Programme specification
MSc Strength and Conditioning

Introduction and Special Features

In addition to the demand for vocational qualifications there is also a need for strength and conditioning practitioners to develop advanced skills and understanding in the field. This programme provides the opportunity to develop research, academic and practical skills that are highly relevant to the discipline of strength and conditioning. The programme is for individuals holding a sport science related undergraduate degree or those with significant practical experience and qualifications in strength and conditioning who want to consider the application of scientific principles to their work. The learning activities and assessments on the programme are highly applied and focussed upon developing students’ ability to evaluate critically the quality and impact of their own work. A key aspect is the engagement with existing academic literature and the production of research to provide evidence that can be used to inform strength and conditioning practice. There is scope for negotiation in terms of practical work and focus of assessment on modules depending upon individual experience or areas of interest. For example, on the Training Intervention module this could mean use of highly controlled laboratory based endurance training or field based repeated sprint conditioning with larger numbers of participants.

Work-related learning is a key part of the activities and assessments on modules. In order to effectively undertake these tasks students will need to draw upon experiences from employment, continuous personal development (CPD) or a work placement. There are opportunities to undertake relevant CPD and work placement while on the programme. Completion of a Personal and Academic Development Profile (PADP), through the academic tutor system, will help to identify which opportunities individuals could access to support their working towards accreditation with the UK Strength and Conditioning Association (UKSCA). An example of the types of opportunities available through our partnerships would be strength and conditioning experience with York City FC/York City Knights RLFC or a British Weight Lifting Association qualification/UKSCA assessment preparation day facilitated by YSJ Active. Such experiences and skills will support the programme of academic study by offering tangible examples for application of theory, critical analysis and reflective practice.
Admissions Criteria

In addition to the university’s general entry criteria for postgraduate study:

- Applicants will normally have a minimum of a 2:1 bachelor’s degree with honours in a sport and/or science related discipline.
- Applicants whose first language is not English should have IELTS at grade 6.5 or above (with no individual skill below 5.5) or an equivalent YSJ approved English Language qualification.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of Accredited Prior (Experiential) Learning (APL/APEL). Typically, this may include: performance in sport at a professional or elite level; prolonged and extensive experience of working in sport; advanced vocational qualifications relevant to the programme; or accreditation with a relevant professional body. We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing. In addition, the Compulsory for Award modules on the programme are remitted from the policy for transfer of credit.

Programme Aims

The programme aims to:

- Develop advanced knowledge, understanding and critical awareness within the subject area of strength and conditioning.
- Produce research that has a clear rationale in relation to existing literature and practice within strength and conditioning.
- Provide opportunities to advance practical and reflective skills that are relevant to UKSCA accreditation.
- Develop self-regulation and self-evaluation skills in relation to learning.
- Cultivate communication skills in terms of clarity and the appropriateness for wider audiences.
- Create an awareness of ethical and professional frameworks in strength and conditioning.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Level 7/ FHEQ L7
Master of Science
By the end of the programme students will be able to:

Subject knowledge, research literacy and academic skills

- Critically evaluate existing knowledge and practice within strength and conditioning and use this to reflect upon their own skills and understandings.
- Synthesise information from a variety of sources and use critical judgement to solve complex problems in strength and conditioning.
- Critically engage with current research in strength and conditioning to develop research questions and conduct associated research.
- Critically evaluate the quality and potential impact of their research in relation to existing knowledge and research approaches within strength and conditioning.

Independence, communication, ethical & social awareness

- Take responsibility for their own learning which involves a commitment to self-reflection and evaluation, seeking feedback from others and identifying strategies for self-improvement.
• Reflect on their ability and the ability of others to communicate complex ideas to diverse audiences.
• Acknowledge a personal responsibility for their behaviour, ethical judgements and scopes of practice in relation to relevant frameworks.
• Critically reflect upon interpersonal and team-working skills in relation to achieving specific objectives.

Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education (120 credits)
By the end of the programme students will be able to:

Subject knowledge, research literacy and academic skills

• Critically evaluate existing knowledge and practice within strength and conditioning and use this to reflect upon their own skills and understandings.
• Synthesise information from a variety of sources and use critical judgement to solve complex problems in strength and conditioning.

Independence, communication, ethical & social awareness

• Take responsibility for their own learning which involves a commitment to self-reflection and evaluation, seeking feedback from others and identifying strategies for self-improvement.
• Reflect on their ability and the ability of others to communicate complex ideas to diverse audiences.
• Acknowledge a personal responsibility for their behaviour, ethical judgements and scopes of practice in relation to relevant frameworks.
• Critically reflect upon interpersonal and team-working skills in relation to achieving specific objectives.

Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education (60 credits)
By the end of the programme students will be able to:

Subject knowledge, research literacy and academic skills

• Critically evaluate existing knowledge and practice within a particular domain of strength and conditioning and use this to reflect upon their own skills and understandings.
• Synthesise information from different sources and use critical judgement to solve a strength and conditioning based problem.

Independence, communication, ethical & social awareness

• Take responsibility for their own learning which involves a commitment to self-reflection and evaluation, seeking feedback from others and identifying a strategy for self-improvement.
• Reflect on their ability and the ability of others to communicate ideas to an audience.
• Acknowledge a personal responsibility for their behaviour, ethical judgements and scopes of practice in relation to a relevant framework.
• Critically reflect upon interpersonal and team-working skills in relation to achieving a specific objective.
Programme Structure

Modules for the Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Status of Module*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MST001</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Performance Analysis</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MST003</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Training Interventions</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCY003</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Athlete Development: from Child to Athlete</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID182</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID183</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*C: Compulsory, CP: Compulsory for progression to the next level, CA: Compulsory for award, O: option or E: elective.

CPD and work placement opportunities can be undertaken at any stage over the duration of the programme. The nature and extent of the activities will be based upon the students' personal development planning with the academic tutor. Such flexibility means we can be responsive to the needs of both the student and work placement/CPD provider.

Part-time routes can be individually negotiated with the programme team, however a typical programme would be:

Year 1 - Performance Analysis; Training Interventions OR Athlete Development: from Child to Athlete.
Year 2 - Research Methods; Training Interventions OR Athlete Development: from Child to Athlete; Research Paper.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

How the programme is delivered is just as important as what is delivered for the development of appropriate Masters level skills and understanding. The teaching and assessment on the programme aims to actively engage students in a variety of learning activities. A set of pedagogic principles were developed by the team to guide module design and enhance student learning and experience on the programme. The principles include:

I. All learning activities support the students to develop the programme outcomes/student attributes that align with QAA benchmarks and professional standards.
II. Subject content on the programme is primarily used as a vehicle for the development of the programme outcomes/student attributes.
III. The programme and modules are designed around learning activities that require students to spend time and effort on challenging tasks.
IV. Feedback activities and dialogue are used to develop self-monitoring skills and evaluative expertise.
V. A key function of teaching on the programme is to provide and facilitate the provision of feedback on the outcomes from the learning activities.

In order to increase flexibility the timetabled contact time of modules will be composed of four module specific learning days and four broader programme study days scheduled throughout the semester (Table 4). The purpose of the programme study days is to engage student in interdisciplinary debate, professional practice, critical review of research, generation of feedback, presentations and data collection. In addition, Supported Open Learning (SOL) activities will be predominantly completed by students outside of the timetabled sessions, although SOL briefings, piloting of methods/techniques and feedback on outcomes will be weaved throughout the study days. This work will help to scaffold a proportion of the independent learning expectation of
modules and for the practical elements of these activities there will be access to support from technical demonstrators within the School specialist learning spaces.

This model of delivery is aimed to support students who are in employment while undertaking the programme and particularly those on the part-time route. The following outlines the schedule for a typical study day. This aims to give a flavour of the approach to learning and teaching on the programme and illustrate how the principles might translate into practice:

- Introductory briefing to outline the structure of the day and provide a map of relevant theory/concepts (30 minutes)
- Group case study review in relation to relevant literature (60 minutes)
- Presentation and peer review of the case study (60 minutes)
- Plenary and Supported Open Learning briefing (30 minutes)
- Laboratory based practical, data collection and analysis (120 minutes)
- Round table debate of an ethical proposal (60 minutes)

The modules are designed around a number of innovative formative activities that provide students with opportunities to internalise the assessment standards and develop their ability to self-evaluate in relation to these standards. The high stakes, summative assessment is used sparingly on the programme with the majority of feedback to students coming via the formative activities. This ensures the development of knowledge, skills and understanding prior to the submission of the summative work. All modules utilise just one component of summative assessment and these have been designed to be linked to professional activities (e.g. the expert statement in Training Interventions) or as evidence for accreditation (e.g. e-portfolio page in Performance Analysis).

**Progression and Graduation Requirements**

The University’s general regulations for postgraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section. Students who fail one of the CA modules are entitled to the award of MSc Sport Science.

**Internal and External Reference Points**

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:
- [University Mission Statement](#) [see page two]
- [Strategic Plan 2015-20](#) [see page four]
- [QAA subject benchmark statement](#)
- [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)
- [UKSCA Competency Document](#)

**Further Information**

Further information on the programme of study may be obtained from:
- Admissions entry profile (Admissions)
- Programme validation document (Registry – Academic Quality Support)
- Regulations (Registry – Academic Quality Support)
- Student programme handbook (school)
- Module handbooks (school)

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