

Track and Field Athlete

Track or field athletes compete in events based on running, jumping and throwing, such as sprint, long distance, high jump, long jump, hurdles, pole-vaulting, throwing the discus or javelin, or shot putting.

The Work

You could be:

- spending most of your time training and working closely with your coach
- working with a support team which could also include your coach, diet expert and perhaps sports scientists and a sports psychologist
- taking part in athletics competitions
- looking after your own sports equipment
- helping to train other athletes
- spending time looking for sponsorship and financial support
- attending events held by any companies which sponsor you.

Pay

Your income will be irregular and variable because it depends on sponsorship, advertising and commercial interests. A few top athletes can earn high incomes, but you may have to support yourself with part time work.

Conditions

- You would spend long hours training, both indoors and outdoors – you might be outdoors in all weathers.
- You would often travel to competitions and sometimes spend overnights and weekends away from home.
- Injury might end your career unexpectedly.

Getting In

- You must be exceptionally good at your chosen sport.
- You could start by joining a club with a good coach, and train until you become good enough to represent your club in local amateur competitions.
- If you are **very** good at athletics (running, jumping, throwing) you could apply for a place at Glasgow School of Sport, Bellahouston Academy. You can join in S1, S3, S4 (limited spaces), S5 or S6. Applications are usually open in November and December for entry in the following year. Your coach or school physical education teacher must support you, as well as your head teacher. You have to do selection tests including practical assessments, an interview and a medical. See the website for details of open days.
- If you become a successful amateur, you may turn professional or semi-professional.
- You need a lot of time to train, and will have little time to earn a living, so you must try to find professional sponsorship – you should try to find an agent to arrange sponsorship deals for you.
- Some universities, including Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Glasgow Caledonian, Heriot Watt, Robert Gordon, Stirling and Strathclyde offer sports bursaries to help with costs.
- The Scottish Institute of Sport in Stirling runs a high performance coaching scheme for talented young

people.

- You must be very fit.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- dedicated and ambitious
- self-motivated and disciplined
- very competitive
- willing to take advice from coaches
- able to cope with the pressures of competing.

You should have:

- endurance and stamina
- self-belief
- strength and resilience
- teamwork skills.

Training

- You would train most days, for around seven hours a day, often with your coach and other athletes.
- Training includes general fitness training and practice of your own sport.

Getting On

- You would probably start by representing your club in local events.
- You might then progress to national and perhaps international events – possibly even the Commonwealth or Olympic Games.
- As more people hear about you, you will find it easier to get sponsorship and advertising contracts.
- Your career will be short and so you must plan for a second career afterwards. If you want to stay in sport, sports journalism, broadcasting or coaching might be possibilities.

More Information

Due to the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, new and improved training facilities and sporting initiatives and funding have become available.

Contacts

British Athletics

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Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.