

Sport and Exercise Scientist

Sport and exercise scientists work to improve both sporting performance and general health by applying scientific knowledge of physiology, biomechanics and psychology. You would usually specialise as either a sports scientist or an exercise scientist.

The Work

You could be:

- working alongside sports coaches and sports therapists to assess individuals and teams and improve their performance
- studying the scientific aspects of human performance, capability and endurance
- looking at factors that influence health, for example diet and exercise
- developing and maintaining diagnostic and testing equipment
- measuring blood pressure, heart recovery rate, body fat percentage, joint flexibility and lung capacity in order to assess fitness
- keeping up to date with the latest research
- contributing to the design and production of sports equipment
- working alongside doctors and other health practitioners to improve patients' health through physical activity
- designing a suitable exercise programme for someone recovering from injury or surgery.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the area of specialism.

Salaries for sports scientists range from around £25,000 to £40,000 or more a year.

Conditions

- You would usually be based in a consultation room at a gym, sports club, leisure centre, hospital or health centre.
- You may travel to different locations.
- Working hours can be irregular with weekend and evening work involved.
- Those working in research may work around 38 hours a week, Monday to Friday.

Getting In

You should have a strong interest and some ability in sports, and also an interest in science. There are two main

entry routes.

- A degree (SCQF Levels 9-10) in sport and exercise science or other relevant subject – for entry you need 4-5 Highers usually including 1 or more science subjects and sometimes English.
- With a degree in a biological subject or physiology, followed by a postgraduate (SCQF Level 11) course in sports science. For entry to a degree you usually need 4-5 Highers including 1-2 science subjects (Biology and Chemistry may be preferred).
- The University of Edinburgh offers the BSC Hons Applied Sports Science, which is the only undergraduate degree programme in Scotland endorsed by the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES).
- A relevant work experience or voluntary placement may improve your chances of getting a place.
- For university research and lecturing posts you need to have a postgraduate qualification.
- After your degree or postgraduate course, you should apply for accreditation from BASES. The normal route is by completing the BASES Supervised Experience and Accreditation Scheme. Details are on the [BASES](#) website.
- You should be fit enough to participate in sports.
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.

There are limited jobs and entry is very competitive. You might work in a university, further education college or with a sporting body, such as [sportscotland](#), a national sports governing body, British Olympic Association, a sport club, a sports council, sports medicine centre or a commercial sports performance centre.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- interested in applying science to sport
- methodical and accurate
- good at analysing complex information
- enthusiastic and confident – especially when working as a fitness consultant
- patient, able to concentrate and pay attention to detail
- able to give useful feedback on performance
- able to use your initiative
- able to relate well to people from all backgrounds.

Training

- Introductory training is on the job.
- After your degree or postgraduate course, you should apply for accreditation from the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES). The normal route is by completing the BASES Supervised Experience course. Details are on the BASES website.
- BASES runs regular workshops, conferences and seminars for continuous professional development to keep you up to date.
- BASES also offers the Certified Exercise Practitioner, a qualification for exercise scientists with a sport and exercise degree. You can get more details on their website.
- You may take coaching and officiating qualifications in your own sport, if you do not already hold them.

Getting On

- You could open your own clinic on a self-employed basis in a gym or sports club.
- To be a research sports scientist you will have to take a research degree, such as a PhD, before finding a job in a university or with a sports equipment manufacturer.
- Once you have gained experience on the job, you may move on to specialise in a particular sport.
- You could move into sports and leisure management, or coaching (see [Sports Coach or Instructor](#) and [Sports or Leisure Centre Manager](#)).

More Information

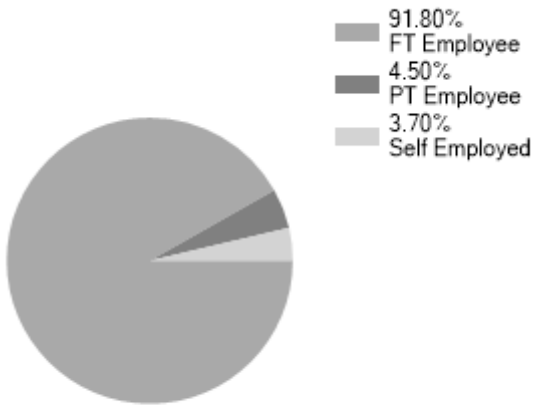
For more information please see organisation below:

[SkillsActive](#)

Contacts

Statistics

Employment Status UK %



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.