**PhD Studentship at Birmingham City University & Worcester Warriors Rugby Football Club**

**Project title:**

The ‘talent transfer’ in rugby union – A fully-integrated multidisciplinary investigation into the developmental factors that support progress from academy level to senior professional status

**Collaborative organisation:**

Worcester Warriors Rugby Football Club

**Funding:**

This is a 36 month (3 year) fully-funded PhD Studentship, in-line with the Research Council values, including a tax-free stipend of £14,777 per year (paid monthly) and tuition fees of £4,260 per year. Stipend is increased annually in line with Research Council recommendations. Students may also apply for additional funding to support conference attendance and continual professional development opportunities.

**Project summary:**

This project, which will be undertaken in collaboration with our partner organisation, Worcester Warriors Rugby Football Club, will investigate the developmental factors that support the progress from academy level to senior professional status. From a multidisciplinary viewpoint in sport, over the recent years, there has been an increase in contemporary research that has illustrated the application and effectiveness of holistic talent development environments. However, whilst it is apparent that current rugby union academy environments implement a holistic development programme, research has failed to match this applied procedure. Thus, as a result of current research failing to adopt a multidisciplinary methodology within rugby union, the aim of this proposed PhD Studentship is to identify the characteristics that are associated to the ‘talent transfer’. By measuring relevant environmental, psychological, sociological, physiological, technical, and tactical attributes, it is anticipated that this project will identify significant factors in talent identification and development. Subsequently, a strong interest in talent development, skill acquisition, sports coaching, and/or sport science, alongside a strong undergraduate degree (2.1 or above) in a sport-related discipline, is essential. A post-graduate degree in a sport-related discipline, alongside experience conducting both qualitative and quantitative research methods, would also be advantageous. Financial support can also be provided to support conference attendance and continual professional development opportunities.

The successful candidate will also engage in a work-based learning placement, for 30 hours per week, across their three years of study (with regular holiday allowances applied). This placement will be for a ‘Lead Strength & Conditioning Coach’ working within Worcester Warriors Rugby Football Club women’s team – Worcester Valkyries. Therefore, previous experience of providing strength & conditioning support within a professional sports setting is essential, whilst experience using GPS and performance analysis software is also desirable. In addition, availability to work evenings and weekends is essential due to the demands of match-days, training, and data collection requirements. By engaging in this particular PhD Studentship opportunity, it is anticipated that the combination of academic study and applied experience will leave the successful candidate well-placed for a career in this particular discipline.

**Person specification:**

***Essential –***

* An undergraduate degree (2.1 or above) in a sport-related discipline
* An interest in talent development, skill acquisition, sports coaching, and/or sport science
* Previous experience as a Strength & Conditioning Coach and/or Sport Scientist within a professional sports setting
* Available to work evenings and weekends due to the demands of match-days, training, and data collection requirements

***Desirable –***

* A post-graduate degree in a sport-related discipline
* Experience in conducting both qualitative and quantitative research methods, alongside a strong understanding of SPSS software
* Experience with GPS software
* Holder of, or working towards, UKSCA and/or BASES accreditation

**Contact:**

The successful candidate will be supported by an interdisciplinary research team, consisting of Adam Kelly, Dr Matthew Cole, Dr Richard Blagrove, and Dr Natalie Walker. For further information please contact Adam Kelly via [Adam.Kelly@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Adam.Kelly@bcu.ac.uk) or +44 (0)121 331 7092.

**Application procedure:**

Please follow this generic link to apply and reference ‘WWRFC’ on your application – <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/courses/health-phd-2018-19> Please start your application by clicking ‘How to apply’ followed by ‘Apply online’

Supporting documents will include –

* Curriculum Vitae
* Supporting Statement – 1000 word supporting statement detailing your experience and suitability to complete the research degree and applied work
* Academic Reference
* Professional Reference

**Application deadline:**

Wednesday 8th August 2018

**Potential interview date:**

Week commencing Monday 13th August 2018

**Successful candidate start date:**

Saturday 1st September 2018