


# Considerations when recruiting a sport psychologist

Dr Kate Hays. (HCPC, C.Psychol)


With Contributions from:

Shameema Yousuf (HCPC) & Professor Richard Thelwell (HCPC, C.Psychol)



# Who can call themselves a Sport Psychologist?


Some specific job titles are protected by law, and 'sport psychologist' is one of them. It is illegal to use the term if you are not registered with the relevant regulatory body – in the UK, this is the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC).





# What is the HCPC?


The HCPC protect the public by regulating 15 health and care professions including psychology. The HCPC set standards for professionals' education and practice, approve programmes which professionals must complete to register with them, keep a register of professionals known as 'registrants' who meet their standards, and take action if professionals on the register do not meet those standards.





# Why is HCPC registration important?

While people without appropriate qualifications may be well-meaning and passionate about their work, they could lack the comprehensive knowledge and professional skills needed to provide the most effective service in a sporting context. Indeed, in the worst-case scenario, they could be putting athletes or staff at risk by performing questionable services without being fully qualified or aware of their own limits.






# How can I check the register?

The HCPC register stores the details of all health and care professionals who meet the standards for training, professional skills, behaviour and health. You can check whether a sport psychologist is registered here:

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/check-the-register/>

The implications are the same for the many other titles protected by the HCPC, such as physiotherapists, speech therapists and paramedics. In essence, you wouldn't hire a non-registered physiotherapist, and the same should therefore be true of a Sport Psychologist!





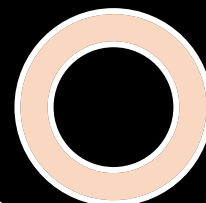
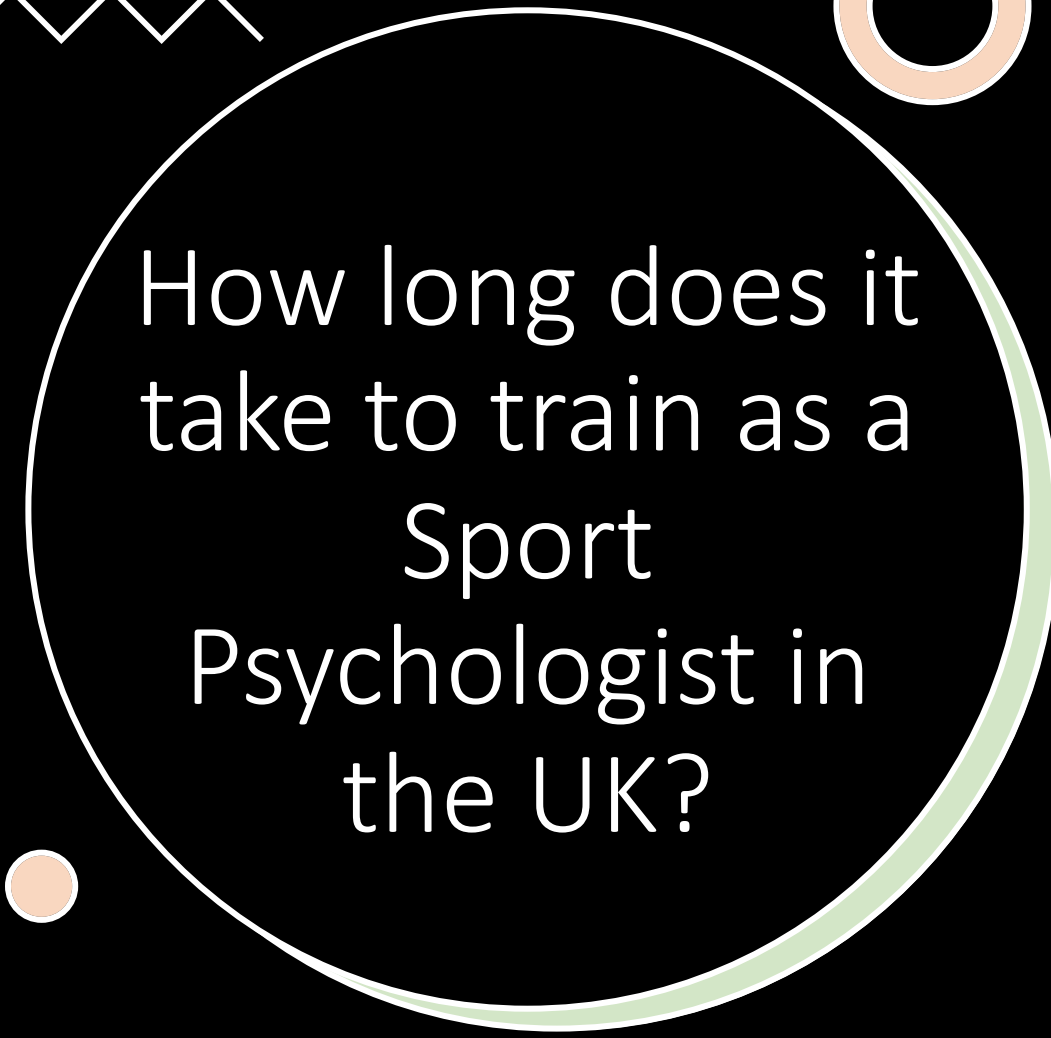



# What about trainees?

There are trainees who are legitimately working toward their Sport Psychology registration through the British Psychological Society (BPS), the British Association of Sport and Exercise Science (BASES), or an international route. For those on the BASES and BPS route, you can check the status of their supervisor at <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/> along with asking for references to verify trainees are working towards Sport and Exercise Psychology registration.


Whilst you can be assured these people are working within the appropriate professional standards, it is important to discuss their level of supervision, applied experience and boundaries/limitations so that you can manage your expectations and ensure they are given room to develop.






How long does it  
take to train as a  
Sport  
Psychologist in  
the UK?

A minimum of 6 years; this includes a first degree (minimum 3 years), a masters degree (minimum 1 year), and a post graduate qualification (minimum 2 years) where an individual learns how to apply theory to practice in a sporting context.











# What are the UK approved training routes?

- 2009 – British Psychological Society
    - Qualification in Sport and Exercise Psychology (QSEP)
  - 2016-2018 – Professional Doctorates
    - University of Portsmouth
    - Liverpool John Moores University
    - Glasgow Caledonian University
  - 2019 – British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences
    - Sport and Exercise Psychology Accreditation Route (SEPAR)
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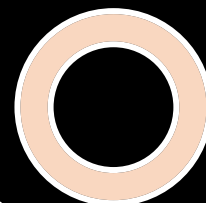





## THE APPROVED UK TRAINING ROUTES TO BECOME A SPORT PSYCHOLOGIST

					
Organisation	<b>British Association of Sport and Exercise Science</b> 	<b>British Psychological Society</b> 	<b>University of Portsmouth</b> 	<b>Liverpool John Moores University</b> 	<b>Glasgow Caledonian University</b> 
Training route	Sport and Exercise Psychology Accreditation Route (SEPAR)	Qualification in Sport and Exercise Psychology (QSEP)	Professional Doctorates in Sport and Exercise Psychology		
Outcome and benefits	HCPC registered Professional BASES membership	HCPC registered C.Psychol Full member – DSEP	HCPC registered DProf	HCPC registered DProf	HCPC registered DProf
Duration <sup>1</sup>	2-4 years	2-4 years	3-6 years P/T	2 years F/T; 4 years P/T 3 years F/T; 6 years P/T	3 years F/T; 3-7 years P/T
Once the requisite entry requirements have been met, candidates are then able to be admitted to the respective training routes					
M-level entry requirements <sup>2</sup>	MSc Sport and/or Exercise Psychology	BPS Accredited MSc Sport and/or Exercise Psychology	BPS Accredited MSc Sport and/or Exercise Psychology	BPS Accredited MSc Sport and/or Exercise Psychology	BPS Accredited MSc Sport and/or Exercise Psychology
Undergraduate education / underpinning psychology knowledge	Professionally Accredited Psychology course  <b>OR</b>  Professionally Accredited Sport and/or Exercise Psychology course  <b>OR</b>  Professionally Accredited Psychology Conversion course (if non-Accredited UG course completed)  <b>OR</b>  60-credit Open University module 'Investigating Psychology 2' (if non-Accredited UG course completed)  <b>OR</b>  Prior recognition from a learned society / professional body that underpinning psychology knowledge has been evidenced	BPS Accredited Psychology course  <b>OR</b>  BPS Accredited Sport and/or Exercise Psychology course  <b>OR</b>  BPS Accredited Psychology Conversion course (if non-BPS Accredited UG course such as 'Sport and Exercise Science' completed)	BPS Accredited Psychology course  <b>OR</b>  BPS Accredited Sport and/or Exercise Psychology course  <b>OR</b>  BPS Accredited Psychology Conversion course (if non-BPS Accredited UG course, such as 'Sport and Exercise Science' completed)	BPS Accredited Psychology course  <b>OR</b>  BPS Accredited Sport and/or Exercise Psychology course  <b>OR</b>  BPS Accredited Psychology Conversion course (if non-BPS Accredited UG course, such as 'Sport and Exercise Science' completed)	BPS Accredited Psychology course  <b>OR</b>  BPS Accredited Sport and/or Exercise Psychology course  <b>OR</b>  BPS Accredited Psychology Conversion course (if non-BPS Accredited UG course, such as 'Sport and Exercise Science' completed)

<sup>1</sup> Specific information to the duration, costs, and structures for each route are available on the respective websites.

<sup>2</sup> There may be some variance to this based on APEL / mapping exercises from other, relevant M-level courses. Please refer to the respective websites for specific information.



# What are the International approved training routes?

International registrants are required to:

- Have relevant qualifications in the profession from an international institution that demonstrates theoretical and practical competencies in sport psychology and meets the UK's HCPC standards of proficiency. This will include practical supervision and assessment at the training or university institution.
- Have professional experience under supervision.
- Detail memberships and / or registrations with International professional associations.
- Meet English Proficiency as set out by HCPC
- Individuals having met the above criteria and with the registrations and/or certifications listed on the next page, may apply directly to the HCPC register, without being required to have accreditation with BASES or BPS





# International Routes to HCPC Register

Individuals with international memberships/certifications/registrations in the sport psychology profession and on the HCPC register may include (the list is by no means exhaustive):

- Membership or certification with Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP - CMPC)
- Licensure with American Psychological Society Div. 47 (APA Div. 47)
- Registration as a sport psychologist with Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)
- Membership or certification with the European Federation of Sport Psychology (FEPSAC)
- Membership or Registration with the International Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP)





# Useful Resources

<https://www.bps.org.uk/qualifications/sport-exercise-psychology>

[https://www.bases.org.uk/spage-professional\\_development-separ.html](https://www.bases.org.uk/spage-professional_development-separ.html)

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org>

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-proficiency/practitioner-psychologists/>

<https://appliedsportpsych.org>

<https://www.ahpra.gov.au>

<https://www.apa.org>

<https://fepsac.com>

<https://www.issponline.org>

