



## **Higher National Unit specification**

### **General information**

**Unit title:** Psychology of Sports Injury (SCQF level 8)

**Unit code:** H71T 35

**Superclass:** PK

**Publication date:** August 2018

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 03

### **Unit purpose**

This Unit aims to give the learner an awareness of the key psychological issues relating to injury of sports participants. Factors contributing, and a participant's response, to injury will be introduced and appropriate corrective strategies supplied. Psychology, as a subject, is one of great diversity and as a result this Unit has been developed to be of an introductory and awareness raising nature. It is anticipated that learners wishing further knowledge will follow other courses of study.

The Unit includes competencies and scope of practice as specified by the Society of Sports Therapists.

### **Outcomes**

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Explain the psychological antecedents that may predispose sports performers to athletic injuries.
- 2 Explain typical psychological reactions demonstrated by the athlete post-injury.
- 3 Investigate the implementation of coping intervention strategies on an injured athlete.

### **Credit points and level**

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8)

### **Recommended entry to the Unit**

Learners should possess good written and oral communication skills. Ultimately, entry is at the discretion of the centre.

## Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)

**Unit title:** Psychology of Sports Injury (SCQF level 8)

### Core Skills

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skills                      None

Core Skill component(s)              Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6

There are also opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills which are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

### Context for delivery

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this Unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

### Equality and inclusion

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

## **Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards**

### **Unit title:** Psychology of Sports Injury (SCQF level 8)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Learners should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

### **Outcome 1**

Explain the psychological antecedents that may predispose sports performers to athletic injuries.

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Stress–injury relationship model
- ◆ Stress response
- ◆ Cognitive appraisal of situation
- ◆ Physiological/attentional changes

### **Outcome 2**

Explain typical psychological reactions demonstrated by the athlete post-injury.

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Post-injury model
- ◆ Psychological wellbeing
- ◆ Emotional wellbeing
- ◆ Social wellbeing
- ◆ Self concept
- ◆ Grief/emotional response

### **Outcome 3**

Investigate the implementation coping intervention strategies on an injured athlete.

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ The role of the Sports Therapist
- ◆ Coping Strategies
- ◆ Goal Setting Principles
- ◆ Cognitive Pain control strategies
- ◆ Somatic relaxation techniques
- ◆ Physical Therapy techniques
- ◆ Psychological profiling instruments

## Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

**Unit title:** Psychology of Sports Injury (SCQF level 8)

### Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills across all Outcomes.

#### Outcome 1

- ◆ identify psychological factors that contribute to, and increase the likelihood of, an athlete suffering a sports injury and describe their inference on risk taking during participation.
- ◆ understand the stress–injury relationship and particularly the significance of personal and situational factors, which have an inference on athletic injuries.

#### Outcome 2

- ◆ understand the integrated model of psychological response to injury and rehabilitation process.
- ◆ explain the typical emotional responses exhibited by the athlete who has suffered an injury and the impact on their social, emotional wellbeing and view of self-concept.
- ◆ explain the sequential stages of the grief/ emotional response model and the significance to the injured athlete.
- ◆ describe the Affective cycle of injury — a grief response model.
- ◆ Describe the role and significance that an effective therapist plays in the management of psychological factors during the rehabilitation of an athlete.
- ◆ Plan and justify an appropriate intervention strategy for an injured athlete including psychological profiling employing a minimum of two cognitive, two somatic reactions the athlete may demonstrate. Include three physical therapy techniques.



## Higher National Unit Support Notes

**Unit title:** Psychology of Sports Injury (SCQF level 8)

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

### Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

#### Outcome 1

- ◆ Stress injury relationship may be: cognitive appraisal of the potentially stressful situation examining the psychological antecedents may increase the risk of suffering an injury. These are based on personal and situational factors.
- ◆ Stress response may be: examples of personal factors to include personality, motivation, mood states, competitive trait anxiety, sensation seeking behaviour and the history of other stressors such as life events, daily hassles and previous sports injury. Self-efficacy, neuroticism, previous success and situational social support will also factor significantly.
- ◆ Cognitive appraisal may be: examples of situational factors to include type and level of competition, time in season, burnout and overtraining. Additionally, include influence of significant others such as teammates, coach and family.
- ◆ Physiological/attentional changes may be: that demands and the consequences of the situation then have a relationship to the stress response to include attentional and physiological reactions. Examples are increased muscle tension, increased distraction.

#### Outcome 2

- ◆ Understand the integrated model of psychological response to injury and rehabilitation process: post-injury the personal and situational factors in the background of the dynamic process and the bi-directional arrows at the core of the model illustrate the dynamic nature of the recovery process.
- ◆ Explain implication of injury on psychological wellbeing to include: physical injury; pain of injury; physical rigours of treatment; fear of temporary/permanent physical restriction.
- ◆ Emotional wellbeing to include: feelings of loss; motivation; confidence; depression; future threats; anxiety; anger.
- ◆ Social wellbeing to include loss of social roles; loss of inclusion and involvement; separation from family, friends and team-mates.
- ◆ Self concept to include: loss of prestige; function; loss of locus of control; altered self image; threat to goals and values.
- ◆ Grief/emotional responses to include: sequential stages of grief/emotional response model typically; disbelief; denial; isolation; anger; bargaining; depression; acceptance; resignation.

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Psychology of Sports Injury (SCQF level 8)

- ◆ Describe the Affective Cycle of Injury — A Grief Response Model: three elements including *Distress* (disrupting impact on emotional equilibrium including shock, anger, bargaining, anxiety, depression, isolation, guilt, humiliation, pre-occupation and helplessness), *Denial* (disbelief and sense of varying degrees of outright failure to accept severity of injury, transparent assurances to return to top form and may interfere with rehabilitation) and *Determined Coping* (implies acceptance of severity and impact of injury on goals and includes purposeful use of coping resources).

### Outcome 3

- ◆ Cognitive strategies to include: avoidance, positive reappraisal, religion, negative diversionary activities active coping, positive self talk, active behavioural and the use of social support.
- ◆ Goal setting strategies to include: SMARTER (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time bound, evaluated, reset) acronym; Objective goals/subjective goals; process goals/performance goals, goal ladders (conceptual diagrams showing the progression of goal development along the path toward achieving long-term goal).
- ◆ Goal Setting Theory (Locke and Latham, 2002): specific, difficult goals better than vague, easy goals in task performance. Five principles of Goal Setting: clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback, and task complexity.
- ◆ Cognitive strategies to include: cognitive restructuring; distraction/ desensitisation training; positive self-talk/confidence training; imagery/mental rehearsal/ visualisation/ pain drawing.
- ◆ Cognitive pain control strategies to include: somatic relaxation techniques; autogenic training/meditation; biofeedback; progressive muscular relaxation.
- ◆ Physical therapy strategies to include: massage, pain control, rehabilitation plan, treatment approach, and cognitive rehabilitation.
- ◆ Psychological profiling to include POMS (profile of mood states).

### Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit aims to give the learner an awareness of the key psychological issues relating to injury of sports participants. It provides an insight for learners for when they interact with injured athletes in other Units in the HND Sports Therapy award.

The Unit should be delivered and assessed at the discretion of the centre. It is anticipated that it would be delivered concurrently with *Clinical Assessment for Sports Injuries and Plan and Deliver Exercise Based Sports Rehabilitation* to augment information within those Units.

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

**Unit title:** Psychology of Sports Injury (SCQF level 8)

### Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

#### Outcome 1

Closed-book, short response question paper in which the learner is required to demonstrate all knowledge and skills elements.

#### Outcome 2

Closed-book, short response questions in which the learner is required to demonstrate all knowledge and skills elements.

#### Outcome 3

Open-book extended response case study of an injured athlete and the intervention strategies employed by the Sports Therapist, covering all Knowledge and Skills. Prior research and resourcing will be required and a written report on findings addressing the issues in scientific report format evidencing adequate referencing.

### Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at [www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment).

### Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

This Unit has the Problem Solving component Critical Thinking embedded in it. This means that when the candidates achieve the Unit, their Core Skills profile will also be updated to show they have achieved Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6.

There is the opportunity for learners to develop skills in working together throughout this Unit.

Learners completing this Unit will gain valuable skills in *Communication*, both written and verbal, through their learning and assessments. Learners will develop communication skills in conversing with the injured athlete, actively listening to their history both in Outcome 1 and writing an appropriate goal setting strategy in Outcome 3.

Some use of *ICT* could be developed when providing psychological strategies and pain control strategies that may include meditation/progressive relaxation.

*Problem Solving* and teamwork will be a large part of all Outcomes as learners will require to work in groups and individually to complete certain criteria to gain the full Unit award. Learners will naturally use and develop aspects of the Core Skills as they work through the assessment requirements for the Unit.

## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
03	Clarification of assessment requirements for centres	31/08/18
02	Core Skills Components Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6 embedded.	03/06/14

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2014,2018

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Business Development and Customer Support team, telephone 0303 333 0330.



## **General information for learners**

### **Unit title:** Psychology of Sports Injury (SCQF level 8)

The Unit is intended to introduce you to the psychological reactions suffered and exhibited by an injured sports participant (athlete) who becomes injured. You will develop knowledge and understanding of the factors that may predispose athletes to injury. In addition, the identification and explanation of typical psychological reactions and the employment of intervention strategies will form the underpinning content of the Unit.

#### **Outcome 1**

Examines the stress/injury relationship and examines the psychological antecedents that may increase the risk of suffering an injury. These are based on personal and situational factors. Closed-book, short response question paper

#### **Outcome 2**

In Outcome 2 you need to explain implications on the psychological wellbeing of the athlete post-injury and explain the stages of the grief response. Closed-book, short response question paper

#### **Outcome 3**

Outcome 3 helps you to describe coping strategies, which should help the athlete to manage their injury period better. Open-book extended response case study of an injured athlete and the intervention strategies employed by the Sports Therapist, covering all Knowledge and Skills.

#### **Suggested Texts:**

Diane M. Wiese-bjornstal, Aynsley M. Smith, Shelly M. Shaffer & Michael A. Morrey (1998): *An integrated model of response to sport injury: Psychological and sociological dynamics*, *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 10:1, 46-69

Heil, John. *Psychology of Sport Injury*. *Human Kinetics Publishers*, Champaign, IL.