did at level two in operations management. She also feels that she does not have the knowledge and skills to move on in her career:

“I want to go and do some extra courses and get those behind me, and that will help me, cos as yet I don’t see that I could move on to another management job with what I’ve got at the moment, the directors are helping me a lot and if I went somewhere else I would be called thick.”

1.18. The extra courses she is thinking about doing are the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management’s (ILAM) short courses in areas such as Health and Safety and she is also considering undertaking a Masters degree in sport management. The lack of application of the knowledge that she did gain has led to a little frustration with Alison saying, “I feel why did you go over three years? But its always going to be there for me if I want to draw on it, whether I can remember any of it that’s another thing”

1.19. However, as indicated in an earlier quote, Alison recognises that she did not have a career pathway in mind either before or during her degree and she is still not sure what she eventually wants to do. She did not enter the degree expecting it to train her for a specific job and recognises that if she had embarked on another career the degree would be more relevant:

“I was doing it because I enjoyed doing itI didn’t really know where I wanted to go with it, cos I kept asking myself what do I want to do with my degree. I still don’t know what I want to be you know, where I am now. I’ve always wanted to go into the police force that’s still at the back of my mind as a possibility”.

1.20. The most relevant part of the course to her job appears to be the generic skills that Alison developed during her degree. These were time management, organisational, team work, presentation, report writing, IT and analytical skills. Alison suggests that these have transferred into the work place and have given her more confidence:

“The presentations, like I do presentations to the directors and things like that, that’s helped me, you know help build my confidence up, my report, I did reports during college and that”.

1.21. As Alison was working part time at the Centre during her degree Alan, Andrea, Amy and Ann were asked if they saw any changes, Amy felt that Alison grew in confidence as she progressed in her degree and also became more analytical:

“After she’d done the degree I think yea it tended, I think she probably tends to go back and think, right I’ll see if we can improve on this and we’ll get this sorted out.”

1.22. Andrea and Amy also observed that the degree had provided Alison with generic vocationally related skills, as Andrea noted:

“She does reports for meetings and everything is put very much how you would expect it to be put through college. Sort of like analysis of like percentage courts used and not used and things like that”.

1.23 When Alison was asked if she had changed whilst undertaking her degree she replied:

“at the beginning of the course in my first year I was very, I wasn’t very outspoken, I kept myself to myself, but as I got to know other people on the course, you know you get into your little groups, your more confident and I was more outgoing then”.

She felt that this impacted on her work in the following way:

“I had more confidence, definitely em, cos I could draw, think, I don’t know just communication with customers and things, we touched on eye contact you know and how to just be aware of you know more aware of customers.”

1.22. Alison ascribes the development of a positive attitude to undertaking the degree: “Yes, its changed my attitude, yes. Cos its I’ve got a degree I want to use it now”. She goes on to say later in the interview.

“Em, its given me to want more whereas if I hadn’t have done my degree I probably would have been happy just being, sitting on reception. But it has given me more goals, I want more out of this job than just sitting at reception making toasties etc, you know I’m wanting to do more”.

1.23. The case indicates is how generic skills transfer into the work place and enable Alison to be effective in her job. Thus, presentations in class and writing reports for assignments have prepared her for the higher level elements of her job of writing reports and presenting them to directors. It is also interesting that by acquiring those skills and being competent in specific areas develops her self confidence, which has a positive effect on the rest of her job. A key effect of the degree, which Alison recognises herself, is that is has fundamentally changed her view of herself and what her goals should be. Alison does not appear to believe that her current job is commensurate with being a graduate and she envisages that she will move on: “I just see this as a stepping stone, this job, to get experience in everything in the area and to just widen my knowledge”.

Performance of the Graduate

1.24. Overall Alison is seen to be performing very well which is illustrated by Alan when he states that, “she doesn’t actually have many weaknesses”. He feels that her strengths are her strong determination and ability to see things through and the fact he feels she is performing well is illustrated when he states:

“If she had a job that offered her substantially more increase in salary we would be priced out of the market by the nature of the job but we would go quite a long way before we would lose her”.

1.25. Andrew describes Alison as “very single minded to be fair, she knows she wants to do something she’ll do something, hard working, she’s organised.”

Andrea also describes Alison as “very self motivated and driven” she also feels that Alison has an “ability to deal with people” and has the “ability to do things

without being told by somebody else". Amy concurs with the comments made by others when she describes Alison:

"She doesn't tend to put things off you know, she, and if she sees something that needs doing she will do it, she won't hang around and wait for somebody else to do it whereas other people here do."

1.26. Amy also goes on to describe Alison's interpersonal skills: "She's very, very friendly, you know with the customers and staff alike. But she can if she needs to have a quiet word with somebody or put them in their place." Ann also emphasises Alison's ability to get on with people and her positive attitude: "She's always got that positive side when a customer is concerned, always out to do everything her best." Alison also identifies that she has a positive attitude:

"I've always had something about me wanting to progress and impress people and you know and aware that people are watching me. I always want to have a good appearance, that I look like I'm doing something."

1.27. She feels that the reason she has progressed is both due to experience and attitude: "I think that they've grown to trust me and they know that I am a good worker and I just put 100% in basically whatever I do." However she feels that the degree has helped draw out these qualities: "It bought myself out, gave me more qualities, which probably would have been more impressionable to them."

1.28. Alison's performance in her job is described in relation to her personality, she is seen as being positive, hard working and getting on with people. However, although these are probably fundamental traits that Alison has, she herself believes that they have been cultivated by her degree. As was identified by Alison in Section 1.2., 'Appropriateness of the Degree', the degree has made her set higher goals and want more from a job. This influences how she behaves and therefore how she is perceived by other people, they relate this to her personality but as Alison has noted it is her degree that has strengthened these traits.

1.29. As Alan identified Alison seems to have very few weaknesses, the only one he identifies is that "she won't suffer fools" and he also sees this as a

strength. Andrea also finds it difficult to identify weaknesses and suggests that Alison has a sharp temper and also she finds it difficult to say no and that she works beyond the requirements of her job:

“she’s been doing 12 hour shifts because there’s people off sick and things like that probably, you know, its one of those unfortunate positions where the buck stops with her.”

1.30. The only weakness that Andrew identifies, but it is different to what the others say, is that she finds it difficult to create a distance between herself and the staff, to separate friendship from work which he feels is an important part of management. Amy cannot identify any weaknesses and Ann’s only criticism of Alison is that she is “in the wrong job” as she’s working in her “comfort zone” rather than moving on to a more challenging job.

1.31. Overall, it would seem that Alison is performing well in her job but is it that the job is below her capability as Ann suggests? This will be analysed in the next section on graduate utilisation.

Utilisation

1.32. A key factor in whether or not a job is a graduate job is the extent to which the graduate's skills are being used. Alison is performing well but is she being utilised to her optimal level and is there scope within the job for this? Alison states that she could be “utilised a little better”. She appears to be constrained and frustrated with the current nature of her job and describes these constraints on several levels. She is temporally constrained as she has to work on the rota and therefore finds it extremely difficult to undertake the more strategic type of work that she would like to do:

“I’m working on rota as well. I’ve got six hours off where I’m expected to do all my admin and everything in that six hours, which today should have been but I’ve had to work on rota tonight to cover so there is no time to do it”.

Alan also realises that Alison could do more if she had the time and gives the following example:

“One of the bars was a bit of a disaster here, I mean we didn’t make any money on it, nobody really was given any incentive. Well Paula knows that she can do it if she wants to develop that, and it’s the, I don’t want to say there’s not enough working hours in the day that’s the problem.”

1.33. Andrea also agrees with time being a problem: “There’s not that much time that is off, sort of off rota or off duty sort of thing that she has time to develop and manage, look ahead.” Being on rota leads to her being spatially constrained as she has to stay on reception:

“I’ll try and do my work whilst on rota but the phone will ring or a customer will come in and everything is put on hold for that and once you break that line of thought it’s hard to get, by the time you get back to your desk you know, something else will crop up”.

1.34. She is also constrained by the structure of staffing at the centre. Even though she has to do the same tasks as her staff she feels that there is such a large distance between their capabilities and hers that she cannot delegate work. She explains that “below me really there’s nobody else for me to pass work on to, so it’s just myself doing that which I do find hard”. Alison is also constrained by the management style of Alan, who despite being a voluntary chair of the committee comes into the centre twice a day: “Yea that’s the battle, I’m with, it’s finding my own space to try and do my own thing. Cos I feel like I’m being held back now”. Later on in the interview she says, “Cos I’m doing the day to day running I’m not taking it on any further which I would like to do, but then I am limited by the directors.” Andrea concurs with this:

“I would say poor sort of management really, but not from her. I know that she probably battles quite a lot with the directors that probably are very much the history of this place.”

1.35. Andrew also feels this within his own job: “there’s no drive or motivation given to you or responsibility given to you” Amy recognises this also and that they could use their graduate skills:

“Some of the people here are wasted, the graduates to be honest, and maybe they could, if they were allowed by the management committee to get their teeth, dig their teeth into something better, its something more I

think they would get, you know of the, you know doing what they did at university.”

1.36. She feels that the reason for this is the committee are stuck in their ways and are not prepared to listen to new ideas. She describes the graduates:

“They come in full of ideas unfortunately as I say they can’t always carry them out. I mean one person we had here he stayed a couple of years and he wasn’t allowed to expand and do things that he wanted so he’s gone on to do something else. You know same for another girl who was here she’s gone on to work for the council and do things.”

1.37. Ann also makes the same point: “she goes there and puts her views forward but, like everybody before her they’ve always come up with the same brick wall”. Alison also perceives that she is constrained by her ability and experience and feels that she needs to undertake a number of courses before she can push the Directors to let her do more:

“I don’t know whether I’d be confident doing that anyway at the moment, you know what I would like to do. I’d like to do these courses first and then I might push them more then.”

1.38. The others in the centre would appear to disagree and feel she is capable of doing more, as Andrea states:

“I think her time and some of the experience and some of the background she’s got that she could be used better and probably being on rota or on shift is not best use of her time in a managerial role”.

1.39. Ann also emphasises that Alison is capable of doing more but it is the directors who constrain her, which may well affect Alison’s confidence if she is putting forward her ideas and they are not being accepted:

“Oh I think she’s not being used to her best ability, not at all, because at the end of the day its run by directors, she’s the manager and everything that she thinks has to go back to them. They don’t agree with her so its really pointless her being a manager as much as it sounds awful”

1.40. Alison feels like she is being held back and does not see her future with the organisation and Andrew describes himself as “brain dead”, “stuck in a rut”,

“very bored” and also says about the directors “my ambition is not matched by theirs really”.

1.41. There would appear to be a feeling that there is scope to develop the job using their graduate skills if the constraints could be removed then the performance of the centre could be improved. However, the key agent that could enable the graduates to do this, Alan, does not seem to recognise the development needs of the centre and does not understand that Alison needs and wants more challenge and to work at a higher level.

General Perception of Graduates

1.42. Alan, Andrea, Amy and Ann all perceive there to be little difference between graduates and non-graduates in relation to their performance in the Centre. Alan feels that, “Often they’ve got less practical skills than if they’d got a job”. Andrea suggests that they seem cleverer and come in with ideas but this doesn’t come through because,

“at the end of the day though we’re all tend to be doing the same thing, the same type of work even though, you know maybe one of them has a degree and one of them hasn’t”.

1.43. Ann and Andrea believe that the differences between staff at the centre are down to personality, not whether someone is a graduate. Andrea also suggests there may be an influence by college course and experience: “I think there’s a range, it depends on the person, probably the type of background they’ve had coming through, like the college system”. However when thinking about the differences between herself and Alison Andrea says:

“I haven’t got a degree but pulling on past experience and looking round and open your eyes you tend to be able to do it. But that’s a totally different field because I’ve got the knowledge from playing the sport at quite a high level and so again is it necessary to have that sort of background. I think she would probably bring different ideas cos she would have picked up different experiences from the college environment, looked at different studies and different case studies whatever and brought in different aspects to the job, or again as she gets the time to do that, that would be one of the areas we’re probably yet to see.”

1.44. Ann compares Alison to the previous manager, who was not a graduate and who she felt did not develop the centre and describes Paula as having more “oomph”. She explains,

“Paula’s got a lot more about her, she wants to make a, now because he was older, now its more of a young centre, obviously more ideas come in from her point of view and we’re able to say to her ‘well this should be one that should be done’ but the last manager it was just a case of well I’m here you run it”.

1.45. Both Alan and Amy did have a view that graduates in general do have status, Alan says, “I think a sort of good degree in a good subject indicates a certain level of education doesn’t it, a certain attainment level to move on to other things”. Amy believes the job is not appropriate for a graduate and she actually suggests that she would not be happy if her daughter, who is doing a degree, ended up in such a job, “I just think my daughter’s doing a degree and I’m thinking what would I think about her”. She goes on to say,

“I mean she wouldn’t be stretching herself and I think they have got to be. I think if somebody has the get up and go to do a degree and to go further to do the masters whatever, they need to be stretched to their full potential and I think if they’ve got a brain and they need to keep it working.”

1.46. Alan believes that degrees such as sport do not have the status of others, particularly due to the numbers of people undertaking those courses:

“Well, for example if you came out of university with a math’s degree or a French degree you probably could go to any of the law firms, accountancy firms, international firms, there’s lots of things you could do.....but I don’t think sports science they would, so they become by very virtue of their numbers, they become devalued”.

1.47. He describes Alison’s high level ability as ‘an exception to the rule’, and a former graduate employee who he felt performed well, was attributed to the fact that he did his sports degree at Loughborough. However, when asked if he had experienced any differences between graduates from different types and courses and institutions he answered: “No. It’s just a perception”.

1.48. Alison realises that Alan believes that her degree is of less status because of the institution she attended:

“I know Alan, personally he would see a degree from another place more useful like somewhere like Manchester, you know, more institutes that have been running the course for a long period of time and have got a good reputation to be better than the one I did”.

1.49. However she feels that it does not affect his attitude toward her saying, “he probably just forgets that I’ve got a degree in some instances”. Furthermore, when Alan was asked if he knew what a sports degree entails he did not know and according to Alison had never enquired. He admits that his knowledge is limited and he only knows that, “you can do a specialist sport, like you can do tennis, you can do rugby and then you do other modules and they build up to a whole picture”. Yet the practical modules within the degree that Alison has undertaken only amount to 10% of the overall course and are not included at level 3. Andrew also realises that Alan has misperceptions of his course and states:

“A lot of people don’t understand it to be honest, you still get perception of sports degree, played sport and that, you know, kick a football around, a lot of people don’t understand that a lot of its, more or less all of its theory based now”.

1.50. Alan also argues that degrees have reduced in status due to the number of people undertaking them:

“Its almost gets to the stage where that degree becomes rather like the old A levels where your twenty one you’ve really got to look to get another degree or qualification. It’s a stepping stone, but if you step off at that stage its rather an ineffective A level”.

Andrew concurs with this suggesting that,

“My personal opinion is that a degree is probably on the same levels as A levels I don’t know six or seven years ago.... Because everyone’s doing it to be honest”

1.51. Thus, it suggests that Andrew who has a degree may feel that there is a declining rate of personal return from him gaining a degree due to the numbers.

However he does acknowledge that having a sport science degree was a requirement for his job and also for other related jobs he has applied for.

1.52. Generally within the job there is not seen to be a clear difference between the non graduates and graduates. Where there are differences it is attributed to personality. However, as identified earlier, and also highlighted by Amy and Andrea, the nature of the job and the management style does not allow graduates to show the skills and knowledge that may differentiate them from non graduates. This may be because Alan does not value the sport science degrees that the graduates have done and does not understand what they entail. From all those interviewed at the centre he had the least amount of knowledge of what Alison had done on her degree. It is interesting that Alison says that she thinks he forgets she has a degree. He also admits that he has not experienced differences in types of graduates but has that perception and actually justifies the graduates who conflict with his perception as exceptions.

Induction and Training

1.53. Another key issue relating to performance within a job is induction and training. Alison did not receive a formal induction but spent a lot of time with her line manager at the beginning of her employment in the manager post learning on the job. Alan outlines it:

She was explained all the elements of the job, remember that she had worked here as a student so she was aware of the various tentacles that she was, we did explain to her what we expected from her”.

1.54. She felt that this was an inadequate method of inducting new staff and has implemented a more formal process:

“I probably did have an induction, work with the till and so on, but there was no specific person telling me that I think it was just watching what the other staff did and asking questions. There’s no set induction. We have, if now a member of staff did come they shadow me for a couple of days. We don’t throw them in at the deep end”.

This was also the case with the former manager of the gym who introduced a more formal process, which Andrew undertook and that he felt was effective.

1.55. In relation to staff development there is no formal process and Alison has been left to identify her own needs. She has recognised a number of areas for development which management have agreed to support but as yet she has not undertaken the courses. The line manager explained that a yearly review is undertaken with the manager but this has not yet happened for Alison as she has not been in the job long enough. However, the review will be based on negotiations on pay rather than a personal development: "We would do a review and explain why we are not paying them more or this is the budget that we've got to work with how would you split it up sort of thing"

Case Conclusions

1.56. Alison's job as it is currently structured and managed does not have a need for a graduate to be employed in it, both in terms of the recruitment requirements set by the directors and also the tasks undertaken within the job. However, there is scope and a need to develop the job to improve the performance of the centre which would draw on the graduate skills. Moreover, there is a mismatch between both of the graduates' and the line manager's perceptions of the nature of the job. Both of the graduates are more aware of the potential of the job to be grown to become a 'graduate job', which will enable the centre to develop. The line manager has a narrower perception of the job which constrains Alison in terms of developing the job and using her graduate skills. Thus, her degree may seem inappropriate to her job as it currently stands, in that the knowledge that she has is not directly relevant and the skills that she has are of a higher level. However, the line manager feels that the graduate is appropriate and is performing effectively based on his perceptions of the job. Alison has a less positive view as she feels that she is not being used to her potential and is not making as much contribution as she could be, and therefore she feels that she is not performing at a high level. Thus it could be said that the job is inappropriate for the degree as Alison is being under utilised and as some of the interviewees have said is 'wasted'. Moreover, if

the job were to be developed in the way Alison wants she feels that she would have to undertake more courses to provide her with more specific areas of knowledge. She feels that it is her degree that has given her the drive to develop further and has enabled her to realise that she needs continuous learning to improve herself and the centre?

1.57. A key point is the impact of the job and management style on motivation. Alison continues to be motivated to perform as well as she can in her job despite her frustrations but she is looking for another job. Andrew is demotivated which is illustrated in the following quote:

“I am ambitious although that again gets overlooked it sort of gets put to the back burner, you don't really show it much cos you get stuck in a rut and bad habits. That's the thing here its quite easy to get into that little routine of doing this and just come to work, go home, you know its hard once you get into that rut and bad habits. Weaknesses is that I probably fall into that trap of, being lazy's not the word but being, just do enough you know because of the culture of the centre, the way the staff are, you know its quite easy to come and do you know, cram your work in twenty minutes and literally sit down and do nothing for the rest of the day because there's no drive or motivation given to you or responsibility given to you to go out and say, 'OK I'm going to go out today and promote this and do that'. You know I basically can't be bothered, whether that's right or wrong I don't know.”

1.58. Due to the nature of the job as it currently stands both graduates are not able to affirm their graduate identity. The graduates left their HEIs with a specific perception of what they as graduates can and should do and they are not being able to achieve this in this workplace.

1.59. Finally, the organisation has no formal policies on human resources thus there are no job descriptions, a lack of recruitment procedures and induction procedures have been developed by the graduates themselves. There are no processes for development of individuals and the Alison suggests that this is impacting on her effectiveness.

2.0. Case Study 2:

Organisation: Local Authority Leisure Pool and Gym

Graduate: Barbara

Title: Senior Pool Attendant

The Nature of the Job

2.1. Barbara's job is at a supervisory level and is concerned with the day to day operation of the pool. Her tasks involve supervising pool staff, administration such as organising the weekly rota, dealing with customers, teaching swimming and ensuring pool water quality. Brian the Centre Manager describes the key areas of Barbara's job:

“her main function really is to be the responsible person on the poolside for organising breaks, having an influence on the rota's, ensure water tests are done on time and just generally organise the staff and support the duty officer”.

Bob the Assistant Manager and Barry the Duty Officer both explained that she is in a junior supervisory position overseeing the other pool attendants and as Barry notes, “she is the line between the staff on the pool and the management downstairs”.

2.3. Barbara has also been given extra tasks to do by Brian that are outside the normal requirements of her job to provide her with broader experiences. These are membership of the Centre's Best Value Committee, reviewing and developing the induction procedures and updating the web site. The fact that these tasks are extra is highlighted by Barry, “she's got lots of these separate tasks on top of her senior rec post and she's adapting to them”. This developmental approach is Brian's own initiative based on his management approach rather than council policy. He has just been promoted to another job so does not know if this will continue when the new centre manager takes up post:

“I was encouraging her to get involved in and to be aware more about the planning side of the job and she's led a little group for me in terms of looking at what our information was like on the web site”.

2.4. Interview participants were asked if they felt that a degree was needed to do the senior pool attendant job and with the exception of Ben all replied that a degree was not required. Nevertheless Bob believed that the job should be viewed as a means to moving up in the industry:

- “they say we get more money in Tesco and things like that, stacking shelves, they know they are using it as it is the way to go, it is a stepping stone, or it should be a stepping, they’ve done the hard work they shouldn’t be sitting being a pool attendant for the rest of their life”.

However for another post within the centre at a similar level, that of Health and Fitness Officer, Brian explained that there was a requirement for a Sports Science degree:

“Because of the way health and fitness has moved on here, GP Referral and Cardiac Referral Programmes, we wanted somebody to come in and be able to come in and be able to drive that forward and take it on”.

2.6. In terms of the skills and attributes required to do the job a wide range were identified which are shown in the table below.

Table 1.1. Skills and Attributes Required for the job.

Skill/attribute	No.	People who identified the skill/attribute
Customer Care	7	All
Delegation	6	All except the manager
Direct People	6	All except the pool attendant Ben
Water Testing	6	All except pool attendant Ben
Communication	4	Graduate, Manager, Assistant Manager, Head Pool attendant,
Pool attendant Skills	4	Graduate, Duty Officer, Head Pool attendant, Pool attendant Ben
Team Worker	4	Graduate, Manager, Head Pool attendant, Pool attendant Bill
Interpersonal	3	Manager, Assistant Manager, Pool attendant Ben
Leadership	3	Graduate, Duty Officer, Pool attendant Ben
Organisation	3	Graduate, Assistant Manager, Pool attendant Ben
Ability to reprimand	3	Assistant Manager, Head Pool attendant, Pool attendant Bill
Charisma	2	Manager, Assistant Manager
IT Skills	2	Duty Officer, Pool attendant Bill
All with one: <i>Manager</i> – planning, <i>Assistant Manager</i> – teaching skills, <i>Duty Officer</i> – Swimming ability, flexibility, confidence, listening, patience, understanding, tactfulness, willingness to learn, impartiality.		

2.7. As can be seen table 1.1 the interviewees were generally able to break the job down into skills and there was consensus over the skills of dealing with customers and staff being a key part of the job. However, most put a great deal of emphasis on how the skills related to the type of person and management style that would be effective in the job. For example Brian emphasised how people should be supervised when he was asked to identify skills: "I think really she has to have the personality and charisma and confidence you know to direct people and cajole them and get them to do the difficult jobs". This is reiterated by Bob who maintained, "you've got to be able to handle the staff, work with them, but you've also got to be firm where necessary". Barry also expressed a similar view, "you've got to be prepared to be if you like good cop, bad cop, tell them off and also build the moral back up".

2.8. As identified in the table a key part of the job is the ability to undertake and analyse water tests in order to ensure the quality of the water. Therefore an essential requirement of the job is to have the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management's Pool Plant Certificate, and as Barbara stated without it she would not have got the Head Pool Attendant job:

"The pool plant operators I think is one of the main reasons I got it, cos a lot of people who applied for it didn't have. So that's what gave me an advantage, not the degree this five day course".

Bill also identified that the Pool Plant qualification is more important than the degree:

"Cos at the moment with a degree I can't get any other job in a leisure centre other than that of lifeguard of which you need no qualifications other than pool lifeguard. In order for me to move up the ladder I need to get supervisory experience and to get supervisory experience you need to get pool plant. So it all starts off with just that one qualification".

This is also noted by Ben: "I was going to apply for a supervisor's role but you needed a plant operator's course and apparently you have to be here so many years or whatever to do one".

2.9. A key area for analysis is whether or not Barbara's job is appropriate for a graduate. The clear answers from the interviewees were that there was no need to have a degree to do the job effectively. There are two distinct parts to the job the technical side, which relates to the quality of the pool water and pool lifeguarding skills, and the interpersonal side that relates to the supervision of staff and the ability to deal with customers. The development of technical skills is provided by the Amateur Swimming Association Pool Lifeguard qualification and the Pool Plant Certificate which are sub degree level. Barbara feels that the tasks outside of her normal remit that the manager has specifically given to her and not the other head pool attendant are because she is a graduate: "I think the main person that notices probably is the manager cos he's like 'Oh you've got a degree so I can give you this job to do'". Consequently Barbara is being developed but it is outside the scope of the job and does not actually impact of the effectiveness of the head pool attendant job but does impact on the performance of the centre. This will be discussed further in the utilisation of the graduate section.

2.10. The centre staff were able to break the job into skills and these did bear some resemblance to the skills identified in the phase 1 research by those in sports employment. Communication, customer care and social interaction skills were in the top 10 of those used in sport employment and are also highlighted by the majority of people in this case study. A key issue is whether or not technical skills that are an immediate requirement for working in wet centres should be provided by degree courses. Both Barbara and Bill felt that such qualifications should have been part of the degree.

Appropriateness of the Graduate

2.11. Barbara chose options in psychology, sociology, sport management and national curriculum sports. She identified that a few specific elements had been of use since she had graduated:

"I do use bits of it, like I worked in the gym there as well and I found like when we did fitness and resistance training that's come in handy. When

we did exercise and health that's sort of come in handy as well because your doing GP referrals and that".

2.12. This fits into the earlier comments by Brian that they required a graduate for the post of Health and Fitness Officer and Barbara noted that it is this area where her degree would be most relevant. Overall though she felt the degree is not really being used, "I worked really hard for three years and I just don't feel like I've, well I'm not using it at all". She acknowledged that the degree has not prepared her for a specific career, "The weakness I think is it was just so broad, that I don't sort of feel like it qualified me to do anything". However Barbara had no regrets about doing the degree:

"I just thought that I'd do a degree cos I wanted to get to my highest level and the reason I chose sports science was cos I've always been into swimming all my life and it just, it was just something I enjoyed and if I was going to spend three years doing something I wanted it to be something that I enjoyed".

2.13. She does note that she did not have a career pathway in mind when she chose her degree and did it because she enjoyed sport, "That's my big problem, I didn't know what I wanted to do and I still don't know what I want to do". Also she had not envisaged gaining a full time job at the centre when she graduated:

"Well to be perfectly honest when I finished my degree I didn't think I would be there for long, but its hard to say, I mean I do like the job..... I just didn't see me staying there at all and its just worked out that way".

2.14. The two pool attendants, Bill and Ben, had undertaken the same degree as Barbara so they were also asked about its relevance to their jobs and its strengths and weaknesses. Bills also felt that the degree was too broad: "Its not specific enough, its more broad involving everything and like only one module was leisure management". Like Barbara both pool attendants do not have a clear career pathway in mind. They did apply to do the degree with an idea of working in sport but are now also looking at opportunities outside of sport with Bill applying to the army and Ben to the paramedics or teaching.

2.15. An area of her degree that Barbara acknowledged as useful was undertaking presentations particularly in applying for jobs. Also the degree overall has helped her confidence, but she felt she already had key skills:

“I suppose I’m a little bit more confident that I use to be, but I’ve never been a very confident person. Like things that I needed to get me through the degree, that’s what I was like anyway so, like a very organised person I have always been and I always will”.

2.16. In order to obtain and undertake her current job Barbara has had to do extra courses:

“I’ve found though since I finished my degree that I’ve had to do a lot of extra sort of things in order to work me up the ladder cos the degree hasn’t really done that”.

2.17. Bill, like Barbara also felt that an important skill he developed on the course was presentation skills,

“in the third year we had to do a presentation with every assignment and it does get you used to talking in front of people which I think is very good, the fact that you’ve got to do it on your own and sometimes you have to do it with a group so it gives you interpersonal skills which I think is good”.

2.18. Ben, who was a mature student and had been in work for sixteen years prior to undertaking his degree, also felt he developed communication skills as well as IT skills, he also believed that:

“I think it strengthened the confidence in my capability to maybe speak to people to do with the different seminars we had to do and prepare for, definitely on that side I think it did strengthen my communication skills and talking to people. I think maybe before I went in there I was very, I was introvert, I think I’d keep things to myself and that, but that side of me I think it helped. I was able to speak to people”.

2.19. He also felt that it developed his analytical skills such as “thinking about things before you do it and preparing”. Like Barbara, the physiology element of the degree has been relevant to working in the gym and the first aid aspect of lifeguarding.

2.20. As all the graduates and students that work at the centre studied the same course as Barbara, the other participants in the interviews were asked about their overall perceptions of them. Brian identified that although generally they were quick learners a key problem they had was a lack of practical experience and qualifications and due to the limited budget for training this made it hard for him to help them develop:

“I think there’s a weakness between, you know, when they come in academically well qualified and what they actually need to perform their duties from the vocational point of view, and there is a weakness there and there’s an absence, there’s a gap to make up and then we’re asking people to almost take a step back really, and then there are other issues like we’ve mentioned like funding which you know doesn’t make the process easy”.

Barry also maintained that experience is crucial:

“Some of them play on it, they think they deserve more because they are graduates. Some of them just say ‘well OK I’ve got a degree but I just got to start at the bottom to find out what the job entails’. There’s no good starting at the top and saying ‘yeah and you’re a pool lifeguard yipeedoo what does it involve, I don’t know’, Well I do and I’m not a graduate, whereas other people say ‘well I want to start there because I want to know what its like to clean the floor before I tell you to clean the floor”.

2.21. In terms of knowing what is involved in the Sports Science degree and how the skills and knowledge developed can be used Bob had a fairly good understanding of what Barbara has done on her degree. In addition he declared, “I think PE and Leisure is one of the hardest ones, even at O level and GCSE, it is one of the hardest subjects”. He stated that the degree “gives you a good understanding of people, how things work, why it works etc”. He went on to say, “The industries changing that much over the last couple of years, they’ve got that background to understand the people, how people work”. Although he acknowledged that the degree has some elements that are relevant to first line jobs, he thought that the skills that Barbara had developed on her degree would be more relevant if she moved to a higher position in leisure:

“Certainly as far as the gym is concerned they’ve got a far broader understanding of the sort of situation and all that so they can apply the

perhaps better than non graduates. But on a pool attendant point of view no, not really, they should have a little bit more responsibility I suppose but not necessarily, not at that level. It comes through as they go higher up you see, well I think so”.

Barry also has a understanding of what Barbara covered in her degree: “Writing, investigating, I’d imagine its nutrition, dietician, there would be some sort of sport of some description they can choose their own I would imagine”. Brian acknowledges that he does not have a very good understanding of what Barbara has done on her degree but recognises that it would mean that she was more able to learn.

2.21. Bob and Barry had both worked with Barbara during the time she was undertaking her degree and were asked if they had seen any changes during that time. Bob outlined that she had changed in the following way:

“Barbara’s always been a home girl, young, don’t mean necessarily in outlook, but like that very quiet girl, always a good personality but I think going to college and all that she’s had, its hard work and she’s had to change. Its toughened her up if anything so I think there’s a difference”.

He also thought that it had developed her analytical skills:

“I think she questions why, as to questions the job or is this the right way and all that. Not so much question she’s willing to do like, to use initiative, can we change this type of thing, which she wouldn’t have done before, if that was right that was right. Yes I suppose she does question. If that was right, end of story, but now she might start thinking there’s things could be done better. Cos of the knowledge of the customers and all that which I think helps”.

Barry also believed that undertaking the degree had developed Barbara’s confidence:

“She’s got the knowledge now, you can tell her to do it and you can see when it comes to doing talks and teaching, that knowledge is coming out, whereas her knowledge will be, when she first started she may have been timid to say ‘look I can’t and say it’ now if we have a big programme of all the staff I could say ‘Barbara can you do that’, ‘Yeah’ and she always does a good presentation, she had a good presentation for her interview”.

He also suggested that it had developed her analytical skills:

“She can look at it from a different perspective than myself, I might hit it, I’ve got no patience if you like, I’m like a bull at a gate while Emma will stand back and say ‘right if we do it that way it will work better than if we do it that way’. That will be her graduation coming through”.

2.22. Another area where he felt that it had helped Barbara was her ability to manage her time and to multi task:

“You say to Barbara do this and she’s there, she’s doing this as well as doing that, she’s got to do this, this and this and she’s got to programme her time, which she can do because of the graduation”.

2.23. Barbara’s degree has not specifically prepared her for her current job in fact, she has had to undertake a extra courses in order to progress to Head Pool attendant. When she was asked to identify which skills and knowledge she had developed in her degree that she used in her job, she found this difficult. The inability to deconstruct the degree into the skills developed was also a conclusion of phase one of the research and also links to Bailey’s (1990) belief that graduates are often not aware what they have learned when they have been exposed to personal skill development. However, Bob and Barry, who have known her in a work capacity from the first year of her degree believe that the degree has impacted in a number of ways on how she approached her job. Both of them and Barbara herself believed that the degree has made Barbara more confident. Ben, another graduate, also felt his confidence had developed on the degree. Bob and Barry also believed that Barbara is more analytical, which again Ben felt he developed. Barry also suggested that she had developed good multi tasking skills. The development of confidence is important for the head pool attendant’s job in terms of having to deal with people. The analytical skills and multi tasking skills seem to have been highlighted due to the extra tasks that Barbara has been given and are not necessary skills for the senior pool attendant job. Thus, it is the management style of Brian rather than the job itself that enable Barbara to make more appropriate use of her graduate skills. Nevertheless what does emerge from

the interviews is that the degree has not provided the incorrect skills and knowledge.

Performance of the Graduate

2.24. Barbara thought that she was performing well but she attributes this to her experience working at the centre, “I’m doing quite a good job, its just that I’ve done it for so long, its just second nature to me”. She found it hard to analyse herself and identify her strengths and weaknesses, but after some prompting she felt that her strengths were her organisational skills and her weakness was having to “tell people off”. Brian believed that her strengths were particularly due to her personality:

“Well I think, her strength derives from her personality, I think that she’s got the nice people technique, from what I’ve seen she’s able to diffuse situations quite well”

2.25 Bob had a high regard for Barbara which is illustrated when he says, “Barbara’s leisure through and through and she’s got the ability to go on”. He also identified that her people skills are her strength:

“Her strengths is the friendliness, her ability to work with people, definitely her people skills are very good, her strengths, she’s quite good at organising things, I can definitely say that”.

He went on to say,

“She’s always been a good worker, she practices what she preaches basically, she’s not one who will just say do that, she leads by example and she does the work herself”.

2.26. Barry also had a very positive perception of Barbara he felt that her “attitude is spot on” which, he illustrated when he said, “She can adapt, she will learn, she will watch and she will listen and if she’s not sure she will ask and that is a good quality to have”. He observed that she has had to develop her confidence and toughen up as she has progressed to a position of supervising the other pool attendants:

“She’s getting more and more confident as time goes by, you can see her coming out of her shell, she’s telling staff ‘well look do it, if you don’t do it’ whereas before she would say ‘can you do it for me’ now she’s saying ‘do it’. She’s stamping her authority now”

Brian also suggested that she is growing in confidence and it has been hard moving up to supervise people that you have been working with:

“She’s growing in confidence because she’s had to be put in a position where she’s been, if you like, working at the same level as several people and now she’s made this step up and of course that would have posed her an initial test but she seems to be coping with that quite well”.

2.27. All of Barbara’s managers were impressed by the fact that where the Council couldn’t afford to put her through a qualification she has paid for it herself which was the case with the Pool Plant certificate. Barry also pointed out that she was prepared to do things in her own time to get on:

“She is coming in in her own time, she has, with her full teachers; again she’s paid for that herself, so that’s two courses valuable to this organisation the she’s done herself”.

He goes on to say that he thinks she believes that “Yeah I’ll do that myself whether they’ll pay for me or not cos she knows long term it will benefit her”.

2.28. Bradley feels that Barbara has “got a lot of strengths” and that he noted that “Barbara’s good at her work, I must admit she is good on the pool she can communicate quite well and that she works well as a team”. Ben feels that her people skills are her strength when he says:

“She’s easy going, she’s well liked, she’s popular with staff”. Bill also sees her understanding of people as a strength, when he says, “she knows people’s characters and everything and I think she’s got that clued up”.

2.29. The only weakness that Brian can identify is the need for Barbara to develop a career plan and move out of her comfort zone:

“Personally what I think needs to emerge is that she needs to have, she needs to decide where she wants to be in the medium term, I think in the short term it is just getting better for her, but I think she would be honest

enough to tell you that she's passed, she has had the opportunity to move. She's had a couple of personal friends who have qualified to degree level who have moved and gone to work for the private sector. I think Barbara is quite comfortable working here she likes the building, she likes the people, she's been here as a customer, has gone through the, not just the swimming lessons, she's been a member of the swimming club since she was young and she's very comfortable here."

Barry feels that Barbara will progress:

"She'll catch up and then she'll gradually overtake, that's because I know what her attitude is. I can, she will do that, some people wont they will stay where they are cos of their attitude as well. But that's the way it goes her attitude is spot on."

Bob also feels that she doesn't have any major weaknesses but her only frailty is that "she takes things personally". Bradley identified that her only weaknesses is to do with her size and gender when dealing with large, male troublemakers in the pool: "she can find it difficult in certain situations, but I mean we all do it if big six foot seven lads come up to you and blah, blah and I mean she's only small".

2.30. However, he does feel that Barbara is getting better at dealing with those situations and being female bring other advantages, as he states "we have no females in authority in this building, good step up, she can deal with the ladies' problems". Brian also feels that being female also brings different qualities to the job:

"I think she can bring a little bit more to the job, the fact that she is female and there hadn't been a female presence at that level previously, I think its been a sort of male dominated area".

2.31. Bradley cannot identify any weaknesses with Barbara, however Ben feels that she needs to be "more authorative" he states "maybe she might not yet have developed management, you know like management leadership skills" although he does go on to say that he thinks this is improving with experience. Bill also concurs with Ben when he states:

"Where she probably lacks sometimes is in the discipline side, strong enough character, there's times when there's a few people say somebody's not pulling their weight nothing is said or if anything is to be said she'll go

and see, get the duty officer to have a word with them rather than it should be a case for them, cos I know the previous two supervisors would deal with it themselves”.

2.32. Barbara is generally performing well in her new job and her strengths particularly related to her personality and her people skills. Barbara’s hard work and commitment were also a particular strength and have meant that she was prepared to pay for crucial training courses and undertake some work in her own time. Her main weakness of being able to ‘tell people off’ seemed to stem from the fact that she was only just promoted to a supervisory position and she also recognised this weakness herself. All of those interviewed felt she was getting better at this as she gained confidence in her new position.

Utilisation

2.34. Barbara felt that she had been utilised much more fully since her promotion to head pool attendant but it is the extra tasks that the manager has given her that have particularly employed her skills. Moreover, a key aspect of the promotion is that it has led to the management helping her to develop to achieve her next position, she revealed that, “as soon as I’ve got promoted they’ve started teaching me how to be a duty officer which is the next step up”. Bob concurred with this when he stated, “We’ll help her out so she sees what manager’s do and all that, we can help and teach her that side of it, you know if it’s a stepping stone”.

2.35. Brian recognised that Barbara needed more challenge but a constraint to this is the nature of her job as she is working on rota on poolside. As Brian stated:

“She’s not challenged at all, she has much, she clearly has more to offer but as I mentioned operationally she is restricted, you know her movement’s restricted and if we do potentially see an opportunity for her, on nearly every occasion there’ll be a financial consequence of having to cover her job or her rota or period of time on her shift and you know we do very tight budgets and I have encouraged her in particular to identify periods herself, you know if your in control of the rota and you know that between 2 and 4 on a Tuesday afternoon you can have, without any holidays or sickness to consider, you’ve got a period of time then perhaps you can do this for me”.

2.36. For Brian it was not the fact that she has a degree that has prompted him to help her develop, he was impressed with her personality:

“I would do it for them all, but obviously its got to be a two way thing as well, the individual has to show some desire to do that, and obviously have some ability to see through and there’s no question that she’s, you know, she has both really. She’s demonstrated the fact that she’s different and she is frustrated in the job and wants to move on”

It is his management approach that has enabled him to identify her potential in that he realised Barbara needed to progress after he had interviewed her unsuccessfully for another job:

“as a result of the post interview chat I had with her I realised that she was frustrated in the position she was having gained an important qualification and was trying all routes to improve her situation”.

2.37. He felt that he has had to take the initiative in terms of identifying potential for development as with the exception of Barbara others had not expressed the need to progress. He observed that when he became manager of the centre 15 months previously it was difficult to see who were graduates and who were not as there was no difference in their work:

“I have to say that there was nothing that particularly stood out to identify people who were academically well qualified, to distinguish them from anybody else, but in chatting to them their obviously in these positions awaiting a better opportunity, you know that became very clear. As soon as Barbara was dealt with any great interest and I’m not being derogatory from the previous manager, but people started to think ‘Well perhaps John can do something for me here you know”.

His perception was that that the other graduates at the Centre were not taking the initiative in order to progress:

“I think from a negative point of view I think there’s this element of ‘well I’ve got myself qualified and I’ve invested quite a lot of time into the qualification and as a consequence I’m only working in a part time capacity in a job that you know that I obviously don’t want to do as a career’. I just sense this sense of frustration and almost a complex really where they have got a little bit of a chip on their shoulder as a result of that”.

He also acknowledges that there were not enough resources in order to help people develop, "we can't always give people the opportunity to fulfill that potential".

2.39. As Barbara had been identified by the manager as someone who could progress there appeared to be some jealousy of her by other graduates. Brian noted that, "I think they are sort of mindful as to what opportunities are created and who slots into them". Barry also observed this:

"They show, some have animosity towards Barbara because they also have a degree and they think it was biased because they had a degree and she got her pool plant operators, yipeedoo, she paid for it".

2.40. However, Ben one of the graduates who does feel animosity towards Barbara interprets the support for Barbara in another way, "there's too much favouritism going on in the building if you want my honest opinion". However Bill, the other graduate feels that with Barbara in a supervisory position it might help him develop:

"You're sitting there and your thinking aren't you, this could be done or that could be done which would maybe have somebody like Barbara to sort of say that's a good idea, what do you think maybe implement it on the poolside or something".

2.41. Barry also recognised that the graduates are not being used to their potential as pool attendants:

"I don't think life guarding is taxing enough for a graduate. Higher up yes where the paper work comes in, that's the work they've trained to do, yes, duty officer, assistant manager, manager, yes but they've got to get there first".

Bill confirmed the lack of challenge within his job when he asserted, "I've been in education since the age of four and you know and nothing at all is being used, your brain is just brain dead". He believed that this has gradually made him demotivated:

“When I first came here I was using my initiative all the time I was eager, I was doing jobs without being asked and then cos you do all that and then you don’t get anything from it its sort of a backlash now and I just do the opposite. I’ll sit around until I’m told to do something sort of thing, cos your thinking to yourself ‘why bother’”.

Bill also felt “underused rather than over used”. He suggested that a method of dealing with this would be to give the graduates projects, some responsibilities and the opportunity to have an input into decisions, as has been happened with Barbara.

“Say like giving you more responsibility, like maybe I don’t know, for example the rota maybe or suggesting things, like having suggestion boxes and so you can get your points across to them and ideas across and see if they could implement them”.

2.42. With the exception of Brian, it seemed to be recognised within the Centre that a degree had become important to progress into higher-level leisure management, but all participants in the interviews felt that experience was crucial:

“I mean the other comments are that you know cos you’ve got this degree then you should be able to apply for the higher jobs and will get along more but then its just, its just like a circle really cos we need the experience and I haven’t got it”. (Barbara)

“With leisure I think you definitely need to do this at the ground level cos it’s the only way you learn about the tricks and all that goes on”. (Bill)

“I think it’s a catch 22 situation where they are saying that you haven’t had the experience in the actual leisure industry so maybe you’ve got to start at the foot of the ladder again” (Ben)

2.43. However Brian believed that in addition to gaining experience Barbara would have to move jobs to progress, as it would be very difficult within the one facility. He pointed out:

“She’s looking at this building as providing the you know, to achieve what she wants to do, I think she’s looking to do it here and I think she just needs to make a sideways step even looking for a similar position or an improved position at another facility within ** but she particularly wants to stay within this authority”.

2.44. Bob also felt that Barbara would need to move on to progress as it was hard to get promoted within ** Borough, "certainly there's quite a few people here if they were in another area they'd be in management definitely". He acknowledged that this was further made worse as the council did not appoint from within for the higher level jobs: "they've got a policy of training ability and looking after the staff and promotion, in reality they always seem to be bringing outsiders in".

2.45. Bradley also felt that it would be hard to progress within the facility:

"I think if its based on this place its going to be difficult to move forward, there is quite a lot of people who are here and their average age, I think they'll stay in the position where they want to be, its going to be a long time till they move out, until they go somewhere else".

2.46. Ben recognised this when he said, "I think there's a lot of people that have been here for years you know, worked here so its sort of dead man's shoes sort of thing". This creates frustration in the graduates as Bill observed:

"Its just there doesn't seem to be any opportunities going and with time it just increasingly gets worse and like I say your coming out and your doing stuff which is just a waste of what qualifications you obtain and IQ wise your not using it at all".

2.47. Barbara was not being used to her full potential, even though she has been promoted to Head Pool Attendant and she is more challenged. She felt that she could have been using her degree and the skills and knowledge she had developed much more. The managers at the centre realised that Barbara was being underused and have tried to develop her and also help her with her career. Nevertheless this, to some extent has created hostility from at least one of the other graduates because he feels he has not received 'special treatment'. The manager explained that he had not identified Barbara because she was a graduate but because she had the right attitude.

2.48. An issue appears to be that the likelihood of graduates being developed depends on the management approach of their line manager. Prior to Brian it

would seem that the previous manager had not had this developmental approach. This had meant that Bill who has been at the centre a number of years had become demotivated, this is reflected in his work and he is therefore unlikely to be recognised as having potential by Brian. However Barbara who has worked at the centre as long as Bill has managed to continue to show motivation and commitment through paying for her own courses and undertaking work outside her responsibility and sometimes in her own time.

2.49. All of those interviewed both graduates and non-graduates felt it was important to work up from the bottom in order to be more effective managers. The problem with this is that all recognised this was extremely difficult within the centre as people tend to stay in their jobs for a number of years. It would seem at the centre a key issue is that because there is a bottle neck in terms of people progressing that promotions are a contentious area particularly with a more than one internal graduate going for a job. This was also an issue within Phase One with employers actually expected to graduates to move on and recognised if they stayed they would become disillusioned with the work. All the graduates had been prepared to apply for jobs outside of the centre but as yet had been unsuccessful.

General Perception of Graduates.

2.50. Within the centre there appeared to be a positive attitude towards graduates from management and staff. Barbara explained that staff at the centre believed that the degree would help her progress, but as identified earlier experience is also important:

“I mean the other comments are that you know cos you’ve got this degree then you should be able to apply for the higher jobs and you will get along more, but then its just, its just like a circle really cos we need the experience and I haven’t got it”

Brian’s perception was that graduates are adaptable and quick learners:

“I mean my personal view is that you know somebody coming to us holding a degree is coming to us with a high academic background and would make a quick adjustment into any role”.

However he also felt that graduates have too high expectations:

“Perhaps their understanding of once they became qualified there would be an opportunity that immediately opens up and you know that they slot into a job that takes them into the right career path”

He believed that a degree does have status and was considering studying for a degree for self-satisfaction, although he did not feel that it would have any particular impact on his career:

“You look at your kids and you want to see them achieving and I think you know my mum and dad in particular have looked at sort of acquiring a degree as a benchmark you know, that’s something they would be proud of, so I mean I suppose if I were truthful it would be for them, then it would be for me and if it did influence my career then fine”.

2.51. Bob also had a generally positive perception of graduates and felt that after studying sport and leisure they would have a commitment to the area, although as highlighted earlier he did feel that personality was crucial:

“Its not just the knowledge, that certificate doesn’t mean your good for a job, it means you’ve got the background of the knowledge, it does not mean you are the right person. They’ve got to have more than that. But what I think if they’ve spent that long in college not just their brainy you’ve got to be hard working to do, I know its hard. They’ve got to be dedicated so hopefully those qualities will come through the job, they should be more dedicated to what they do”.

He also believed experience was also important:

“In the leisure industry in general its been happening for quite a few years, you’ll get somebody straight out of graduate into a management job which is fine, they’ve read the book. What happens when the book doesn’t work, they haven’t got the experience, they haven’t come up and sometimes their outlook is one dimensional. Whereas if you’ve worked your way up hopefully you can see it from both ends”.

Bob also thought that a degree could develop key skills:

“Hopefully they can communicate and think better or see things more logically but an ends to a means, not just a job, they don’t see it as ‘I just

need to get paid, they can understand what's going on, hopefully understand your customers better”.

2.52. Barry also believed that graduates should gain experience before moving up:

“They've got to work their way up and if they're patient their skills will be useful and valuable but they can't expect to come in and say, “I am superman because I've got a sport science degree, or superwoman”.

2.53. In the final question of the interview where Barry was asked if there is anything else he would like to say he did have a bit of a rant about the attitude of the graduates when promotions have been made:

“Graduates are great, they are they're brilliant, they bring a lot of knowledge to the building, but as long as they don't come in expecting to move up faster than those that have been here 20 years, 10 years, 12 years whatever, they've got the experience on the floor, they've got the experience on paper, now its up to the employer to make the decision, but that impartial decision should be respected either way. Whoever gets it, two graduates get it, I got a 2:1, I got a 3rd, so what whoppeydoo, you are the best person for the job on the day. I might be the best person for the job and those 2 have got degrees well tough. You've got to learn to live with it cos I've got 12 years experience, they've got none except college experience and they've got to bear with that. If they can bear with the great, if they start preaching, I know this, I know this, and I know this I got no time for them and that's again myself”.

Like Brian he also feels that they have high expectations:

“Now graduates are coming in here and they are expecting I don't know, £17/18 grand a year starting salary, here your on £10 grand, now you have to be committed and enjoy the job and take the flack that goes with it”.

2.54. Ben reflected this when he says: “When I first started my degree I thought I would be able to walk into a high paid job but I'm finding it hard to actually get the right job”. Bill felt differently to the others, he thought that graduates had no status within the facility or leisure services and believed that people get on “if your face fits”. He also claimed that degrees are now devalued: “It just seems like the degree nowadays is the new A levels. A levels don't really count for anything”.

2.55. Ben also felt that mass HE had impacted on the status of degrees but doesn't feel that a degree is necessarily academically devalued but is more of a requirement:

"Nowadays a degree is a good step forward. I mean in the years before I think A levels and O levels were seen, but I think now with a bigger spectrum of society they are looking for degrees now maybe looking to PhD and masters and that"

2.56. Ben argued that there should be some sort of career structure for graduates:

"I'd like to see something like maybe you know, them taking graduates on and maybe giving them like, starting off like I am as a pool attendant and then giving them a supervisory role of some sort".

2.57. Generally there seems to be a positive attitude towards graduates within the centre however all of those interviewed agree that experience is also needed for them to progress. The graduates themselves also feel that with the number of people getting degrees in order to stand out a higher qualification is required.

Induction and Training

2.58. The centre has formal induction, training and development systems, however a key issue is whether they actually happen in practice and how they impact on the transition of the graduates into work. Brian and Bob described the induction process as having three stages; one and two took place within the centre and stage three was provided centrally and was about the council in general. Barbara described her induction to her first job as being fairly basic and she did not have an induction to senior pool attendant: "they take you around, they show you the building, they tell you the rules and next minute you've got the uniform and your on the pool basically". Bill also thought the induction was brief: "It was about thirty seconds, like there's the spectator stands, don't be looking at people all the time and then just briefly the basic rules on the pool". As does Ben:

"A brief one, just a quick show round the pool and introduced to a few people you know and it was mainly the staff training sort of progresses,

sort of training on the pool and that, I think that's your sort of induction really its ongoing".

2.59. Thus it would seem that the formal process laid down does not happen in reality, moreover within the formal process there is no differentiation made for the type of employee i.e. if they are a graduate or not.

2.60. In terms of training and development at a basic level all pool staff had to undertake pool attendant training once a week. The Council also had a Personal Development Review system in place where staff met with their line managers once a year to identify training needs. However, Brian states that he does not have control over who actually receives funding for training:

"Once all the interviews have taken place there's a summary sheet compiled by the colleagues in the education department and you know a list will be produced of the training requirements for all the staff within our department and then sort of appointment of costs and then the chief officer has a decision then to make, you know in terms of who is going to receive that training"

2.61. Barbara reflected this in her perception of it not being a very effective system:

"All council employees have an interview every year about what they like to do, what courses they'd like to go on. It kind of has an influence, it doesn't always work out, basically most of the courses that I've been on I've put myself on them".

2.62. Bob also felt that the system is not very effective:

"they've got a training plan if you like, where everybody will do PRD's where you want to be and then there's never any money for training, so there's a very negative attitude from staff towards that".

2.63. The frustration this caused is shown by Bill:

"Although I turn up but there's not a lot, you air your views, you write them down and then a year later you do exactly the same and nothing happens. I've been here 6 years now and I've not been sent on one course, nothing".

2.64. Partly this is due to the fact training is predominantly provided for staff to undertake their current job rather than to help with their career development:

“I mean you can ask for courses and they have, we have to process that and send it across to the chief officer. He’’ look at it and say ‘Barbara Bates senior rec why does she want to go on an IT course? Not part of the job, no you can’t”.

2.65. However as Barbara said the PRD does encourage staff to identify future career needs and she has had to be quite pushy to develop her experiences:

“Well they do ask all these questions you know, ‘what do you see yourself doing?’ Its like I asked at one point if I could sort of shadow the head pool attendant and duty managers to gain more experience and they’ve allowed me to do that.”

2.66. Bradley realised that the problem is cost:

“We have to state in our PRD what we want to do really and we’ve had them for about four/five years, its just that they haven’t got the funding to actually put us on the course”.

2.67. Ben who has been at the centre for just over a year has not had a PRD and is not aware of them. Thus it would seem that the PRD system is ineffective and may actually be detrimental to morale.

2.68. In terms of how staff developed and progressed with the Council in the past, Brian has worked for them for his whole career and a major influence on his progression was that one manager took interest in his development:

“I had some good advice and I was guided quite well and part of the brief was ‘you’re going to have to tolerate having a year you know on the pool but we will help you and you won’t be in that position long’. Now I can’t make that kind of guarantee to people”.

2.69. Thus he progressed, not through a formal career development system, but because of the approach of one man and he seems to be replicating that with Barbara.

2.70. Overall it would appear that the induction, training and development processes are ineffective for all never mind meeting the needs of graduates and there is a discrepancy between what is formally laid down and what actually happens.

General Conclusions

2.71. Barbara's job does not require a degree, the main requirements are for a specific vocational qualification in order to perform technical skills and keep the pool in operation and the appropriate personal skills in order to deal with staff and customers. It could be argued that Barbara's personal skills have partly been developed during the degree course, which other people seem to recognise rather than her. Where graduate skills are being used they are for activities beyond the scope of the job that the manager has encouraged Barbara to undertake. The manager is a key person for Barbara within this centre as it is his management style that has enabled her to be utilised more fully and thus gain more from her job. However, he stressed that he has not identified Barbara's potential because she is a graduate but because of her attitude and personality, although he does understand that because she is a graduate she needs to be stretched more. Thus it could be argued that it is a combination of Barbara's personality, where she has used her initiative and put herself forward in order to be recognized by the manager that she has the commitment and personality to progress, and her degree which enables her to be stretched more.

3.0. Case Study 3

Organisation: Local Authority Sports Development Team

Graduate: Carol

Job Title: Senior Sports Development Officer (SDO)

The Nature of the Job

3.1. Carol's job is at junior manager level, she has responsibility for the Sports Development Officer, Carrie and she will also have responsibility for recruiting and managing her replacement Disability Sports Development Officer. Her main responsibility is to lead and manage sport development programmes and initiatives for the county. Carol describes the role as:

“overall line manager of the sports development unit within ***, more of a management position, bit more paper shuffling than hands on work and just overseeing the development and implementation of the strategy.”

3.2. Carol's role is more strategic than operational which is reflected by Carrie's description of the job:

“I'm directly answerable to Carol, so she basically manages the whole sports development programme on a generic level and obviously I have my parts that I manage but Carol sort of oversees everything and deals more, she's trying to get away from the hands on and leave that to me, so its more with the meetings and that type of thing”.

Chris also identified that Carol's role was developing, planning and implementing sports development programmes, however he sees her job evolving over the longer term to eventually take on more responsibility:

“Over the next twelve months she will develop the role into a managerial line as well, with support from me, so she will have initial line management then for the other six sports development officers within the department”.

3.3. He is very positive about the job growing with her:

“Her background and her experience so far through the work she's done with us part time, led us to believe that we could evolve that post with her as the key catalyst”.

3.4. With regard to whether or not a degree is required, the job description does state, "preferably qualified to Degree Level or equivalent in a leisure related field". However Carol herself is not convinced that a degree is needed for her job, she suggests that experience is as valuable:

"I've tried to think of that you know people say you should have a degree well I'm thinking well, why? Why should I employ someone with a degree with no experience as opposed to employing someone who hasn't got a degree but they've got three years experience".

Colin also believes that a degree is not a necessity although it can be of benefit:

"Well you've got to be bright to be in that position, but again the flip side of it is if you use your common sense or are willing to learn I should imagine that somebody could do that job".

Carrie feels that a degree is "something you need" to do the Senior SDO job as it enables you to be more effective:

"the original SDO, he didn't have a degree. It was always something that was commented on about because of you know of his basic intelligence and you know and his basic just writing skills that type of thing and then when Jim came in he didn't have a degree either you could tell like, no offence to him but he would write a report or whatever and it was awful you know punctuation, grammar everything was just dreadful and you can tell".

Chris feels that the most important element is character:

"I'm a firm believer, and I say this with no disrespect, but I'm not, I'm not really gonna be drawn in by qualifications. Sports development by its nature and leisure in a broader sense, is very much dependent on the character, and I really do believe that the character's that we are looking for within our sector of leisure, it is critical that they are gregarious for a start off".

3.5. In terms of the skills and attributes required to do the job a wide range were identified, which are shown in the table 1.3. This indicates that the interviewees were able to deconstruct the job into skills and attributes and there was consensus on the two areas of management and people skills. Management can be broken down into two aspects, management of the programmes and management of people. Chris, Carol and Carrie put an emphasis on the

management of programmes and the main skill needs relate to the technical activities of sports development of developing, implementing and monitoring work programmes. People skills were seen by all as key, although different people emphasised different aspects of the people skills. Both Chris and Colin felt a crucial aspect was the ability to deal with external people and to be political:

“Able to handle areas of confrontation, able to deflect and deal with confrontation in a way that is managed, and a managed process that allows the participant, the parent, the schoolteacher, the general enquirer to understand the pressures that we are under as a department, the pressures that sports development is trying to solve and be party to. They need to understand the political will that we are driven by”. (Chris)

“The job obviously great communication skills, patience, which is a massive thing because they put so many blocks in front of you and really being, you’ve just got to be very patient with, not only the sports council, the assembly and all the other external partners but also in house aswell you know you’ve got to have patience because there’s so many different, like there’s the rugby, there’s obviously myself the football, there’s everything, you’ve got to have lots of patience with all the different associations because they all have a different agenda”. (Colin)

Table 1.3. Skills required for the job.

Skill/attribute	No.	People who identified the skill/attribute
Management	4	All
People skills	4	All
Administration	3	All except Colin
Supervision	3	All except Colin
Developing work programmes	3	All except Colin
Planning	3	All except Colin
Coordination	3	All except Colin
Implementation	3	All except Colin
Monitoring	3	All except Colin
Delegation	3	All except Colin
Political	2	Chris and Colin
Analysis	2	Carol and Chris
Obtaining grants	2	Carol and Colin
Develop & maintain relationships	2	Carrie and Colin
Confidence	2	Carol and Chris
Gregarious	2	Chris and Colin
Learning	2	Chris and Colin
Patience	2	Chris and Colin

3.6. This perception may be because Chris and Colin have worked in sports development for a number of years and have a sophisticated view of what is required. Carol and Carrie perceive people skills more narrowly in terms of Carol's management style. This is probably because this is the more immediate issue for both of them as they have both been recently put together as manager and staff member. Carol states:

"Its about people skills more than anything. While yeah you can get trained on it you could get somebody who came in and needed training because they haven't got the confident approach or you could get somebody who is overconfident and goes in and is a bit sort of abrupt".

Carrie views it in terms of how she will be managed:

"I think I've a little bit of a worry with Carol because we're in the same office and because she's never been a manager before, I'm just wondering how its going to go, whether it will affect us. I don't think it would or should do but I don't like the thought that she's going to check on me all the time cos I don't need to be. From her point of view she thinks maybe as a manager that's what she should be doing, not that she needs to."

3.7. A key area for analysis is whether or not Carol's job is appropriate for a graduate. The person specification does identify that a degree is preferred however all the participants state that it is not a necessity and experience is just as important. Also the interviewees all felt that the expertise and knowledge required was not at graduate level and that a non-graduate with experience would develop this knowledge. Chris goes as far to say, "I really genuinely believe in the nicest possible way we could actually teach monkeys to deliver sports development". However he does feel that in order to be effective there is a need to use analytical and problem solving skills. Furthermore, Colin states, "you need people to challenge sports development, it should never be the same, it has to evolve and it has to go on" and Chris states: "I really believe that's gonna help the department develop itself and to really be able to continue to challenge sports development".

Appropriateness of the Graduate

3.8. Carol chose options in physiology, coaching studies and psychology. She found the most relevant area of study was coaching studies however there were a

number of transferable skills that she gained from her degree that have been valuable. A key area is the ability to research and learn:

“You have to read up on things don’t you, keep in touch with things, its something you learn at university as well, your used to going to the library and sitting down with a book or the internet as it is now and having a research and look through things”.

Carrie also feels that this is an important part of Carol’s job and that those skills are developed during degree courses:

“Carol’s probably going to be covering such as doing more reports as such, you know for maybe, probably internal bodies but also externally as well, like the strategies and things like that. That type of thing would push me you know that’s something that I would have to work at doing. It would be like going back to university really doing the reports and having to research”.

Colin also feels that’s this is an important part of sports development:

“So you know, especially, working in sport development, especially in the side, that job, things change and its not silly to say, change on a daily basis, they change the goal posts on a daily basis so you would really, really need to be clued up, constantly, constantly, constantly reading up on what’s changing, what’s not changing”.

Chris also feels it is important to continue learning:

“there are thankfully a lot of resource material out there that will provide us with that information. But it also means an awful lot of learning in our own time because you do have to take stuff home”.

3.9. Another key attribute Carol feels that her degree course developed was her confidence:

“You learn to be confident again through uni haven’t you. Now when I was in university I used to have to stand up and do, especially with dissertations, and I’d be shaking and I’d be bright red. Well from doing that, although you wish you could do anything but, and that puts you in stead for the future cops you have to do it, you have to stand up”.

Carries also feels that her degree helped her develop her confidence and like Carol she believes the presentations she had to undertake helped: "Obviously I'm a confident person, when it comes to doing, speaking to the public or whatever I think university helped me a lot there". Carol also believes that her degree helped her develop analytical skills that enable her to be more creative:

"You begin to develop a bit of initiative about things and you think, or creativity, you know, I mean I can sit here with, and start, and * was in here earlier with Dragon Sport and said right what are you going to do in the next three years and ideas are just coming, they just flow out, and he's like where have you got all these ideas from and that's from thinking about things and you have some sort of, not imagination as such, but some sort of development structure inside to get the ideas out".

3.10. Chris feels that this is a key strength of graduates and particularly of Carol:

"She's not prepared to just accept it because its written down, she wants to know why we do it that way, she's very innovative in the way she tries to approach things and she's prepared even at this very early period in her sports development career to challenge the concept of what sports development is trying to do, and more importantly how it is doing it, and rightly or wrongly I can only really say that that's come from an awful lot of teaching she's had within the college environment because this is only her second job and previously she's worked very specifically in disability".

3.11. In terms of weaknesses Carol feels that the main issue was that the course did not cover specific aspects that are relevant to her job such as accessing grants and managing volunteers. She also felt that the course was very broad and there was not an opportunity to specialise. Carrie also felt that her course was broad: "I always think that's one of the hard things with a sports course anyway you know, it is so diverse".

3.12. When Carol started the course she did not have any idea of a career and actually wanted to do interior design but was not able to do a degree course in it. It was not until she was well into her course that she decided on her career path:

“I think I can remember sitting it might have been, actually it might have been at the beginning of the third year. It was the beginning of the third year em cos I remember whose dining room I was sat in, at the house you know, student house. I was doing research in something, I’m not sure exactly what it was but I can remember thinking then sports development that’s where I want to go”.

3.13. Carrie had a basic idea that she wanted to work in sports development but did not seek career guidance whilst at university about it.

“To be honest I didn’t really think about it. I didn’t realize how difficult it would be to get a job. I sort of knew, I enjoyed the sports development and I knew sort of roughly where I wanted to be so, I never really, I couldn’t even tell. Where was it, in the library?”

3.14. Although it was university that made her aware of sports development as a possible career: “I didn’t even know sports development existed before I went to university anyway so it sort of opened my eyes to that.”

3.15. Carrie also felt that a placement should have been included in her degree as a lot of her friends who did other degree subjects found them useful:

“A lot of them did four year courses with a year placement and that’s what I would like to see * and other universities do is a year out, even six months something like that, some sort of placement in the workplace”.

Chris agrees when he says, “I think there needs to be an area where they actually get physical placement”. He also feels that degree courses aimed at sports development should include more management. “You know whether courses in the future take the students down an understanding of management as part of sports development”. However he does understand that higher education can’t prepare people practically for management:

“She’s now in a management side and she needs to understand how to develop that role and that range of experience will come we’ve obviously got to give her guidance and training for that as well which is clearly something that they can’t give in college’s and universities, and we appreciate that, that’s our role.”

3.16. In terms of knowing what is involved in the Sports Science degree Chris states that he is “not wholly au fait with the full content” of Carol’s degree but he has a good idea in general as his son has done a PE and Sports Development degree. This is reflected in his understanding of graduate skills and knowledge.

3.17. There is a contrast in perceptions of the extent to which the degree has prepared Carol for work in sports development. Carol feels that it did not provide her with the appropriate knowledge although it did give her crucial transferable skills. Chris feels it has prepared Carol well although her background in voluntary work has facilitated this:

“when she first came here to be interviewed for the disability sports post she’d got a massive understanding of sports development which was a great credit, and I’m not saying this cos I’m sat here talking to you, but a great credit to the college’s programme but also her ability to tease out of her specific course the sports development information that she wanted, and clearly when she sat down stairs, there’s not many people that have thrown me off my seat when they’ve been interviewed, she did that”.

3.18. Carol seems to have a good understanding of how she developed in her degree and the skills she has gained. She illustrates this when she says about recruiting others that “we need to look at that person as a person not just as a degree”. Both Carol and Carrie felt key areas of development were research/learning skills and confidence. Chris also feels that the ability to continue learning is crucial. Chris and Carol both felt that analysis and critique were important attributes and ones, which graduates could particularly bring to the job. Chris’s emphasis on the need for what might be termed ‘traditional’ academic skills but also more vocational attributes through work experience, “There still needs to be the balance of theory but I think there needs to be a harder more thorough understanding of the practical delivery”.

3.19. Although Chris does not know the exact areas covered in Carol’s sports science degree he does seem to have a good understanding of the skills that a graduate can bring to the job, probably due to the fact that his son did a sports degree. Chris is also positive about the courses that both Carol and Carrie have studied.

Performance of the Graduate

3.20. It is difficult to analyse how well Carol is doing in her current job as she has only been in post for two weeks. However, it is possible to ascertain how well she has performed generally since gaining employment post graduation as she worked for the unit before as Disability Sport Officer, thus all the people interviewed had a view on her performance.

3.21. Chris thinks very highly of Carol and it was the combination of her character and her knowledge that got her the job:

“We did buy Carol’s character in a big way because she was just wonderful, very articulate, very bright, very positive, above all else she brought a huge understanding of sports development having never been a sports development officer, which was critical”.

3.22. Carol herself feels that she has the right attributes to do the job well:

“I’ve got the initiative to get on with it, to go out there and get what I want...I’ve got a bit of imagination to foresee where I want **shire to go, what to achieve and just what I want everybody to achieve as a team.”

She feels that one of her strengths is realising she doesn’t know it all and when to ask for help:

“Having a bit of intelligence and finding if I read something I don’t understand I look it up or I’ll ask somebody, I’m not, I’m only the same as them but at the end of the day I’m just in a higher position”.

She also feels that she can deal with confrontation:

“Well I told someone off for the first time last week, I was pretty good at that, so that, I was pretty worried about doing that, but I was quite good at that, so that was alright”.

3.23. Chris agrees that she is able to deal with confrontation: “she’s quite a character, a very strong character capable of dealing with occasional confrontational processes but dealing with them in a managed way.”

He also feels that she will perform well:

"It was very important that the character fit the role as well as the role being moulded to the character and that's what we are doing we are evolving that process with her now because we see her as being the key person to do it".

3.24. Carol concurs with the fact that she has been given this kind of support when she says, "my boss obviously saw something in me that is going to grow up with me and mature with the job". Chris also acknowledges that they have both started well:

"They understand the process, they understand the theory, you need the hard evidence that they actually deliver for you very quickly and that's the difficulty, say the term, and I know that it's a term that is used lightly you know at the moment their having to hit the floor and run and that's difficult, you know not every person can do that so we are lucky that our two could".

3.25. Chris feels that part of the reason for Carol being able to be immediately effective is due to that fact that she also has a lot of practical work through the voluntary and paid work that she undertook whilst at college:

"I know that Carol's background has been a very proactive coach both in the equestrian arena and also in the hockey programmes that she still does at Plas Coch. She then went on, or whilst still at college undertaking work as a part time leisure attendant within a leisure centre complex so she's beginning to broaden her background and understanding the needs of the participant".

3.26. Carrie and Colin also believe that Carol will perform well:

"I think she's got all the skills that she needs to be able to do the job".
(Carrie)

"There's no doubt about the fact that she is a very clued up girl, a very bright girl, which is brilliant for her, you know its good and she's the right person for the job, which is great". (Colin)

3.27. With regard to weaknesses Carol feels that it is her age and inexperience:

"I mean my main weakness is I'm young and its gaining knowledge, not only knowledge of **shire, cos I've only lived here for two years anyway,

but the knowledge, sports development is so diverse it changes everyday, they bring in new things, new contracts, and its just, its like, you know. I've been asked to do the strategy, if they'd asked me that four months ago I would have been like, 'Oh my god what do you mean I've got to do, you know but so if I get stuck I'll ask somebody or I'll have a go basically'.

Chris agrees that the main issue is her age and inexperience:

"She does challenge things she then gets frustrated quite quickly if people don't understand why she's challenging things or they're not switched on to that area of work. She does, she does sometimes publicly share frustration, but that's a thing about maturity as well, you know she's a young girl in a very senior post and she's got that because she thoroughly deserves it, as I've touched on."

3.28. The fact that Carol gets frustrated is reflected by Carrie when she says, "I think sometimes she can be a bit too abrupt maybe sometimes".

3.29. The consensus is that Carol is performing well and the perception is that she will continue to do well in the job. Three elements combine to enable this, the transferable skills she has gained from her degree, her character and her experiences.

Utilisation

3.30. Carol does feel she is being fully utilised both in her current job and she also felt she was challenged in her previous job,

"its challenging, especially this one cos you know its new, but its rewarding at the same time because your working with members of the public, you might not like the members of the public in * but you know it is challenging. If you can, when I was working in disability sport I actually gained four and a half grand of extra income from people to spend on facilities and you can do things like that. You can do whatever you want to do, your helping other people, you learn a lot, you meet a lot of people".

3.31. She also feels that there is a career pathway for her within the unit and is encouraged by Chris, which enhances her motivation:

“I mean Chris will say the same thing, the next step up is his office basically, and he said I want to see you there in a few years time, so why should I leave? I’ve got the perfect opportunity to develop myself here now, you know I’m lucky enough to get this job and obviously I can work up and it’s nice to know there are routes. The only thing is when you’re stuck in a job and you can’t see any progression at all, that’s when you start getting bored and thinking I don’t want to be here anymore”.

3.32. Carrie also feels that Carol has been utilised in both jobs:

“You’ve got disabilities within the disability and all that sort of thing and I think that was hard for her and obviously working part time was another thing that was stifling her probably a little. So I think coming into this post, I think it is right for her”.

3.33. However Carrie herself does not feel that she is being used to her full potential:

“I mean I just find everything quite easy to do, I’m not, nothing’s pushing me at all, it’s just I do it and that’s it. I don’t, I always thought before actually getting sort of like a proper job, you know you’d come to work and you know stress and thinking about work all the time....I never have really felt like I’ve been pushed to my potential as such”.

In contrast to Carol she does not see a pathway upwards for herself:

“The only way you can move is sideways to either being sports specific or go to another authority that maybe pays a bit more but you’re still doing the same sort of thing”

3.34. Chris feels that he is challenging both of them:

“What we tend to do here though is we actually stretch them beyond sports development because we evolve their work programme quite quickly in so much as we give them individual management responsibilities”.

Thus Chris’s management approach has meant that, in Carol’s case, he provides the right conditions for graduates to develop which he indicates when he says, “it’s up to the employer to give them the additional challenge and we do that here”. Despite feeling that she is not being used to her full potential Carrie does like Chris’s management style:

“Dave knows me and he knows that I can do the job and he’s happy with what I’ve done and he says that you know, There’s not any need for me to be breathing down your neck, you know just go and do anything and if you’ve got any problems come and see me. Which is good, I don’t need anyone”.

3.35. Her feeling that she will not be challenged may be because Carol is now above her and will do much of the higher-level activities:

“Carol’s done a work plan for the next six months until April, so its just basically implementing that and carrying on with the work that’s been going on so its just sustaining the different initiatives and trying to get up to date and just monitor everything”.

3.36. It may also be related to character in that Carol does appear to be more pushy in relation to taking on more responsibility although it could be argued that as senior sports development officer she is in more of a position to do that. As Chris says:

“She wants things to move quickly, she wants to develop the programmes that she’s responsible for, she wants immediate responsibility of the whole sports development team”.

This is supported by Colin when he says, “she knows exactly what she wants career wise”.

3.37. In relation to a degree influencing progression Carol feels that the industry is in a transition stage. When comparing her career progression with Chris’s she says:

“He might have got there later than I’ll get there but I don’t think you can justify that as I’ve got a degree therefore I’m better. I don’t, I really don’t think it works like that. It will get to that point that so many things are on offer now, it will get to that point where the old school system will go out and all these diverse degrees will come in, but at the moment it’s still the case when ‘hang on I’ve done seven years experience in this therefore I am more qualified than you’ and it is still true.”

However this transition may be due to the perception that university courses are becoming more effective in preparing people for this area of work:

“The great thing about this is that all three of them come from different college or university backgrounds, so if that’s a thing that is happening and being reflected across the UK then that to me is really positive, because its not just a local change, its probably a national change and that’s really good.” (Chris)

3.38. Colin emphasises that he feels that a degree is of benefit when he discloses that he would like to do a qualification:

“I would like to have some sort of qualification, I’ve always felt like that but the job that we actually do now, the job that I actually do now is very, very time consuming but I’m hoping from possibly this September I would like to be on some sort of course”.

3.39. It would appear that Carol is being used to her full potential, this comes from the job in terms of the nature of the tasks she has to do. The management style of Chris, plus her own attitude also enables her to stretch herself. She seems to have particular support from Chris in developing her career. In contrast Carrie does not feel she is being stretched and is frustrated. Her position is at a lower level and in the section on the nature of the job she states that she does the hands on work whilst Carol does higher-level activities. Carol also does not seem to demand as much from Chris and is happy to get on with things however she herself identifies that she needs an external pressure to do that which is hinted at when she says, “I mean there’s probably a lot more that I can learn but its just being pushed”.

General Perceptions of Graduates

3.40. Within the sports development unit there is a positive attitude towards graduates, as Carol states, “I don’t think its negative in any respect at all”. Chris sees the benefit of graduates in terms of the ability to learn from them but he sees it as a two way process and that a mix of people is the most beneficial:

“We’ve got graduates, we’ve got people who worked their way up, Dave and myself, but I feel that everyone put, you know, everyone works together and it’s a great thing as well because we are learning off each other everyday and that’s a great thing as long as we’re learning isn’t it”.

He believes that generally there will be a positive view of graduates from others in the unit when he says "I think they're settling into the understanding that yea, it's great to have new ideas, people fresh from college". This is supported by Colin who says:

"It can be a very, very positive thing, not only for themselves but also the knowledge that they can pass on to others, definitely I think that it's a great asset. I wish I had something like that, but again it was a case of 'don't need that when your young', but if I could roll it back now I would have that, I would do that because I think that I personally would say that it's a great benefit to the individual".

3.41. Carol did feel there was a little bit of jealousy outside of the unit within the general administration unit of leisure services but she also put this down to the fact that she was young as well:

"they have got a problem and you can tell they have cos I've come in, I've got sort of 20 year old, sort of graduate, got a job and people are going to get peed off with that because that are sitting there thinking 'why haven't I gone up there?'"

Carrie also puts any views towards her down to her age, "I think because we're the youngest in the department and there is quite a big age gap between some people". However Chris does not feel that Carol and Carrie act differently because they are graduates, "They don't come across that I've got a degree. They're not like that, they're very much part of the team". Overall there is a very positive perception of graduates within the unit but the view is that the most effective team consists of people with a mix of backgrounds.

Induction and Training

3.42. There are formal induction, training and development systems within the unit that are set by the local authority, a key area of investigation is whether or not they work in practice and how they impact on the graduate. Chris felt that the induction process was thorough for both Carol and Carrie. This involved familiarity with the geography of the borough and the operational processes of the local authority. He also spent time talking with Carol as part of her induction.

“I spent quite a bit of time in the first week, ten days of her new appointment with Carol talking about existing programmes, reviewing where we are now, reviewing the status of the department, the budget issues. So I guess on a fairly informal casual way we’ve sat for a good few hours”.

3.43. Carol and Carrie both contradict this view,

“all I basically got shown was where the photocopier was. It was honestly, that was it”. (Carol)

“A bit of a mish mash, obviously I had the initial induction, you know fire escapes and toilets and all that type of thing. Never really had a proper induction within the office.” (Carrie).

3.44. However Carol does support the fact that Dave has an informal approach when she indicates that she has been shadowing him to learn the job.

3.45. In terms of training and development all staff have an annual staff development review which helps them identify their training requirements for the following year. Carrie pointed out that training was poor within the unit: “The training we have had internally has been awful, non existent really, so you know its basically learning, asking, find out for yourself how things work”. Carol has identified that this is a weakness that she wants to address in her new role: “I’d like to do some top up training. I think everybody should in the department and that’s something that I’m actually looking into”. Chris admits that there is a lack of resources for training and development which means that it is difficult to take on a graduate with little experience:

“We’re limited on the budget elements that we can bring in. therefore that has a reflection on what time existing officers have got to give to development, for induction purposes, ongoing training, whatever it might be.... I think that’s the point that other authorities albeit in an informal way is that they don’t have the capacity to bring a graduate in to spend time helping them to develop into that particular role”.

3.46. However the lack of resources means that training identified at staff development reviews doesn’t always happen, which causes frustration:

“Oh yeah we have development, well I’ve had one since I’ve been here and it, nothing ever came from it. Cos at the time myself and Carol were both wanted to do like management courses knowing that there might be a possibility of, but nothing happened”.

3.47. Chris does see training as important and he feels that professional body qualifications are of benefit:

“I think that its critical that the guys understand that those types of bodies, whoever it might be have a big part to play in the industry and have a very big part to play in the development of their careers and I think they ignore ILAM or ISRM or anyone else at their peril to be honest.”

3.48. In terms of how staff have developed and progressed with the Council in the past both Chris and Colin have worked their way up from being part time coaches to begin with. Chris undertook a number of NCF and ILAM courses as he progressed. When Chris became an SDO his then manager was a key influence on him and acted as a mentor. An example of the relationship is given by Chris:

“I used to have a boss here who was brilliant and he used to say ‘if you wanna be a sergeant wear the stripes’ and that was a clever way of making me do it for free I think, but you know it worked because I wanted that experience and I realized if I was going to develop I needed to have that broader understanding”.

3.49. Chris hints that he worked beyond his job, which helped him get on, and he also explained that to get into sports development he undertook a number of coaching qualifications and voluntary work. Carol is similar in that she funded herself through a number of qualifications and picked up voluntary work whilst at college and when she was working part time with the authority, “I went out and did my own. I got NVQs, I got BHS courses, I got hockey coaching”. Carrie also worked beyond her job from working in a part time position within the authority in order to get a permanent full time post:

“They put me on to the play schemes so then I was getting a wage then after the play schemes finished then Dave put me on as like assistant sports development officer and then paid, I worked full time but he paid me part time wages. I thought that was great cos I was getting the experience, I didn’t mind working for nothing really, well not working for nothing but and then just from that it’s basically grown”.

3.50. This was evidenced in Chris's explanation of why they got their respective jobs:

"I've interviewed many candidates in the past that have been degree qualified or HND They're the first two characters, the pair of them together, that I've seen that have actually come to the table with an understanding of sports development, and not just a written understanding of theoretical understanding. They've come with the fact that they've tried even in a small way to turn into practice within a voluntary role, be it club, leisure centre whatever it might be, whereas others have brought me to the table theory".

3.51. Overall it would appear that the formal systems of induction, training and development do not work in practice. There is a discrepancy between the perceptions of Chris and the two graduates. This may be due to expectation or Chris not realising that the induction did not meet their needs.

General Conclusions

3.52. The post of Senior Sports Development Officer can be categorised as a graduate level job as the nature of the job and the management style of Chris provides the scope for Carol to use her graduate skills and knowledge. This contrasts with Carrie whose job as Sports Development Officer is not a graduate level post as she believes that she does not need to draw on these skills. Her job is much more operational and hands on rather than strategic. However, Chris, who is supportive of the graduates, does not seem to realise this and Carol is probably not an experienced enough manager to also realise.

3.53. Carol's degree has provided her with a range of attributes and transferable skills in order to do the job and it is generally recognised that she is performing well and will continue to perform well. Chris has mapped out a clear career pathway for her in terms of eventually taking over the team and also encourages her by suggesting that she will eventually take on his job. Carol recognises this and is therefore satisfied in her job and can see her future in the unit. On the other

hand Carrie does not have this clear pathway and feels the way to move on is to look for a job externally.

3.54. Chris seems to have an understanding of graduate needs and abilities and is thus able to stretch Carol and also use the graduate attributes that she has. However he feels that the most effective team is a mix of educational backgrounds. He is also very focused on Carol perhaps to the detriment of Carrie.

3.55. The unit appears to be weak in relation to induction and training and development practices which would seem to stem from a lack of time and financial resources.

4.0. Case Study 4

Organisation: Commercial sector Health and Fitness company

Graduate: Dan

Job Title: Peripatetic Swimming Instructor

The Nature of the Job.

4.1. Dan's job is a new position for the organisation and does not have a job description. Dan describes it in the following way:

“I actually teach swimming in the centre I work at in **. I do all the administration side, booking people on to courses, making sure there's spaces, making sure the classes are full”

4.2. At the other centres he oversees the administration of swimming lessons and covers if there is sickness. He is also currently setting up a swimming programme for all the clubs. David describes Dan's job as:

“Dan is the swim coordinator for *, * and *. How it links is basically Dan arranges sort of swim lessons so forth, he organises the aquatic side you might say, he has big inputs into that of what goes on. Procedures wise he's involved in that. Basically he generates cash for the centre, promotes his own classes”.

4.3. Dan's job is very flexible and generally he can identify his own working hours and activities. With regard to needing a degree to do the job it was not a specific recruitment prerequisite and both Dan and David feel that it is not required, as Dan says, “it helps in certain aspects but its not sort of you must have a degree to do this job”. Although Dan does feel that he does use elements of his degree,

“I wouldn't have said that I would have done the degree for the job I do, there are certainly things that I have taken from the degree that I can use in my job, but with the sports science degree you can take it an apply it to loads of different things”

4.4. In terms of skills and attributes required to do the job a range were identified. However, David was more able to identify the types of skills required for the job than Dan.

Table 1.5. Skills required for the job.

Skill/attribute	People who identified the skill/attribute
Administration	Both
Communication	Both
Lifeguard	Both
Swimming ability	Both
Teaching	Both
Cash handling	David
Creativity	David
Evaluation	Dan
Life skills	David
Multi skilled	David
Organisational	Dan
Patience	David
Versatile	David

4.5. There was consensus over the core skills to the job of administering the swimming activities and the actual teaching of swimming, however David seemed more aware of the peripheral skills needed to do the job such as creativity, life skills, patience and versatility, he tended to describe the type of person required such as being multi skilled, having life skills and being an “all rounder”.

4.6. Due to the fact that Dan’s post is new and unique to the organisation it appears quite vague as to what Dan’s role actually is and he and David were not able to be specific about Dan’s day to day tasks with the exception of teaching swimming. This seems to be reflected in how he got the job:

“last January, so eight or nine months ago they wanted me to set up a swimming programme within the company because there wasn’t anything set up. There was swimming lessons but there was nothing else in place, so I got asked to a meeting at head office with three or four other people and basically it ended up where it was just the two of us doing it, carried on doing it and I just basically got asked if I would like to get more involved in the swimming and did. I still worked as a lifeguard and I just set up the swimming programme. Then I went away for nine weeks in the summer, before I went away they said this is what we want you to do when you come back”.

4.7. It would appear from the description of the job and the perceptions of Dan and David that the job is not a graduate level job. The job can be broken down into three elements; teaching swimming, administration of the swimming programme and developing the new swimming scheme for the company. Dan's job requires technical skills and knowledge in order to teach swimming and develop swimming programmes. However, this expertise was not developed on his degree programme but through him undertaking swimming qualifications and also from the fact he is an experienced swimmer. Dan's job also requires some strategic skills in developing the swimming programme for the company and introducing it into the clubs. However, he does not seem to have the final decision as to whether the club takes on the programme as he has to convince the individual managers' of the clubs to put it into practice, "They seem dead attentive, 'Oh yea, we'll do that and there's no problem and you go back two weeks later and nothings been done". He therefore has to communicate his ideas effectively and influence and persuade others in trying to get his programme implemented. Dan does not identify the need for teamwork skills because generally he does work on his own.

Appropriateness of the Graduate.

4.8. Dan chose options in sports psychology, sociology, physiology and coaching. He acknowledged that he does use elements of the knowledge that he has gained on his degree:

"Exercise physiology definitely, cos when I do coaching or teaching especially with adults you get them asking quite specific questions that you can use what knowledge you've got to answer, not in any great depth. The things I learnt on coaching, coaching things you can put them into practice as well".

4.9. He also feels that the degree has given him some transferable skills that are relevant to his job:

"Organisational stuff really, its stuff that I do because its never the same thing and you have to jig things round, its that organisational, and the other main one is using the computer. Before I came to university you

either sort of, you know, played games on it, now you can use it more efficiently”.

He also believes it has developed his planning and analytical skills:

“It gave me an understanding of why I was doing things and I do some coaching in the job I do and it gives me a better way of thinking about applying things and working things out”.

He also identified that presentations had improved his communication skills, particularly when teaching and also he has developed gone information gathering skills:

“definitely using the internet that probably is the biggest one, biggest thing you can do and looking, sifting through magazines and things and books and articles”.

4.10. Dan also believes that its has developed his thinking skills:

“I think doing a degree, doing a broad base of subjects you can, if there’s something not exactly what you need to do you can sort of think around the broad subjects that you’ve got in the back of your head”.

He also believes that the degree helped him to mature:

“You perhaps have a better appreciation of things because you’ve got to get things done, you’ve got deadlines for assignments and things it makes you sort of more, I don’t know, grown up in the way you go about things”.

4.11. Dan could only identify one weakness of the sports science degree which was that it may have been too broad for other people but for him this was a strength, particularly as he wasn’t sure about what career he wanted when he started the degree:

“I’ve done sport for years and years and its what I’ve been involved in and its what I’ll carry on doing as well. I don’t specifically have an ideal job that I want to do just within the sports industry so it seemed the right thing to do.”

4.12. David employs other graduates from the Sports Science course that Dan has undertaken as well so his perceptions of their appropriate tends to relate to

their role as fitness instructors as well as Dan's role. David feels that graduates are not necessarily appropriate to the fitness instructor job as it doesn't require graduate skills:

“they're very intelligent but a big chunk of the job, a big chunk of my job isn't necessarily working things out, its interpreting things and you don't necessarily need that amount of intelligence to do it”

He goes on to say:

“We're not looking for a sports scientist, its brilliant to have but again you need the hands on experience. I mean you could have a sports science degree and not know how to use that piece of machinery there”.

4.13. However he does acknowledge that graduate skills will become more relevant in the job in the future,

“I think they should have more hands on qualifications too, as I say you know anatomy and physiology is brilliant and we do need it, fitness instructors need it but as in depth I don't know. I mean if our company moves forward with like testing and so forth, then they'll come into their own I presume. But where we are exactly at the moment what I need is hands on”.

4.14. David believes that Dan is more effective than most graduates describing him as “far from typical” to the extent that he believes Dan “could go to duty manager's position; I'd have him as a duty manager”. In fact this Dan's effectiveness is illustrated by the fact that he has been offered a duty manager's post at another club but he turned it down which he explains when he say's, “I don't really fancy management at the moment to be honest with you”. David also identifies a sports science undergraduate from Dan's course who is a casual lifeguard whom he also feels is a good employee “I mean we've got one on the pool, John, and I think John will stay with us and hopefully we'll push him on. Again he's a good all rounder”. David explained that he had formally worked for a local authority and feels that the graduates and undergraduates he has working for him in his current post are more highly motivated,:

“Maybe that’s the way the local authority makes them, maybe it does demotivate them in some ways. The private sector seem to be, the graduates seem to be more motivated”.

4.15. He also acknowledges that he has learnt from the graduates, “There’s things I’ve learned you know from them. I’m not the sort of person who thinks I haven’t got a degree they’ve got a degree I’ll shut them out”. He goes on to explain where graduates are valuable:

“They’ve got up to date knowledge, I find that, I mean to be honest private sector training courses wise are very slow. But they’re getting this information on a day to day basis when they are at college and it’s very useful to me”.

4.16. In terms of knowing what is involved in a sports science degree David admits he only knows a little about them and perceives they mainly cover anatomy and physiology.

Dan’s job has not provided him with the specific skills and knowledge to undertake his degree, he has developed these in other ways. However it has provided him with a broad base of knowledge that he can use elements of to facilitate the work that he does. The transferable skills he has developed on his degree have also enabled him to think through issues and communicate more effectively. Thus it would appear that degree is appropriate by the fact that it enhances Dan’s performance in his job.

Performance of the Graduate

4.17. Dan feels that the fact he has been promoted to his current job indicates that he is performing effectively, “I think personally, from my point of view, really, really well. Cos I’m probably high up in a short space of time. So I think really well”. The other external indication that he has had that he is performing well is that he comments that “the area manager has said that they want to try and hold on to me for as long as they can”. Dan also identified the reasons why he thinks he is doing well which relate to his personality and practical swimming ability and experience:

“I think personally I’m quite good with people, I get on with them well, communicate well with them. I am organised as well, if I wasn’t organised it would just fall back on me I think and with regard to things specifically to swimming I’ve done it for fourteen/fifteen years so I’ve got a fair amount of knowledge and I did it to a high level as well so I think cos I’ve got the knowledge there it makes it easier for me to do the job”.

4.18. Dan also indicates that he works beyond his job:

“You think you go into work and you do and go in at nine and finish at five or whatever, you do so many jobs a day and then you go home; but you don’t cos you get sidetracked and you do other things and you end up staying until half past six, cos you do. You might have a job title but more often than not they ask you to do something that’s not really, not that you shouldn’t be doing it but its not within what you normally do”.

This appears to be one of the reasons for his promotion:

“I got employed as a life guard and then last January, so 8 or 9 moths ago they wanted to set up a swimming programme because there wasn’t anything set up. There was swimming lessons but there was nothing else in place. So I got asked to go to a meeting at head office with three or four other people and basically it ended up where it was just the two of us doing it, carried on doing it and I just got asked if I would like to get more involved in the swimming and did. I still worked as a lifeguard and I just set up the swimming programme”

4.19. David also believes that Dan is performing very well and suggests this is because of his personality, “There’s not many people I do trust but Dan is one”. He goes on to explain this:

“If I give Dan something to do, I could be 99.9% sure that it’s come back and not need a lot of adjusting or if any. He’s quite relaxed as well in the way he goes about things, you know, he never seems to be under pressure, so he’s confident and basically he’s got the full package. Like I was saying he’s got good interpersonal skills, he’s very, very intelligent. Yeah, he’s an all rounder”.

4.20. However, David does keep referring to Dan’s intelligence in a positive way and gives an example of his contribution:

“he’s doing a health and safety review for this building, basically I brought Dan in on it cos its such a mindfield but we worked together and

thrashed things out, different opinions and so forth but yeah, I mean he's a very intelligent lad and he was good to work with".

4.21. Dan feels that his main weakness is "I think the biggest one I can't actually do anything about is just age and experience" whilst David does not feel that Dan has any weaknesses which he illustrates when he says, "Weaknesses, weaknesses wise, it's a difficult one as I do see him as I say as the full rounded".

Utilisation

4.22. On the whole Dan appears to be satisfied with his job although he does feel that he could be utilised a little more:

"from what I know I'm being utilised as much as I can be but that's limited in what I can do within the job role. I think I said before that they are expanding and I think given time when it expands a bit more and there's more work for me to do I will be able to apply a bit more"

4.23. He also feels a little frustrated that other managers do not necessarily listen to him:

"You go to a lot of centres and you try and get things up and running and you don't feel as though they're listening to you. I don't know whether its age or cos they don't know you, I think it's a mixture of both".

4.24. However he feels that the organisation realises that it needs to utilise him more:

"I think some people, the ones that know I'm a graduate, its sort of 'Oh, he's got a degree he won't be here very long'. A lot of them have actually said, quite a few of the management and higher management, we know you don't use enough of the staff and so they move on to something else, which is not saying that they want to get rid of me but its quite nice".

4.25. He also appreciates the fact that he is left alone to get on with his job:

"it's a new role, it's a new job role in the company, although the woman who does it for the whole company, you could say it's the watered down version of that. I think she thinks I know what I am doing and I can get on with that. I think I know what I'm doing and I get on with it".

4.26. David explains that he enables Dan to have a lot of freedom to do his job because of the attributes that he has. "I let Dan run with the ball cos I've worked with him before and I know his capabilities and basically it's a trust thing between me and Dan". David also believes that to keep Dan there is a need to utilise him to his potential, "To keep people like him you've got to keep them stimulated".

4.27. With regard to the degree impacting on the career progression of the graduate, Dan feels that it will have a positive effect, "I don't think the degree is helping at the moment, I think it will help in years to come. This idea was reinforced by Dan by his former manager who he quotes as saying "The person who appointed me at the time, who's no longer with the company actually said she expected me to leave fairly soon cos I had got a degree".

4.28. David feels that Dan will progress but he relates this to his attitude rather than his degree,

"I think that he is definitely capable of going higher without a doubt; he applies himself well to everything. I can see the way he goes about things, but again it's back to the trust thing and knowing that he's got a level head on his shoulders for his age as well."

4.29. There is scope within Dan's job for him to be utilised to his full potential but this does not seem to undermine his motivation as he perceives that senior managers' recognise his potential and he is also allowed to manage his own job and is given a lot of independence.

General Perception of Graduates

4.30. There appears to be mixed views towards graduates within the organisation. Dan's perception of his status as a graduate within the company is positive:

"I think you get given, I don't know if it's more respect but I personally get left alone to do my own thing. I don't know if it's the way I work or whether I'm a graduate, it's hard to say. I know cos the other person I know that's a graduate, they do, it's been said that because you two have

been to niversity we'll let you get on with things, cos you know, I think there is some sort of attitude to graduates definitely”.

4.31. However he does feel that he has to be sensitive to his attitude as a graduate:

“The people who I've come across in the company, I wouldn't say a lot of people know that I am a graduate, not cos I hide it just cos they never ask or they never. I think if you did say you were a graduate they would think your being snotty, however the ones that have found out that I am they do sort of treat you a little better as well I think and to an extent they expect a bit more out of you”.

4.32. Dan is also a little self-effacing about his degree, perhaps because he is sensitive to those who haven't got a degree:

“I think non graduates cos they've not been to university have got the experience of being at work and knowing how things work. So in that way, in that sense they have got a lot more common knowledge, worldly wise, however you want to word it. Skills, not skills, facts and knowledge about what your body does whatever I think I'm probably better up on that, anybody can read a book and go and, well not anybody, you know you can read a book and find it out for yourself”.

4.33. This perhaps is illustrated by David's attitude towards graduates as having a poor attitude when he says, “I do think a lot of graduates have a high opinion of themselves. As identified earlier he views Dan as the exception with regard to graduates and makes the following general comment about them:

“Graduates to be honest lack life skills. I sort of say that is a main problem . If they stay in education too long they lack that communication thing.

4.34. However he does feel that there is the potential for graduates in the industry if the have the right sort of experiences:

“If you could get a graduate with life skills they're your all rounder then, well that's what your looking for, but there is a high percentage that haven't and I've noticed it you know through people that have worked here and to be honest a lot of them lack common sense. I don't know why but they seem to lack common sense”.

4.35. Another issue that David raises is his perception that graduate's have too high expectations and that there is an abundant supply of graduates which is illustrated by his description of a conversation with an undergraduate from Dan's course who works casually at the centre:

“I think that they need to realise that the days of just going into a top job just when you graduate, and this is the thing with John at the moment. Now John has mentioned to me on a few occasions saying, ‘well I want to go in as manager’. Well I can tell you now its not going to happen. He would be very lucky if he does. There may be some but again there's a lot a degrees out there and you've got to be the cream of the crop of them degrees to do that”.

4.36. David also perceives that there are differences in institutions: “I think there's good and bad universities. I'd say ** was probably a good sports science degree college, whilst ** it's at the low end”. However David acknowledges this is only his perception as he has only had experience of graduates from the latter university and he has identified that they are good graduates.

4.37. Dan also believe that some graduates are not realistic:

“I don't know when you start doing a degree you think ‘Oh you're going to come out with a 20 grand a year job, nice car, but I do think that some people when they graduate think that as well. It doesn't happen. I know it won't happen and you could say that I don't mind starting at the bottom and working up which I don't mind doing.”

Induction and Training

4.38. The recruitment process is based on applicants sending in CV's for a general set of jobs that are advertised on the organisation's websites or by speculative CV's which is the route Dan took:

“I just sent my CV off, I didn't apply for the job, so I just sent my CV in to see what would happen and then they got in contact with me cos a position had come up and asked me to go for an interview”.

4.39. As illustrated above selection is by interview as and hen required, however this is not always the case as Dan identified that he was asked to do his current

job without interview, "I went away for 9 weeks in the summer, before I went away they said this is what we want you to do when you come back". David's experiences support this in that he has risen up through the company from lifeguard and has had two promotions where there was a competitive interview and one where there was not. He explains the policy of the company:

"The policy of this company from what I can tell is that they like to promote from internally cos it motivates the staff, but I think you've got to shine a bit to get selected. You are being watched sort of thing, how you produce your reports and things like that. You know you're being constantly watched".

4.40. With regard to induction Dan had a fairly informal one for his lifeguard job, "it was just a case of showing where everything is and how everything works. A lot of it I picked up and learnt myself." For his current job there was no induction as it was so new, and as Dan says, "I don't know how you would induct it anyway".

4.41. With regard to training and development there is no appraisal system except a three month probation period which Dan explains, "they'll say have you done what your suppose to do, is it working, have you been time efficient etc, etc." With regard to training there are in house training courses which are not always running and the expectation is that staff will undertake specific coaching qualifications paid for by the organisation. However David expects staff to already have such qualifications, "I prefer to sort of have them, like you say hitting the ground running with being a spin instructor, with being aerobics qualified."

Conclusions

4.42. Dan is perceived as performing well in his job and he also appears to be generally contented in his role, this is perhaps because he has a lot of flexibility and control over the job. The job does not require a degree, but Dan feels that he uses elements of the knowledge gained from his degree and a wide range of

transferable skills. He also feels that his managers realise that he is under utilised, although when he was offered a promotion to Duty Manager with the company he turned this down as he was happy with his role and did not want a management post.

4.43. As with the other graduates Dan felt that a weakness of the degree was that it was too broad, however also like the other graduates he did not have a clear career path in mind when he applied for his course.