

# HANDBOOK

## AN INNOVATIVE EUROPEAN SPORTS TUTORSHIP MODEL OF THE DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

Antonio Sánchez Pato | Emanuele Isidori | Antonio Calderón | Julie Brunton

EDITORS



**ESTPORT**  
Dual Career

**UCAM**  
UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA  
DE MURCIA



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
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## Message from the President of UCAM

I designed and started promoting the Sports Tutorship model 18 years ago, given my knowledge on the management of sport at American Universities. The model involved and was built focusing on the development of an effective tutorship system to help the high-level student-athletes to develop as autonomous and independent people. At UCAM, the dual career focuses mainly on high-level active athletes who are pursuing a university degree. With the support of the Spanish Olympic Committee, we care about the person, we want the best for them and for their future career once they give up their elite sport practice and have graduated. We are delighted to act as a model of reference for many European universities and institutions. UCAM is actually the European Sport University, and the University with more Olympics medals won in the last Olympics 2016 hosted by the city of Rio de Janeiro, just behind University of Stanford. Our investment in Olympic and Paralympic sport is terrific and is making the brand UCAM very well known all around the world. UCAM student-athletes are giving their best, to represent the University in high level championships but even more important, to represent their country. None of that could be possible without our investment, the Spanish Olympic Committee (COE) and the financial support from programmes like Erasmus+.

Professional athletes embody a set of values and attitudes that must be projected to society beyond the stadiums where they train and compete. They symbolize an exemplary way of life, while being seen as a national pride of the countries they represent. All this implies an immaterial wealth that must be reverted in the same society that supports them during their professional careers.

In recent years, the Spanish Olympic Committee (SOC) has made a bet when it comes to supporting our athletes to achieve their athletic, academic and career goals. We are aware of the importance of offering

our athletes an opportunity of a ‘complete’ education, focused on the competitive reality of their present world but rooted in the professional perspective of their future, once their careers are over.

The Dual Career model, promoted by UCAM, has the support of our institution as it has become an effective initiative that seeks the harmonious union between sport and academic life. This initiative allows the athlete to achieve a quality university education, while the sports performance does not decrease. At the same time, their presence in the classrooms creates a unique and incalculable synergy from which it is thought that other students benefit from the student-athletes’ capacity for sacrifice and having a spirit of self-improvement that these athletes transmit to their study partners.

**José Luis Mendoza Pérez**

President of UCAM

## Message from the President of Spanish Olympic Committee

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Sport is, after all, one of the greatest cultural achievements of contemporary societies and its presence should not be excluded but integrated into other scenarios. In short, the Dual Career serves to overcome another step in the process that aims to integrate high-performance sport as an inexhaustible part of the overall progress of societies.

**Alejandro Blanco Bravo**

President Spanish Olympic Committee



## Preface

This handbook compiles the experiences of researchers and university staff from five different European universities who understand that the dual career of student-athletes is more than a necessity, it is a right that the student-athletes has as a human being.

I want to acknowledge the great work done by our European partners in Rome, Malta, Greece and the United Kingdom, as long as they have believed in this project, and for their enthusiasm and professionalism in carrying it out.

In the first chapter, we discuss the dual career issue and its importance for the European Union – encompassing projects such as ESTPORT – whose results we present in this book. We start from the idea of the athlete-student as a “centaur”, who must harmonize two high-level activities, one sport (as high level athletes) and another academic (such as university students). To do this, they must have the best conditions to respond to their personal right to be prepared for their future, once they finish their sports career.

Following this line, in the second chapter, we present the UCAM Sports Tutorship Model, a pioneering model in Europe to offer a dual career to those high level athletes who study a university career.

In the third chapter, we present the enriching experiences of the methodology of implementation of the model “sports tutor model” carried out by the Universities of Rome “Foro Italico” (Italy), Malta (Malta), Leeds Trinity University (United Kingdom) And Thessaly (Greece). From their methodological experience on how to implement the figure of the sports tutor in their universities during an academic course, we gathered important lessons to adapt our universities to sports universities.

Therefore, in the fourth chapter we present the “Estport” Model 2.0 version, which arises from the enrichment of the initial model of sports tutoring, with which we have been working at UCAM for more than a

decade, after the experiences resulting from its implementation in partner universities as a result of project funding by the European Union.

Finally, in the fifth chapter we present the initial findings of parallel research conducted with athletes-students from the five partner universities.

We hope that this handbook will serve as a guide to good practices and as a reference for those universities that want to join the dual career model, benefiting from the synergies that our most distinguished athletes give us when they represent us all over the world, and contributing to their own development as human beings.

**Antonio Sánchez Pato**

Project Manager of “ESTPORT”

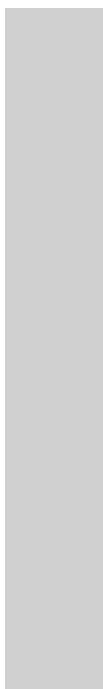
Dean of the Faculty of Sport of UCAM



# 1

## **INTRODUCTION**

Emanuele Isidori, Alessandra Fazio, Emilia Angelillo,  
Espedito Laterza, Lucia Colitti





# Introduction

## 1. The EU and the dual career of student-athletes

There is a growing interest in the topic of dual career student-athletes. In the last three years, the importance of helping professional athletes during and after finishing their professional career has been highlighted by the European Union (EU) through specific initiatives and political strategies supported by its funds. The EU has taken aware of the importance of enhancing athletes learning and education giving them the opportunity to attend university courses. These courses aim at developing athletes' skills and competencies (European Commission, 2007; 2012). The ethical starting point of this recent interest of the EU for athletes' education is that education is a human right and the athlete, who is serving the community through sport and has/is been/ being useful to society, deserves to be helped to enjoy this right in all stages of her/his life (Schweiger, 2014). Studies in this area (Giulianotti, 2004) point out that although Universal Right exists for education, as established in Article 26 of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (United Nations, 1948), however, there are evidence that young athletes have had to seriously compromise their educational development in favor of a potential elite sports career; "Historically among young athletes, specialization in sports disciplines with a view to entering elite levels has invariably led to a serious shortfall in other forms of education that promote their personal and social development" (Giulianotti, 2004, p. 4). There is a need therefore, to provide support for athletes to help avoid this.

The athlete has to be helped to develop as a professional and human being and to join the life-long learning system which society provides for its members. In contemporary European society, the issue of dual careers represents a very central topic. Nowadays, the main educational agencies

and institutions of the Old Continent have recognized the importance of the development of the athlete, and they are aware of the complex problems that all this implies. Actually, it carries complex demands for quality teaching activities, social and professional placement, and teaching program development (Bastianon, 2014). The characteristics of the athlete, who is both a student and professional who wishes to earn a university degree, require a specific system capable of both teaching and assisting them in following both routes. For this reason, the universities which are interested in devoting part of their efforts as educational agencies to these kinds of athletes know that they need to focus not only on the specific and particular contents of their teaching programs but also on the specific organizational and logistical aspects related to the teaching activities.

## **2. A “centaur” profile**

The concept of dual career refers to the combination and coupling of an athletic career with education and/or occupation (Geraniosova & Ronkainen, 2015). For an athlete, pursuing education while competing in high-performance sport can be a challenge. We know that nowadays there is an increasing demand on athletic performance in elite sports. This can determine a very high pressure on athletes, who are often forced to choose between maximizing their athletic potential or obtaining a good degree for their post-athletic career (Lavallee & Wylleman, 2000). As claimed by Geraniosova and Ronkainen (2015), if this, on the one hand, can often lead to premature discontinuation of the athletic career due to prioritization of education (Amara, Aquilina & Henry, 2004), on the other hand, it can happen that the athlete tends to invest less in education due to her/his exclusively focusing on athletic success (Aries, McCarthy, Salovey & Banaji, 2004). It is important to keep in mind that although the longevity of sports careers varies according to sport, most athletes have to face the inevitable decline of their physical abilities at the time when the majority of workers have stabilized in their professions. The end of the sporting career in 5-7% of elite athletes occurs at an average age of 34 years (North & Lavallee,

2004). Depending on the type of sport, the age of making this transition may vary. North and Lavallee (2004) found that athletes in gymnastics, diving, swimming, skating and judo thought to retire between the ages of 24 and 30, and sailing, golfing, riding and shooting, retirement typically occurred after 40.

For all these reasons, the dual career represents a challenge for European universities that need to invent new ways of reorganizing their knowledge, regulations and the learning models they offer to their students. This has to be done to help student-athletes in their learning processes which, if one wants them to be effective, they have to be supervised and monitored through an appropriate system of supervision, capable of adapting to the needs and requirements of the student-athlete both as a person and professional. To be clear, one of the main questions relating to the dual career of athletes and its issues concerns “what”, or better “who” the student-athlete is. According to the main definitions, a student-athlete is a person who is a full-time university or high school student, and who participates in athletics or plays sport as an individual or member of a federation, a club, or of a sport association.

This definition is generic, and it takes into account the situation and characteristics of the student-athlete as seen in the tradition of the European Universities, which do not have a long tradition in this field, as it happens, unlike the long-term existence of American systems. For the student-athlete, it is not easy to find a balance between education and participation in athletics because this participation takes complete mental and physical dedication. Nevertheless, many authors claim that participation in sport can foster, in all people, the growth of personality, leadership skills, and it can bring, if adequately supported, global satisfaction with the University experience (Ryan, 1989). This experience can serve as what we can call a “reservoir” for skills which can become qualities shown as behaviors by the athlete as a person in her/his everyday life. To define who the student-athlete is, it seems a very complex and elusive task due to many factors and variables such as: the vision of each university, college or high-school about the student-athletes; social awareness that education is a right for the athlete throughout the overall course of her/his life; the

policy and political strategies, dependent on local or national institutions/ governmental bodies, aimed to support the dual career of student-athletes; and, above all, the prejudices and stereotypes towards the dual career of student-athletes.

Actually, there are several prejudices and stereotypes towards the student-athlete and her/his being as such. These prejudices and stereotypes «range from being classified as a “dumb jock” to majoring in “easier degrees” as opposed to their peers» (Diersen, 2005). This prejudice has been dismantled by many researches and studies which have shown how, in some countries such as the United States (where the “culture” of the dual career of student-athletes has always been massively present), student-athletes succeed in attaining higher grade point averages than other students (Soltz, 1986). The same studies have also shown how these students reveal educational aspirations, reveal that they are not superficial because they show self-concepts, philosophies of life, and other effective characteristics that can be enhanced by participation both in education and sport.

The student-athlete shows a complex profile which can be considered very similar to that of a centaur (half man and half animal). We could say that, actually, the student-athlete is neither an athlete nor a student, if we conceive of her/him as a person who is used to entirely devoting themselves to the full activities that both sport and education imply. The student-athlete really seems to be a centaur: half a student and half an athlete, whose success depends upon being entirely one of the two parts of the mythological creature. This centaur profile, being so complex, fragmented and unstable, of course, makes it difficult to identify a stable pattern of overall training and education for students athletes in a dual career. In this regard, contemporary studies have stressed the importance to offer student-athletes the satisfactory experience of a “whole career”, focusing on an approach centered on the “whole person”, and highlighting that athletes are human beings who, in their professional development, go through several transitional and alternative phases. All these phases can develop simultaneously and range from sport performances, educational activities carried out both face to face and at a distance, and through psycho-social development (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004).

The centaur profile of the student-athlete calls for a specific holistic approach in terms of learning models, organization and structuring of experiences offered to these persons. The research on the dual career of athletes supported by the European Union testifies the importance of this holistic approach (Aquilina & Henry, 2010; Platts & Smith, 2009). The documents of the European Union have also stressed the importance, despite the differences due to cultural and country specific educational policies and traditions, of guidance and counselling as key factors to promote the dual career of athletes, and to offer them the opportunity of a satisfactory “whole career” experience capable to coupling sport and education, career and life (EOC, 2011; EC, 2012).

### **3. The student-athlete and her/his “desert”**

One of the main ethical issues concerning the dual career of student-athletes deals with so-called “desert”, i.e. what the student-athlete deserves in terms of rewards, attention, care, support, guidance, tutorship and mentorship, assistance from universities and public institutions. From a philosophical point of view, the “desert” is a matter of justice, fairness, and rightness. “Desert” in dual career stems from a variety of forms, generally, it is about some positive or negative treatment that athletes ought to receive during and after their transition from their sporting career to their educational path. One might claim why an elite student-athlete, compared to an exceptional student –worker should deserve an ad hoc treatment and special attention by the European Union and Public institutions to support his/her academic career? In addition, in light of a hypothetical theory of justice, is it right or wrong to strongly support student-athletes when they decide to attend a university course? A professional athlete is a person who is engaged in sport to earn a salary and survive. Sport is not a hobby for her/him. Very few athletes are able to generate a large income from sport. Most of them are poor and after their sporting professional career, they are forced to restart a new life and find a new job. The question of what student-athletes deserve is closely connected to issues

of social justice (see respectively Rawls' and Miller's theory of justice). An athlete who becomes a student (at any level), and participates in national and international competition, gives prestige and honor to her/his nation, city and community. Sport has in itself intrinsic good while the athlete, through sport, showing her/his competencies, skills, virtues and values, transforms them into extrinsic goods.

The student-athlete, before being an athlete and a student is a person. As a person, the athlete is recognized to be a "means", or even more effectively, a human being capable of expressing; completing the intrinsic and internal values and virtues that sport as a human practice bears to humankind. We recognize that the student-athlete plays such an important function for our society and consequently we reward her/him for this important role and function. This means that sport is a human capital able to activate resources that bring good to the community in which we live. To be clear, it is not the athlete in herself/himself that we reward (through a special attention when she/he attends a university course or the high school) but her/his dedication as a person to sport and to its internal and intrinsic goods. Actually, we are convinced that dedicating her/his life to sport, to its values and virtues, a person will be always a better person and, therefore, more useful to society in line with de Coubertin's concept expressed in his so-called theory of "Sports Republic".

#### **4. The quest for new learning models**

The quest for new learning models means that when one teaches student-athletes attending different university courses, the main starting point of that teaching should be the competences and skills acquired and developed by them in their sports career. To be clear, sport and both its intrinsic and extrinsic values should always be the starting point for designing contents, learning models and outcomes of university courses for student-athletes. Recent studies (Aquilina, 2013) state that encouraging athletes to focus on other activities (such as academic achievement) to athletic achievements alone, helps to reduce stresses related to competition pressure and to learning skills.



Sport always has to be seen as providing a resource and set of experiences that allow student-athletes to enrich their knowledge by reconverting the competencies and skills acquired during their previous professional career into competencies and qualifications for their new professions, future jobs, and employment. We could say that an athlete is an athlete forever. Therefore, in the context of the seeking new learning models for student-athletes, sport has to be seen as a toolbox for developing their new competencies and skills in order to grant them access not only to the University as a community of learning but also to other vocational courses or the lifelong learning system. Key figures in the development of these new learning models are represented by mentors and tutors. These figures are responsible for activities which are fundamental to assist and support student-athletes at University. As we have said about tutoring and counselling, there are also specific differences between mentoring and tutoring. The main aim of both these two activities, which imply the need for help and support, is to promote the attainment of results, encouraging and instilling positive attitudes in student-athletes. Tutor and tutoring are two academic terms which define the figure and action of people whose aim is to assist individuals who are behind in their studies or experience problems when they study within large groups of people. A tutor has to have proficiency in the main subject matters the student-athletes are taught. Mentor and mentoring, on the contrary, are terms which refer to an older and mature person who acts as an example to emulate and offer students/trainees opportunities to improve their life skills (Danish, Petipas, & Hale, 1993). For student-athletes, mentors, who can come from several and different backgrounds, serve as examples to emulate. A mentor is more a guide than a teacher, and this figure can also play a remarkable role in assisting student-athletes during their transition from their profession as sportswomen/sportsmen to University life. Both mentor and tutor are key figures in the process of assisting student-athletes in their transition from profession to inclusion in the formal system of learning (Stankovich, Meeker & Henderson, 2001). Both the two figures represent and form the pillars of the tutorship/mentorship system in the context of the dual career of athletes.

Mentoring and tutoring within the system of the dual career, although these two actions want to achieve the same goal and are part of the same system, are different. As we have said above, mentoring focuses on life skills and provides help and assistance to athletes encouraging them to live the experience of studying and learning at the university as something positive. Mentoring helps students cope the stress that this experience might imply. Tutoring helps athletes acquire information and develop problem-solving skills related to the specific courses they follow. Both mentoring and tutoring show the importance of developing new learning models for helping athletes successfully attend university/education courses (Schön, 1983; Mezirow, 2000; Tuijnman, & Boström, 2002; Jackson, 2012).

Assuming that a formula does not exist to successfully mentor, tutor or counsel student-athletes, a successful tutorship system for these specific students has to include both mentoring and counselling actions. The student-athlete is a “person”, that is a human being who acts as a “whole”, and as such she/he has to be helped to develop. As a person, the student-athlete has to be encouraged to critically reflect on her/his motivation to study, and to be helped to reflect on her/his own limits, on how to overcome difficulties being aware of the results attainable through commitment and dedication to the task (Zagelbaum, 2014).

An effective tutorship system for dual career student-athletes has to intellectually and emotionally motivate them to find solutions to solve problems and to put forth the necessary effort to complete the tasks they are required to carry out. In the context of this tutorship system, mentors have to positively influence the athletes to be personally motivated and be able to encourage themselves. Furthermore, a mentor is a person who provides advice, shares knowledge and experiences with student-athletes, and motivates them to study using an approach based on low pressure and self-discovery.

We could say that the person who can make the tutorship more effective has to be half a tutor and half a mentor, focusing on strategies aimed at enhancing self-discovery and problem-solving. Being this person also a tutor, on the one hand, she/he has to be well versed in the subject matters the students are taught. In addition, using problem-solving in student-

athletes or critical thinking methodology, the tutor has to be capable of listening and determining the concepts student-athletes don't understand or are not able to grasp when they study, helping them to autonomously solve the problems they face.

## **5. The need for a personalized tutorship model**

Motivation, knowledge, and comprehension of the subject matter, as well as of the process of acquiring them, have to be the pillars of a system to tutoring and mentoring student-athletes. This system has to help them develop problem-solving skills and to discover how to better understand things.

This system has to inspire confidence in the student-athletes and motivate them to learn autonomously and in a critical way. The system has to focus on the way individual students acquire information, i.e. on their learning styles, not being afraid to use innovative communication approaches to tutor and foster effective study habits in them. At this point, we can try to sketch the principles of a methodology to design a tutorship system for the dual career of student-athletes who follow university or, generally speaking, education courses. Taking into account that the scope of an effective tutorship system is always to help the student-athlete to develop as an autonomous and independent person, these principles can be summed up as follows.

- a) To teach student-athletes how to assess a problem they face;
- b) To help them analyze the problem and propose individual solutions;
- c) To encourage them to individually acquire the research tools and skills to solve the problem;
- d) To help the student-athletes to autonomously acquire all the information needed for solving the problem;
- e) To help them put into action the solution they are testing working both individually and in team;
- f) To continuously provide the student with examples of problem-solving, and gradually increase the difficulty and complexity of it.

Tutorship is, after all, a communication system aimed at developing both educational and communication skills in student-athletes. It is a tool that educational organizations can use to help and grow their student-athletes and it can be an informal practice or part of a formal program. There are many causes which can determine the success or failure of an education program for student-athletes. One of these is not to give athletes the opportunity to continue their sport participation at an elite level during and after their university studies. Upon the end of participation in sport at an elite level, for example, former athletes can often experience negative emotions and behaviors. In a program aimed to tutor and to mentor student-athletes, these latter ones have to be helped ease the transition from sport activities to university life, also continuing to combine both. In some cases, student-athletes have to be prepared for the end of their sporting careers by assessing their identity (Webb, Nasco, Riley, & Headrick, 1998) since the reality for most professional athletes is that although they may have had a great success in the sports career, they will have to think about some alternative subsistence during and after their sports career (David, 1999). Developing a tutorship system to support and encourage them to develop strategies to use whilst leading up to and after they retire from sport will help to make this transition easier, moving out of sport and into a new role in life and society. In this regards, the design and implementation of a tutorship system for student-athletes should focus on and take into account how to carry out four crucial actions. These actions can become guidelines to sketch a successful tutorship program and are as follows:

a) To take care of the “self” of the student-athlete. By the time they enter university, the student-athlete has been engaged and participated in sport for many years. She/he have achieved success in her/his sport and have developed an identity as an athlete. This identity has to be preserved and at the same time developed so that the athlete can be motivated to study, being aware of the importance of studying to provide opportunities for future work. We know that (mainly among professional athletes) a sports culture exists that emphasizes athletics over academics (Adler & Adler, 1985; Benson 2000), causing them to be at risk of a lack of engagement in academic pursuits and delayed career development (Menke, 2013). In

this regard, it is important not only to encourage the student-athlete to engage in academic activities such as knowing other students, but also talking with teachers and instructors, understanding their own strengths and weaknesses, and establishing their values which are at the core of their athletic and student identity.

b) To take care of the support of student-athletes. Coaches, trainers, teammates, as well as athletic counselors are important and key figures who are pillars of support for the tutorship system of student-athletes (Wisker, Exley, Antoniou, & Ridley, 2013). This means there is a need to encourage student-athletes to establish and enter into a support team that includes significant others inside and outside of athletics. This team has also to be capable of creating a link between the university and athletics (Anderson, Goodman, & Schlossberg, 2012).

c) To encourage student-athlete's participation in academic activities. This achievement has to be attained not only through pointing out the benefits of studying at university, but also showing the athletes how the university can help them develop role models for a future non-athletic identity. The university has to be a "resource for supporting resources", encouraging student-athletes to maintain a support web that includes family, friends, and others.

d) To think of and to be aware of the strategies to support the student-athlete. In this regards, it is important, for the success of a tutorship system for the dual career of sportswomen and sportsmen, to use specific strategies to encourage them. These strategies can be based on dialogue and discussion (so that to create an environment where student-athletes feel comfortable and free to express their opinions about class attendance and how they feel about university). The strategies can also consist of intentional actions aimed at developing in the athlete's thinking around personal identity, and understanding how that of being a student differs from being an athlete. This exploration helps for an easier transition and a more effective participation in academic activities at university by the student-athlete. There are authors who have stressed the importance of helping student-athletes develop a student identity in addition to their athletic one, aiding and nurturing this development in order to promote more positive outcomes for them (Lally & Kerr, 2005).

To summarise, what is of fundamental importance for creating an effective tutorship system for student-athletes in being successful in having a dual career, is networking. Given that students are based at a university, it makes sense that this networking is developed during this time and that student-athletes are encouraged to value the high-profile experiences they have received in sport to help themselves when they are at university as well as after. Sport represents a focus and a positive model for student-athletes who can use it as a drive to put forth their best effort at every task. We know that sport develops a specific set of abilities and skills useful to effectively work in a team environment. For this reason, both tutors and mentors should encourage student-athletes to adopt similar behaviours, and to use the positive aspects of sport as a human practice to transition into other new life and social roles.

## **6. Future trends**

Future research would benefit from studying tutorship for the dual career of athletes using a more systemic approach, taking into account all the multidimensional aspects and pedagogical challenges it embodies (social, cognitive, political, organizational, etc.), and framing it within the overall concept of guidance for sport. To study this tutorship in terms of a systemic approach can help us to better understand the importance of the involvement and coordination of different educational and social agencies, seen as key institutions to sport policies. These policies could be conceived of educational policies in the future (Stambulova & Ryba, 2013). Education is a human right, and the participation in education and learning activities by athletes has to be increased and seen as a part of a permanent and complex social process that fulfills and completes sport as a human practice. Within this process of guidance and orientation for athletes, communities, and families – rather than the university – plays a fundamental and key role. A real tutorship system for the athlete in a dual career can achieve its main goal only through an effective cooperation between the main agencies and organizations that promote sport in our

society (schools, federations, sport associations, and clubs, etc.). The concept of dual career needs a rethinking of sport as an educational practice and form of human capital capable of empowering athletes and helping them to enhance their skills as a person in the frame of lifelong learning and a continuous educational system (Zagelbaum, 2014). The university alone cannot take care of the athlete as a student and enhance her/his skills through education. Students athletes have to be seen as members of an educational system that involves the whole community as a set of educational agencies that support them in all the stages of professional and personal life. Therefore, tutorship, flexibility and the need for a systemic approach represent the main pedagogical challenges for the dual career of athletes. These three challenges are all summed up in another big challenge that consists of finding a methodology that can help athletes to reconcile, as well as possible and suit their needs, education and professional career (Casucci, 2002). For the athlete, sport should represent an opportunity for fulfilling her/his life as a professional and human being who needs to learn to be a better citizen, woman or man.

To conclude, we are convinced that it is necessary to rethink the dual career of athletes in terms of a specific pedagogy of sport guidance (Isidori, 2015) looking at the athlete as a person who has different types of intelligences that, in accordance with Howards Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2011), have to be oriented and guided in the framework of a human *paideia* of values and virtues (Reid, 2002).

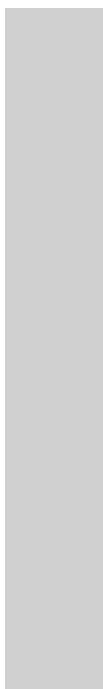




# 2

## **THE UCAM SPORTS TUTORSHIP MODEL: “ESTPORT”**

Antonio Sánchez Pato, Antonio Calderón, Juan Alfonso García Roca,  
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# The Ucam Sports Tutorship Model: “Estport”

In this chapter, we will outline the core features of the Innovative European Sports Tutorship model for the dual career of athletes. ESTPORT, the Sports Tutorship model began 18 years ago designed and promoted by the UCAM President, Mr. José Luis Mendoza Pérez. It involved and was built focusing on the development of an effective tutorship system to help the high-level student-athlete to develop as an autonomous and independent person, as it was described previously. The UCAM experience over these years can provide some key insights to ensure the quality of dual career services.

The ESTPORT model originated at UCAM as highlighted earlier by the President. The model is also framed and follows the directions of the *EU Guidelines on Dual Career of Athletes* (European Commission, 2012). We must recognize the excellent initiatives, as part of setting the norms to provide a “seal of quality” or the “*Minimum Quality requirements for Dual Career Services*”, as proposed by Cees Vervoorn.

We must take advantage of the good work done by pioneering institutions such as the *European Athlete as Student* (EAS) Network, following the model established by the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes, approved by the EU Expert Group “*Education & Training in Sport*” in Poznan on September 2012, and the GESS Project (*Gold in Education and Elite Sport: Enhancing the competences of the elite student-athletes & dual career support providers*), led by Paul Wylleman, Koen De Brandt & Simon Defruyt. But we must go a step further and establish the ‘normative principles’ to influence the sports policies of the EU.

## 1. Requirements and Assumptions

At UCAM, the dual career focuses mainly on high-level active athletes who are pursuing a university degree. Athletes from other academic levels

are not excluded, but UCAM have specialized and adapted its practices to this population. Therefore, some of the requirements for a smooth delivery and integration of the model into universities are:

- a. There must be an institutional commitment to support dual careers at all levels and by all stakeholders: at European, national, or regional levels as well as by universities and other authorities. It is critical to raise public awareness as well as the awareness of people (athletes, coaches, teachers and families) and by the institutions involved (responsible for sports, clubs, competitive leagues, etc.).
- b. It is imperative to establish the norm for achieving quality standards that make the dual career sustainable and integrate along with all the university services that carry it out (sports coach, sports service, academic services, new technologies, physicians, physiotherapists, etc.).

In addition, it is important to reflect about different assumptions on the topic, which will contribute to a more effective delivery and integration. These are the two assumptions that ESTPORT consider essential:

- a. The dual career is a “service” that universities should offer to student-athletes, and can only be maintained over time if it is a quality service.
- b. It is important to recognize the conflict involved in prioritizing the athletic or academic career in these athletes, establishing two different models: a) the athlete-student and b) the student-athlete. Therefore, we must generate two different models, which must be complementary.

Dual Career services are most effective when they provide individual support, promote athlete progression, are embedded in formal agreements, combine facilities (e.g. education and training), and encourage professionalism, awareness, interaction and monitoring. In particular, it is vital that all concerned – not least the athlete – accept and live up to their responsibilities and those they communicate as openly and intensively as possible. Pitfalls include inconsistent definitions and qualification criteria,

diverse ownership of an issue that involves a large number of stakeholders, and discrepancies between the great variety of policies and practices in place (European Commission, 2016).

## **2. Core features of the *Ucam Sports Tutorship Model***

### **2.1. Contextualization**

Strategically located in Murcia (Spain) with a Campus of 15,541 students and around 644 professors, UCAM is a private Higher Education & Research Institution with twenty years of history which offers 30 prominent European official degrees studies, 52 Master programmes and 54 PhD programmes, among other relevant studies. With a strong international vocation (<http://international.ucam.edu/>), UCAM students have the opportunity to develop their global perspective thanks to the joint programs, scientific collaborations and exchange agreements with more than 200 universities all around the world, including UC Berkeley, UC Stanford, Università di Bologna, National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), PUC - Rio Grande do Sul, Wuhan University & Beijing Foreign Studies University. UCAM, the Catholic University San Antonio in Murcia promotes sports and physical activity since its foundation.

UCAM currently have about 200 high-level athletes, of which 60 have attended the Rio Games, obtaining 12 medals and six diplomas, and this is not by chance. UCAM's close relationship with the Spanish Olympic Committee (with the support of the IOC), to train athletes so they can have a profession when they finish their sports career, through a personalized tutoring program, has motivated the best Spanish athletes to want to study at our university.

From the Sports Activities Service we provide our students the opportunity to practice their sport or modality at all levels, we organize internal Championships (Opening Trophy and President Trophy), to the sponsorship of professional teams and to the participation in the Spanish University Competition. From 2003, UCAM has occupied podium positions

in the Spanish University Competition being hailed Champion in 2003 and last years, 2013 with 76 medals (50 golds) beating all the medals records, 2014 with 118 medals (76 golds), 2015 with 118 medals (76 golds) and 2016 with 114 medals (71 golds). There are more than 2000 athletes competing for UCAM. Much of UCAM's success is due to our commitment with innovation and reinforced by the fact that we are pioneers in Spain in the implementation of a study system that make possible for high-level athletes to conciliate sports activities with academic achievement. With near of 200 Olympic and Paralympic athletes in Athens, Beijing, London and Rio (in Rio, our athletes won 12 Olympic medals, second university on the world), UCAM's sports system is determined to enable world-class sportsmen and sportswomen who chose this university to complete their training (Table 1).

The medallists Mireia Belmonte (swimming), David Cal (canoeing), Saúl Cravioto (canoeing) achieved 13 Olympic medals for UCAM. UCAM not only promotes the practice of sports but also maintains a policy of sponsorship and co-direction of sports clubs in the Region of Murcia, increasing its scope with the main sponsorship of a basketball professional team, *UCAM Murcia CB* who competes in the ACB League and *UCAM Murcia Football Club*, which debuted this season in the Second Division. All our projects, together with our UCAM Olympic Studies Centre and our series of conferences and research programs in the field, help UCAM to be considered as "The University of Sport". This recognition was confirmed with the *Joaquín Blume Trophy*, given by the Spanish National Sports Council to UCAM and to other personalities such as Vicente del Bosque, Di Estefano and Cristiano Ronaldo.

## 2.2. The Sports Tutorship Model

There are three theoretical principles to be considered under the Sports Tutorship Model:

- a. Integration: It aims to provide all academic, professional and sport services and activities currently scattered in different agencies, units, departments and institutions, etc.

- b. Individuality: The programme is structured in an individualized itinerary for each athlete.
- c. Pro-activity: The programme acts proactively, anticipating future needs.

In practical terms, the Model will work as follows: The diagnosis and identification of specific needs of the athlete; guidance and advice for future jobs; and enabling the sports and academic careers to work together:

- Occupational guidance
  - Diagnosis and identification of need.
  - Guidance and counselling for employment.
  - Working together with athlete training pathways and career paths.
- Training
  - Information and advice about training activities.
  - Information and advice about scholarships and financial aids.
  - Support in the management and processing of entries to training activities.
  - Sport monitoring and academic tutoring.
  - Having an intermediary between businesses, organizations and institutions to facilitate access to employment services.
- Employment
  - Information and advice about the job market (type of contracts, social security, labour law, etc.).
  - Information and advice about employment sites/opportunities, related to their professional profiles.
  - Advice and support during the job search.
  - Providing tools for active job search.
  - Job vacancies management.
  - Tracking job incorporations and work maintenance.
- Collaboration
  - Promoting partnerships with private businesses, organizations and institutions.
  - Coordination of activities with partners.
  - Searching for potential employers.

Procedure for granting a sports scholarship, application for admission and registration of the athlete at UCAM:

1) Application and granting of a sports scholarship:

There are two methods of recruiting sports scholarship holders for the UCAM Sports Service:

- By searching for talents by the technicians of the Service.
- By the athlete's own request.

The sportsman can contact the Sports Service and make requests or queries, through the email account *deportes@ucam.edu* or by telephone. Then the commission intervenes, in charge of filtering and evaluating the applications, finally deciding whether or not to grant the scholarship to the student.

2) Administrative procedures, application for admission and registration of the athlete:

- Once the sports scholarship has been awarded, in the case of new students, contacts with the student are initiated to carry out all the administrative procedures, in order to complete their pre-registration and admission to UCAM.
- The student he advises and reports all the documentation to complete and procedures, such as may the transfer of the academic records from their home university. This step is necessary to proceed with the registration
- With the help of the Sports Tutor of each degree, the student enrolments are made, taking into account the personal, academic and sports situation of each student.
- Guidance is provided in the case of students with studies completed in other universities, who make the request for recognition of prior credits to complete the application.
- Sports scholarship students from the second year onwards, with the coordination of the Sports Service, are advised by their corresponding Sports Tutors. Tutors use the Virtual Campus as a tool to help them when choosing subjects and academic strategy on behalf of the student.
- Throughout this process, direct contact with the Secretariat Office



of the UCAM and its Economic Management Unit is essential, recognising the importance of each role they play.

### 3) Follow-up of incidents.

- Once the athlete is enrolled and is attending the course normally, it is essential to keep track of the possible incidents that may arise, in order to ensure that the compatibility between academic and sports life is successful
- In case of an incident, the Sports Service receives the warning from the student and any unexpected situation is solved, as far as possible, or the solution can also be referred to the corresponding department or to his Sports Tutor.
- Examples of incidents can be: adaptation of exam dates to training programs, management of absences due to non-attendance to class due to attendance at competitions, paperwork, information on specific topics or any other situation related to the academic aspect.

The Sports Tutorship has to be run by tutors-mentors assigned to athletes and supervised by a coordinator, who analyses their training and professional itinerary together, diagnosing and detecting their needs. This model provides individualized attention that involves face to face and telemetric information, advice and guidance, brokerage and management of all resources that high-level athletes may need to ease their transition to work after their sporting activity. These tutors will be responsible for collecting and integrating various existing resources for formal and non-formal training, labour intermediation and support in active job search that are of interest for athletes, both their professional evolution and for their access to the labour market.

The "UCAM Sports Tutor" requires the development and maintenance, in each academic year, of the Official Census of Athletes who participates in competitions, federated or university competitions, representing the UCAM. They are athletes of special interest to the Sports Activities Service, and are students enrolled in any of the courses held at this institution. In particular, it requires:

- a. Control of academic and sports performance of all students included in the Official Census.
- b. Personal tutoring to reinforce all Census students.
- c. Establishment of appropriate lines of coordination between the different students of the Census in relation to their sports commitments and their academic obligations, establishing, special and/or individualized treatments of:
  - Dates of exams;
  - Class attendance;
  - Collection and/or delivery of work and homework.
- d. Information and on-going advice on topics of interest to Census students.
- e. Liaison and spokesperson of all students of the Census to the various professors and UCAM, as well as to the Department Division of Physical Education and Sport Sciences and the Sports Activities Service.
- f. Election, along with the Heads of the Faculty of the student-tutor. In relation to the objective of creating the figure of the Student Tutor, it is important to point out that UCAM already has this figure. For some years now, it has introduced to help Student-Athletes, which will be the “link” between classmates and teachers. On many occasions it is clear that this figure could solve problems faster, like group works or retrieve class notes on days that cannot be attended. It should be noted that the UCAM is already promoting research to be able to help the Student-Athletes in their day to day, with the presence of the Student Tutor as a goal. The reality is such that in the research carried out parallel to this project by (Sánchez-Pato et al., 2016) three of the questionnaire questions (#33, #38 and #84) directly affect this figure (see Annex 2).
- g. The responsibilities of the student-tutor are very important because it allows to having access to information by a classmate directly is considered more enjoyable than working directly with a professor, due to the different positions in the organization chart of the university. For these reasons, UCAM is focused on improving its

Student Tutors and that they become an indispensable tool in the future.

- h. Collecting information for the annual report of each Faculty:
  - Sports results obtained.
  - Observed Academic Performance.
  - Predictable short and medium term sports projection.
  - Personal report.
  - Others, determined at the time, inherent to those already described.

The Sports Tutor of UCAM guarantees control of academic and sporting success of all students including in this census and provides personal tutoring and reinforcement of all these high performance student-athletes.

The Sports Tutor also provides on going advice and information on issues of interest to high-level student-athletes. The Sports Tutor liaises and acts as a spokesperson for all high performance student-athletes to the various teachers and UCAM itself and to the Office of the Faculty of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences and UCAM Sports Activities Service. The Sports Tutor prepares an annual report for the Faculty of Physical Activities and Sports Sciences that details, in relation to each of the high-performance student-athletes, at least the following information:

- a. Sports scores achieved.
- b. Academic performance observed.
- c. Foreseeable sports planning, short and medium-term.
- d. Personal information.

### **2.3. Rights and obligations of student-athletes**

Students-athletes, as all the students, have rights and obligations:

- Rights:
  - Assignment and general support from the sports-tutor and from the students-tutor.
  - Supervision and support from the sports staff from the University (researchers, and coaches).
  - Changing an exam date.

- Exemption from class attendance.
- Facilitating participation in university championships
- Supervision and support from the medical and health staff from the University (physiotherapist, etc.)
- Obligations:
  - Representing the University in the acts that it requires.
  - Competing for the university at the national university championship and other competitions.
  - Participating in lectures, conferences, inaugurations, etc., representing the University, sharing their experiences in their sports life.
  - Participate actively in social networks representing the University.

## 2.4. Other contextual data from UCAM

In the academic year 2015-2016, 188 people benefited from the UCAM scholarship program, of which, 139 remained active during the course (through taking exams).

Of these, 89 were men and 50 were women, who belonged to 23 different sports modalities. With regard to the type of studies enrolled, 107 were in undergraduate studies and 32 in postgraduate courses (University Master or Official Master). Among the sports practiced, Football stands out, with 28.8% of athletes studying (33 in undergraduate studies and 7 in Master's studies) followed by Athletics with 9.4% of athletes studying (8 in undergraduate studies and 5 in Master's studies) (Table 1).

In relation to undergraduate students (107), they enrolled in different Faculties of the University, with special attention to those students who studied in the Faculty of Sports (35.5%), as well as those who studied in the Faculty of Health Sciences (18.7%) and the Faculty of Legal and Business Sciences (Table 2).

Taking into account the percentage of success in the studies carried out by scholarship students (calculated by dividing the enrolled credits by successfully approved credits), the results show a success rate of 72.3% as can be seen in table 3. In this Table the percentages of success of each student of Degree and Master are presented.

**Table1.** UCAM Student-athletes with scholarship of different sports and programmes (academic year 2015- 2016).

SPORT	Degree	Postgraduate	Total	%
Athletics	8	5	13	9,4
Cross-country	2	1	3	2,2
Foot orienteering	2	0	2	1,4
Triathlon	1	1	2	1,4
Tennis	3	0	3	2,2
Paddle	2	0	2	1,4
Table tennis	0	1	1	0,7
Karate	3	2	5	3,6
Taekwondo	2	2	4	2,9
Judo	1	0	1	0,7
Swimming	4	0	4	2,9
Men's Basketball	5	3	8	5,8
Women's basketball	7	1	8	5,8
Men's volleyball	4	1	5	3,6
Women's volleyball	4	0	4	2,9
Motorcycling	2	0	2	1,4
Men's Futsal	4	1	5	3,6
Women's Futsal	6	1	7	5,0
Men's Handball	1	0	1	0,7
Women's Handball	7	2	9	6,5
Football	33	7	40	28,8
Canoeing	5	2	7	5,0
Another sports	1	2	3	2,2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2.** Descriptive data about Sports Tutorship programme, Faculties and sports.

Sport/ Faculty	Health Sciences	Sport	Nursing	Social Sciences and Communication	Legal and Business Sciences	Higher Polytechnic School	TOTAL
Athletics	3	3	0	1	1	0	8
Cross-country	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Foot orienteering	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Triathlon	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Tennis	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
Paddle	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Table tennis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Karate	0	0	0	2	1	0	3
Taekwondo	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Judo	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Swimming	0	2	0	0	0	2	4
Men's Basketball	1	2	0	1	1	0	5
Women's basketball	3	0	2	2	0	0	7
Men's volleyball	0	1	0	0	0	3	4
Women's volleyball	1	1	0	2	0	0	4
Motorcycling	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Men's Futsal	0	2	0	1	1	0	4
Women's Futsal	1	2	1	2	0	0	6
Men's Handball	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Women's Handball	4	2	0	1	0	0	7
Football	5	17	1	1	3	6	33
Canoeing	0	3	0	0	2	0	5
Another sports	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>18,7</b>	<b>35,5</b>	<b>3,7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15,9</b>	<b>12,1</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3. Descriptive data; success rate by sports.

Sport	Studies	Registered credits	Credits exceeded	% Success
Athletics	Degree	43,5	16,7	46,5
	Postgraduate	50,8	42,8	83,5
Cross-country	Degree	62,3	25,5	40,1
	Postgrade	60,0	60,0	100,0
Foot orienteering	Degree	75,0	66,8	89,2
Triathlon	Degree	60	48	80
	Postgrade	60	50	83,3
Tennis	Degree	54,5	49,5	89,6
Paddle	Degree	65,3	62,3	95,7
	Postgrade	9	9	100
Karate	Degree	80,5	43	50
	Postgrade	60	21,5	35,8
Taekwondo	Degree	105	51	39,3
	Postgrade	35	19	71,9
Judo	Degree	54	6	11,1
Swimming	Degree	56,6	35,3	68
Men's Basketball	Degree	59,4	38,7	65,3
	Postgrade	60,0	42,7	71,1
Women's basketball	Degree	78,6	67,4	82,6
	Postgrade	60	60	100
Men's volleyball	Degree	60,8	47,6	81,3
	Postgrade	60	34	56,7
Women's volleyball	Degree	76,0	74,9	99,1
Motorcycling	Degree	58,5	7,5	12,5
Men's Futsal	Degree	52,1	22,9	40,5
	Postgrade	8	8	100
Women's Futsal	Degree	60,3	54,5	90,4
	Postgrade	60	51	85
Men's Handball	Degree	115,5	94,5	81,8
Women's Handball	Degree	106,5	96,6	84
	Postgrade	60	50	83,3
Football	Degree	75,1	57,8	73,4
	Postgrade	52,9	48,9	93,3
Canoeing	Degree	96,3	77,4	71,7
	Postgrade	60	60	100
Another sports	Degree	72	45	62,5
	Postgrade	35	10	58,3
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>72,3</b>

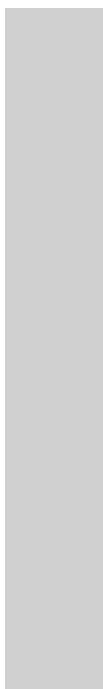




# 3

## **METHODOLOGY OF IMPLEMENTATION THE SPORTS TUTOR MODEL**

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# Methodology of Implementation the Sports Tutor Model

In this section, we are going to uncover the experiences of implementing the Sports Tutor in the universities involved within the ESTPORT project. The nature of each university will be described before providing a description of the methodology used and developed for the implementation of the project. The major barriers and obstacles that had to be overcome will follow, along with the lessons learned during the process that help inform the recommendations. Finally, this Chapter will discuss how to make such a project, like ESTPORT, sustainable.

## **1. University of Thessaly (UTH)**

University of Thessaly (UTH) was founded in 1984 and elected the first Rectorate Board in 1998. While its administrative and academic center is situated in the city of Volos, it has also been expanded in more new campuses in the cities of Larissa, Trikala and Karditsa as far as the regions of Thessaly concerns and in Lamia. UTH is an institution which its present academic structure consists of eighteen (18) Departments and six (6) Faculties, with prominent position in the Greek educational system. The main mission of the University of Thessaly is the promotion of scientific knowledge through research and the contribution to the cultural and economic development of the local community and to society in general. UTH is steadily attracting both high profile professors and personnel either from Greece or abroad and continuously upgrading its services to industry, central government, local authorities and society.

The Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences was founded in 1993. Its facilities are situated in an area of 150.000 m<sup>2</sup> in Karyes, Trikala. The Department currently employs 23 faculty members,

9 members of teaching and laboratory staff, and 12 members of technical and administrative staff, not considering the yearly contract or secondment staff. The Department was among the first 10 Greek higher education departments that participated in the formal internal and external evaluation procedures set by the Greek Ministry of Education.

As it is imposed by the Institutional Law the Bodies of the Department that form the institutional framework of operation are the General Assembly, the General Assembly of Special Composition, the Administrative Board and the Head. Beyond its great performance within the present context in the Department there is not any other fundamental institutional approach concerning the students/athletes and their integrated framework in order to support them.

UTH gives also special emphasis on the bond between the University of Thessaly and the labour market. This bond is further supported by the operation of the Career Services Office which is mainly associated with connecting graduates with the business sector, and it encourages a great deal of social activities and public lectures on various issues held by qualified academic staff.

### **1.1. Methodology**

#### **a) Steps and explanation of the main features of each step**

Operating in a quite conventional and traditional institutional framework, the concept of the Dual Career imposed by the ESTPORT project had to be introduced in a very attentive and concrete way. Such an approach was considered really necessary in order to ensure that the introduced model could provoke the interest of the students-athletes and the staff but at the same time without causing radical changes in the traditional way of the Department's overall operation.

Therefore, a careful and a well-designed strategy was developed assuring the effectiveness of the model of dual career sports – athletes in the Greek framework. The proposed strategy was based on the following integrated and well defined steps.

## **b) Dissemination & Raising of Awareness**

The basic priority and main aspiration of the working team was to highlight the importance of supporting athletes-students on an institutional basis while at the same time to reveal the regulatory operating framework of this institutional model which is one of encouragement the dual career aspect. Subsequently, the design and the development of a comprehensive strategy towards disclosing the importance of the dual career model became the first working priority.

The working team in the project had to adopt a relatively careful strategy in order to “stress” the innovative concept of the “Sports Tutorship Model” under the framework of a very conventional and traditional operation of the Greek Higher Educational Institutions (HEI).

Therefore, an “outward” official launch of the project and raising of awareness of the Sports Tutorship Model attempted to focus on the problem of the dual career of sport athletes and its negative effects not only in short term period but also in long term. With the presence of policy officers, stakeholders, trainers, students and faculty members the first workshop was implemented in the premises of the Local Municipality (symbolically) in order that the aspect of the dual career could be highlighted beyond the conventional limits of the University. The basic goal of the workshop was to address the issues and the framework of having a dual career for the student-athlete in Greece.

The feedback received and the results provided were the basis for the smooth introduction of the concept of the Sports Tutorship Model in the Greek framework. Beyond the many significant results and key assumptions that were extracted by this 1<sup>st</sup> workshop, one of the most critical points that actually represented the basic inflow in UTH’s contribution was the adoption of a very aggressive awareness strategy.

It was decided that this strategy that will be implemented throughout the life time of this project, will concern the different target groups in order to ensure that the concept of the dual career of students-athletes in general and in particular the Sports Tutorship Model would be incorporated into the consciousness of all the related stakeholders (faculty, staff, students, trainers, athletes, etc.).

The aggressive dissemination strategy that was adopted by the UTH team in order to ensure the awareness of the Sports Tutorship Model, was considered to be successful. It has been confirmed by the number of students/athletes that replied to the questionnaires of the related survey but also by the number of students/athletes that participated in the next workshop. This 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop raised the interest of a really big number of participants that actually provided the feedback for the design of this Sports Tutorship Model.

With the implementation of the two workshops the first main objective of familiarizing the concept of “Sports Tutorship Model” had been accomplished. All the relevant stakeholders revealed the importance and the significance of supporting the students-athletes through an integrated model which was the first priority in our Greek Institutional framework.

## **1.2. Barriers and difficulties**

Beyond extensively raising awareness of the project, the introduction of the innovative, new and radical concept of the sports tutorship could not be introduced automatically into a conventional and bureaucratic public institution without constraints and delays.

A number of barriers and limitations appeared that made the smooth introduction of the Sports Tutorship Model in a Greek Higher Educational Institution a very big challenge:

a) The Institutional approval: Despite the presence of a relatively big number of faculty members in the workshops and their positive attitude towards the importance and existence of the Sports Tutor and the Sports Tutorship Model in the Department there was still a need of institutional acceptance/approval in the general assembly of the Department. However, the bureaucratic “monster” that rules the Greek public sector (including the Greek HEI) requires an additional institutional acceptance in order to become an official regulation through the Division of Students and Administrative Affairs.

b) Profile and availability of Tutors: Two basic issues, concerning the tutors and their contribution to the model, negatively affected its smooth

introduction. Firstly, the availability of the faculty for undertaking the “critical” role is one of the biggest obstacles since the present status of the professors in Greek HEI is considered extremely busy. Therefore, it is highly important to expand the base of the available staff in order to undertake the important role of a tutor. However, in that case another problem is automatically assigned. Who might be a potential tutor beyond the professor? Who obtains the necessary skills and competence to undertake this role?

c) “Elite” student-athletes: Since the Greek professional sports have been affected by the recent economic crisis inevitably that affected also the number of students/athletes that actively participated in a championship level being considered as an “elite” student-athletes. Therefore, another big problem that has emerged is related to the profile of the students-athletes that were to be considered as “elite” and therefore, that could take advantage of the sports tutorship model.

d) Content of the Model: One of the most critical issues that was raised through the workshops referred to the real content of the proposed Tutorship Model. Due to the diverged target group it was a real difficult task to determine the content and the support services of the proposed Tutorship Model. Different demands and needs could not be applied or modified in one simple unique framework.

e) Status of the model: A big debate emerged concerning the “status” of the model. The very “busy” schedule of many students/athletes with a lot of training sessions and courses, created the need for online tools to support the students. It then became a critical question about whether the sports tutor would be represented by his/ her physical presence (through scheduled visits) or if the role could work through a dynamic platform.

### **1.3. Recommendations and lessons learned**

The present institutional framework together with the different limitations represented the need for the design and the development of an integrated methodological approach that would contribute to the

successful introduction and the smooth adoption of the Sports Tutorship Model in the national context. In order to overcome the difficulties and the limitations, the proposed model consists of a staged approach of four different phases:

**I. The initial Phase:** Contains the raising of awareness of the concept of the Sports Tutor in order that all the involved stakeholders could become familiar with this new challenge and gradually then for it to become an integral part of the daily life of both the faculty members and the their relevant student-athletes.

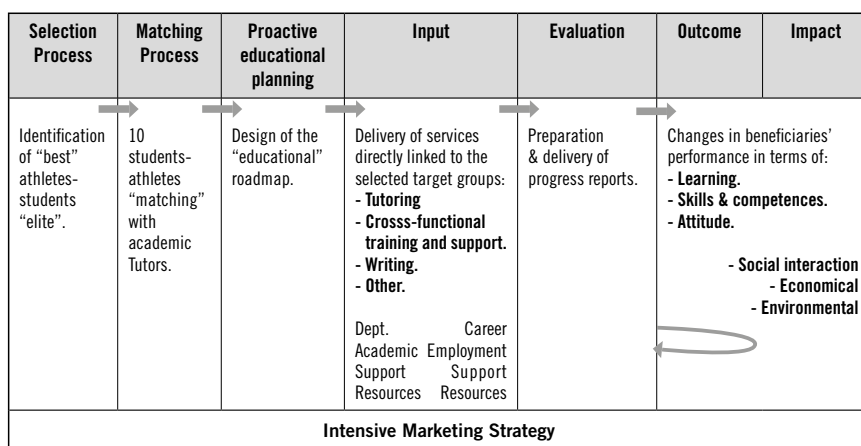


Image 1. The Sports Tutorship Model in the Greek context.

**II. The Introduction Phase:** Contains the two first stages of the model a) selection process and b) matching process. At this stage the criteria of selecting the "elite" group of students-athletes are carefully determined in order to achieve the best "matching" of the tutor-athlete relationship. An open invitation was launched with a clear description of the necessities and the profile of the proposed "elite" students that would be able to participate in the Sports Tutorship Model. This carefully designed stage of the model facilitated the whole process of identifying the correct "target" group and thus to avoid any misunderstandings between the student-athlete and the faculty members of the Department.



**III. Implementation Phase:** This stage of the model was considered quite necessary firstly in order to identify the right portfolio of support services provided to the participants and secondly to achieve a high quality of services to be delivered to the student-athlete. In order to do so a careful determination of the particular needs of each participant is required, formulating, along with the Tutor, the “roadmap” for each student-athlete.

Additionally, the qualitative provision of support services has been ensured by being categorized in two different thematic fields: a) educational and b) career & occupational. Similarly and in order to be able to meet the needs of the student-athlete, an online tutorship approach was introduced (merely by skype) to accommodate the busy schedule and outdoor training of students who could not meet the Tutor in person.

What was obviously identified as basic outcome during the workshops and the sessions with the tutors, was that the student-athlete needs a career oriented “toolkit”.

Due to their daily dedication to their sport they are missing important information concerning their future both in terms of postgraduate studies and career options available for their future. Therefore, along with the labour market experts of the career office a necessary career “toolkit” was prepared containing:

- A list of selected Sport master courses across Europe and particularly in the UK,
- A Career Guide with detailed description and guidelines of how to prepare a Curriculum Vitae and a Covering Letter,
- Templates of CVs both in Greek and English language (including Europass format).

**IV. Evaluation Phase:** Selected members of the “elite” team were asked to prepare and present their CVs to the Tutors in order to monitor both their involvement and their progress. Additionally through scheduled meetings “virtual” interviews were organized in order that the Tutors (acting as potential employers) could identify skills, abilities but also weaknesses and negative aspects of the student-athlete.

This role-play exercise facilitated the whole introduction of the elite students to the model and their familiarization with the concept of tutorship. Their performance was also monitored during the exam period in order to not only facilitate the student-athlete but also to ensure that the model performed properly and successfully met the initial objectives.

As illustrated from image 1, the successful implementation of all the phases of the Sports Tutorship Model (for the first time in the Greek Higher Educational Institution) was reinforced from a parallel dissemination strategy that occurred as an on-going basis.

#### 1.4. Sustainability

The first Sports Tutorship Model of dual career of student-athletes was successfully introduced and implemented in the national Greek context. This first initiative was considered really successful with several critical aspects to be inspected for the future sustainability of the Tutorship Model. Some of these issues are considered necessary pre-requisites not only for the existence of the model but also for its future sustainability.

a) *Become institutional unit.* As it has been clearly illustrated by this first implementation of the Sports Tutorship Model in the Greek Higher Educational Institution a broader aspect of dual career of the students-athletes should be addressed institutionally and not occasionally according to the “good willingness” of the Sport faculty. It is highly important that this model is seen as an institutional model and therefore, becomes a permanent service provided to all student-athletes that “fit” under the proposed criteria available not only to the students of the Sport Departments but also to the students of the other departments as well.

b) *Constant raising of awareness.* The dissemination and the raising of awareness for the Sports Tutorship Model should be an ongoing activity to promote the positive effects of its implementation. An aggressive marketing strategy should be aligned to the sustainability of the model revealing all the advantages and the multiple effects not only for the student-athlete but also for the Institutions and the relative stakeholders. Particularly UTH invested in this ongoing promotion of the Sports Tutorship Model. Having

that in mind the UTH invested in this ongoing promotion of the Sports Tutorship Model. Having that in mind the UTH working team prepared and promoted a promotional video revealing not only the importance of the model but also the benefits for the student-athletes, by using as main characters of this video the same student-athletes that participated in the model.

c) *Adjustment to the changing economic environment.* A sustainable framework for the Sports Tutorship Model dictates that its concept will be always subject to consideration and continuous adjustment to the changing conditions of both the economic and the social environment. Student-athletes should be aware of the continuous changing and the demanding economic environment that might affect their transition (after their sport performance) to the labor market.

A static and solid Model unable to be adjusted to the changing conditions and the different demands of the student-athletes cannot ensure the prospective benefits and the added value of a successful Sports Tutorship Model. In order to ensure this continuous improvement a multi-disciplinary committee should be introduced in order to assess the validation of the model and its functional adjustment to the conditions proposed by the new environment.

The introduction of a supportive system for student-athletes is very important for the continuation of their career. This system may include, financial support for elite student-athletes (e.g. scholarship), medical support with regular medical check-ups in order to prevent any health problems and psychological assistance by helping them to overcome oncoming problems (e.g., transition period in their career).

## **2. Leeds Trinity University (LTU)**

Leeds Trinity University was founded in 1966 as a teacher training college, and whilst the institution continues to be renowned for the high standard of teacher training provision, the number and range of courses has expanded and diversified considerably. For example, Leeds Trinity

University was one of the first places in the United Kingdom to offer degrees in Forensic Psychology and Sports Journalism. Now with more than 3,000 students, a tenfold increase compared to when the institution first opened, the university focuses on undergraduate provision; recruiting over 1,000 new undergraduate students in 2016. Additionally, recruitment is expanding with regards to postgraduate, part-time, continuing professional development and international learners. With 433 postgraduates recruited in 2016, Leeds Trinity University continues to demonstrate a sustained upward trajectory in Higher Education provision.

The University has an ever developing sport structure. The Sports Development team work to promote sport and physical activity participation at the University in all levels of sport. This now includes the recruitment and retention of student-athletes. Prior to the implementation of the Sports Tutor model, Leeds Trinity University had three identified student-athletes, this has increased to sixteen throughout the implementation period. A partnership developed internally with Trinity Performance has contributed greatly to the supporting of student-athletes, Trinity Performance are an external facing specialist team that work with a range of athletes, coaches and students to offer support and development opportunities within sport performance, health and exercise by offering services such as, performance consultancy, fitness assessment and coach education workshops.

Prior to the implementation of the Sports Tutorship model in academic year 2014/2015, there was no formal support structure in place for student-athletes enrolled at Leeds Trinity University. Although praised by previous cohorts, the support that student-athletes previously received was on an ad-hoc basis and was reliant on the “good will” of individual staff members. Obviously, this approach demonstrated inconsistency and lacked formalisation as well as workload allocation; often leading to confusion and a blurring of roles for both students and staff. Leeds Trinity University was therefore unable to recruit student-athletes on the basis of this ad hoc support and the absence of a formal support system for student-athletes. The opportunity to introduce the Sports Tutorship model has allowed Leeds Trinity University to support current student-athletes and become a realistic option for those who may consider to combine

the demands of competitive sports participation and a programme of study at the University in the future. The model fundamentally aims to assist student-athletes in the learning of key transferable skills that can be utilised in ensuring the demands of both academia and their sporting career can be met and utilised post sporting career (Cosh and Tully, 2014; Aquilina, 2013). Leeds Trinity University prides itself on providing a special community feel therefore the Sports Tutorship model aims to utilise this through fostering support and development of student-athletes.

## **2.1. Methodology**

Prior to the implementation of the Sports Tutorship model, the surrounding literature was reviewed. An emergent theme was, the transition into University life combined with a high level of sporting competition places a potentially intolerable level of demand on the student-athletes. As the implementation process developed, new publications continued to express the difficulties in the transition into University life, particularly for student-athletes (Cosh and Tully, 2014; Brown *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, the Sports Tutorship model aimed to educate and support student-athletes through their journey of Higher Education and sporting career by ensuring that the demand placed upon them could be managed, controlled and coped with. Figure 1 provides an overview of the methodology that will be discussed.

### **a) Introduction of project assistant**

The initial step for implementation of the Sports Tutorship model was employing a Sports Tutorship project assistant. As there was no formalised method of student-athletes support, no staff within the sport services were contracted to work with student-athletes. As ambiguity of the role and responsibilities was highlighted previously at an institutional level, a key priority was for a staff member to take ownership of the project. Accordingly, additional hours were added to an existing Sport Development team members contract to account for the administration and supervision of the project under the guidance of the project leader. The day-to-day

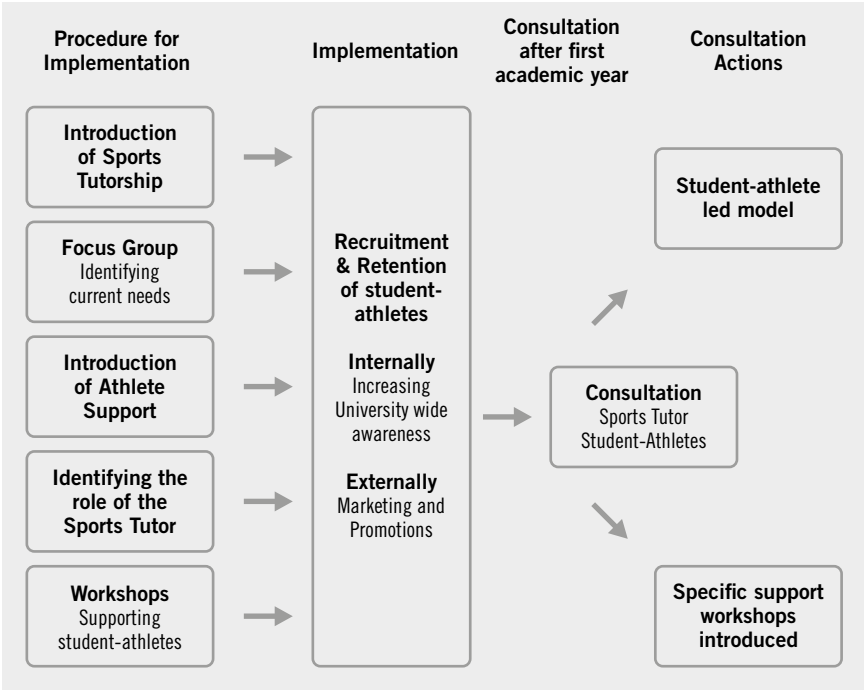


Figure 1: Leeds Trinity University Sports Tutorship implementation model.

running of the project; included, but was not limited to: identification of, retaining and managing student-athletes, along with allocation of a designated Sports Tutor based on the demands of their sport. Having the project assistant as the named point of contact allowed for the promotion of the project internally to create awareness of the model.

**b) Focus group**

Once a project assistant was employed, a needs analysis was performed such that the requirements of current student-athletes were sought to be identified. To achieve this aim, a focus group with three student-athletes allowed exploration of the perceptions concerning the level of current support, whether adequacy was achieved and how support systems could be improved via the introduction of the Sports Tutorship model. Several

<b>Identified staff member</b>	Student-athletes identified that a designated staff member to seek support from would be useful. They felt it would expel the previous ad-hoc support that was reliant on the “good will” of individual staff members and provide clarity for student-athletes. The Sports Tutorship model would address this by providing a designated member of staff to seek support from.
<b>One-to-one support</b>	Very similar to identified staff member, student-athletes felt one-to-one meetings with a designated staff member to discuss progress and any potential issues. A tailored approach was identified as required. They also stated that specific subject knowledge and previous experience supporting elite athletes was vital within the one-to-one support.
<b>Priority facility access</b>	Student-athletes identified that access to sporting facilities for training purposes would contribute to reduce the demands placed upon them. Access to the gym and strength and conditioning facilities would allow student-athletes training to be shaped around academic timetabling.
<b>Clearer academic support procedures</b>	Once again, the support in relation to academic procedures was very ad-hoc. Therefore extensions and support may not be guaranteed and were granted in varying circumstances. Student-athletes acknowledged that a better understanding of the circumstances that would allow for an extension or re-submission and the designated steps to follow if required.

**Figure 2:** Focus Group Emergent Themes.

key deterrents were highlighted to explain a student-athletes ability to successfully manage the demands of being both an athlete and being engaged in full or part-time academic study (Figure 2). To facilitate this process, it emerged that specialist workshops would be of benefit to provide further bespoke guidance on pertinent topics. Additional issues identified included: an increased provision of one-on-one support from staff, priority facility access to manage training schedules and clearer academic support procedures around pinch-points in the competition calendar. The focus group allowed the opportunity to introduce the new Sports Tutorship model to the student-athletes. At this early stage, they were confident that this would address their issues identified as it designated a single member of staff as their point of contact.

### c) The Sports Tutor role and identification

The next step was to identify suitable academic staff members to take the role of the Sports Tutor. Key characteristics required of the Sports Tutor then were elected (Figure 3). These characteristics were identified

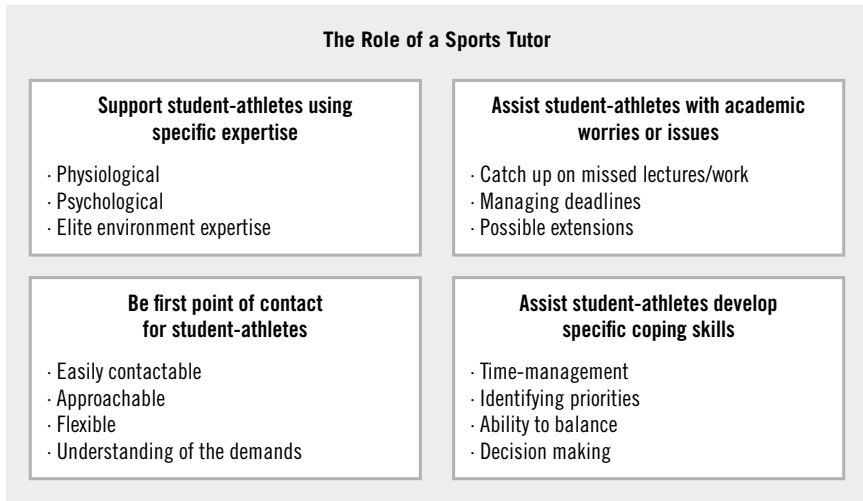
Experience	Personality Characteristics	Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Supporting Students</li><li>· Supporting Elite Athletes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Approachable</li><li>· Disciplined</li><li>· Efficient</li><li>· Enthusiastic</li><li>· Flexible</li><li>· Passionate</li><li>· Reliable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Physiology</li><li>· Psychology</li><li>· Nutrition</li></ul>
Identified Via		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Student-athletes ideals</li><li>· Focus Group</li><li>· Literature (Aquilina, 2013)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Student-athletes ideals</li><li>· Focus group</li><li>· Literature (Aquilina, 2013; Cosh and Tully, 2014)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Student-athletes ideals</li><li>· Focus group</li><li>· Literature (Cosh and Tully, 2014)</li></ul>

Figure 3: Characteristics of Sports Tutor.

through surrounding literature and information provided in the focus group. The Sports Tutors had to be approachable and flexible, these had to be pre-disposed by the individual and been developed further through previous work experience in an elite environment and working to support students. Therefore they were required to hold a strong level of knowledge in relation to the demands of both academia and competition. It emerged that two members of academic sport staff who had previously worked in an elite environment, one in relation to physiology and the other, psychology met the designated criteria.

The core of the Sports Tutor’s role is was aimed to reduce the demands placed on student-athletes (Figure 4). The focus group highlighted that supporting staff must have previous experience in working with and understanding the demands of an elite sporting environment (Johnson, *et al.* 2013). A second reason that strengthened their suitability to the role of Sports Tutors was that, both physiological and psychological assistance emerged from the focus group as two areas of support student-athletes wanted improved access to. With this demand, the identification of Sports Tutors became about not just supporting the student-athletes academically but in a performance related well-being role too. Another aspect of the Sports Tutor role that would strengthen the model was their ability to assist in the development of key transferable skills or ‘critical tools’ that





**Figure 4:** The role of a Sports Tutor.

would have life-long value for student-athletes (Aquilina, 2013). This included supporting the student-athletes in improving skills such as coping strategies, problem solving and addressing priorities. This element of the Sports Tutor aims to encourage student-athletes to take responsibility for their current positioning and use the key skills to maintain or adjust the direction in which they are heading. Whilst also knowing how to access further support if required. This allowed the Sports Tutorship model to be strengthened, as it ensures an additional dimension on the role of the Sports Tutor and the importance of their contributions to the successful implementation of the model.

#### **d) Development and introduction of an athlete support package**

The third step after identifying student-athletes needs and suitable Sports Tutors, was the development of the Athlete Support Package (ASP) that could be administered in conjunction with the Sports Tutor model to provide students with a holistic, formalised and sustainable support package (Appendix 1). As there was no offer in place prior to the introduction of the Sports Tutorship model, it was acknowledged that alongside providing

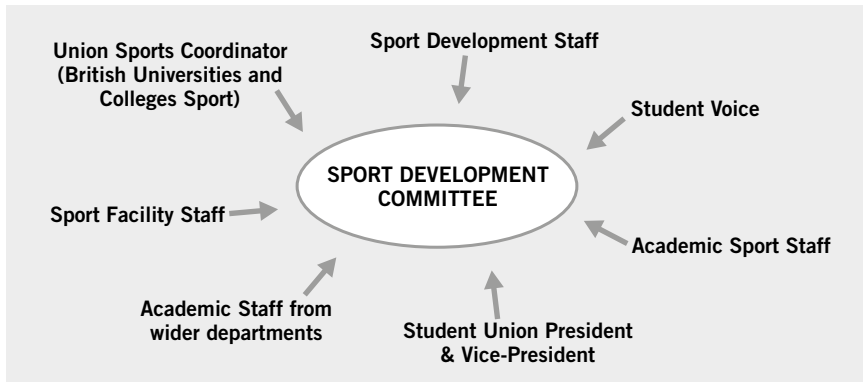
a Sports Tutor, the further development of a unique support offer was required. The responsibility for the researching and designing the ASP was assigned to a sole member of staff placed on the Sport Development Committee. They conducted a review of competitor Universities offers, leading to the formulation of the ASP. It was found that English Universities offer specialist access to facilities and tailored sports science programmes. The ASP was signed off by the Sport Development Committee as they felt the level of support it offered was unique and beneficial to student-athletes. It was then introduced, the Sports Tutor model was placed within the offer and aimed to meet the demands identified in the initial focus group at the beginning of the process.

Two key aspects of the ASP are the offering of tailored support via Trinity Performance team and access to sport facilities to manage training schedules. It was seen that Trinity Performance held a level of expertise that, combined with the Sports Tutors could benefit student-athletes. Alongside Trinity Performance, improved sport facility access allowed student-athletes to fit training in during busy periods if required. The aim was to provide a base for training to occur as a coping strategy if external training sessions could not be attended due to various demands.

The role of the Sport Development Committee at Leeds Trinity University was to inform and discuss the sporting landscape. The committee aimed to develop all levels of the sporting pathway and strategy. It was a strong communication channel that allowed an internal partner approach to sport and physical activity, allowing shared objectives and a platform to voice opinions. Another aim was to assess how sport can contribute to internal partner's requirements and strategies. Figure 5 identifies the breakdown of the Sport Development Committee group members. The committee was constructed to include a wide range of internal partners to develop the sporting landscape.

#### **e) Internal recruitment of student-athletes**

Once this support offer was in place, it allowed for the internal recruitment of student-athletes. As previously discussed, prior to the Sports Tutorship model being introduced there were three identified student-



**Figure 5:** Sport Development Committee Breakdown

athletes at the University therefore identifying student-athletes currently studying at the University was deemed a priority. Internal communication channels were utilised. Three methods were primarily used, the Sport Development Committee, the project assistant attending lectures in various departments, allowing engagement with staff and student groups and internal intranet communication that would be viewed by staff and students. These methods identified a further ten student-athletes. One-to-one meetings were held with each student-athletes, this allowed an understanding to be gained of their sport, the demand surrounding it and how they feel this support could assist them.

As the student-athletes competed in varying sports, it became clear that varying levels of support would be required. Each student-athletes identified they would find an increase in academic based support, including assistance with time-management and scheduling useful. This identification of student-athletes further recognised that the process of implementation was a continuous learning progression and several developments would be made during its course.

After recruiting internally for student-athletes, the attention then focussed on external recruitment. The use of the University's marketing channels including website, blogs and articles, Trinity Sport promotional information, prospectus and open days were all vital in sharing the new

model with external partners and prospective students. The possibility of promoting via National Governing Bodies (NGB) also arose. Several NGB's provide information packages that are distributed to academies and performance teams consisting of the support available at various Universities. This was an excellent platform to utilise as recognition from NGB's surrounding the Leeds Trinity University package was a positive step in the progression and promotion of the University's support offer.

#### **f) Workshops**

As discussed previously, the Sports Tutor was responsible for guiding student-athletes in their development of key skills that held life-long value (Aquilina, 2013; Brown *et al.*, 2015). These key skills were advanced through one-to-one meetings with Sports Tutors but also four developmental workshops, the workshop topics emergent from the focus initial focus group. Four workshops were run over a two year period (Figure 6), each workshop targeted a specific area of development for the student-athletes. All four workshops provoked discussion between student-athletes to allow them to compare their experiences with other student-athletes. It also allowed them to understand the varying levels of support required and how the development of specific knowledge and skills could reduce the demands placed on them on their dual career journey. The workshops were key in the implementation of the Sports Tutorship model as they provided feedback, increased awareness of the model both internally and externally and assisted meeting the requirements of the student-athletes.

#### **g) Consultation Process**

During the implementation process, the Sports Tutorship project assistant, distributed a consultation form to student-athletes. The aim of this consultation was to allow student-athletes to confidentially share their experiences with the project assistant regarding their initial interactions with the Sports Tutorship model. This provided a vast array of thoughts on the model, some utilised it in a positive manner that allowed them to continue their dual-career option. Others acknowledged the support system but noted they had managed sufficiently therefore had not needed

<b>Workshop 1</b>	<b>Focus Group</b>
Identified the needs and issues faced by student-athletes. The focus group found student-athletes current methods for dealing with the demands and how the Sports Tutorship model can assist. The focus group provoked discussions between student-athletes and offered an opportunity to share experiences.	
<b>Workshop 2</b>	<b>Introduction to Sports Tutorship (Appendix 2)</b>
The workshop was introducing the new Level 4 Dual Career Athletes to the Sports Tutorship project and also to the Level 5 and 6 student-athletes. The project strives for all our student-athletes to interact, share their individual knowledge and experiences. The workshop was delivered by Sports Tutors and they focussed on how their support can develop key skills required for coping with demands of the dual-career option.	
<b>Workshop 3</b>	<b>Mental Toughness (Appendix 3)</b>
The workshop increased student-athletes and invited coaches' knowledge of mental toughness in the field of sport and how this influences performance. It discussed and identified practical methods to control and develop mental toughness and assisted student-athletes in developing coping strategies for dealing with situations which may be considered as stressful.	
<b>Workshop 4</b>	<b>Nutrition (Appendix 4)</b>
The workshop provided an overview of key nutritional considerations for student-athletes. It involved discussions regarding the student-athletes current nutritional practice and recommended nutritional intakes.	

**Figure 6:** Workshop Content.

to utilise it. These returns were positive as it demonstrated that there was a high level of awareness surrounding the Sports Tutorship model.

After consideration and reflection on this consultation regarding varying engagement with the support, it was decided that engagement with Sports Tutors would be student-athletes led. Due to the varying levels of support, Sports Tutors were advised to maintain regular contact with student-athletes to ensure they were managing sufficiently. This approach ensured the model was not over-bearing resulting in extra demand being placed on student-athletes. Instead the student-athletes led approach promoted a responsibility for the student-athletes and their Sports Tutor was a supportive figure who could be utilised if required.

The steps identified highlight Leeds Trinity University's methodology in introducing the Sports Tutorship model. As there was no previous support offer for student-athletes it was a challenging process however on reflection the University now offer a strong individualised support system. The barriers and difficulties faced in the implementation process is to be discussed below.

## 2.2. Barriers and difficulties

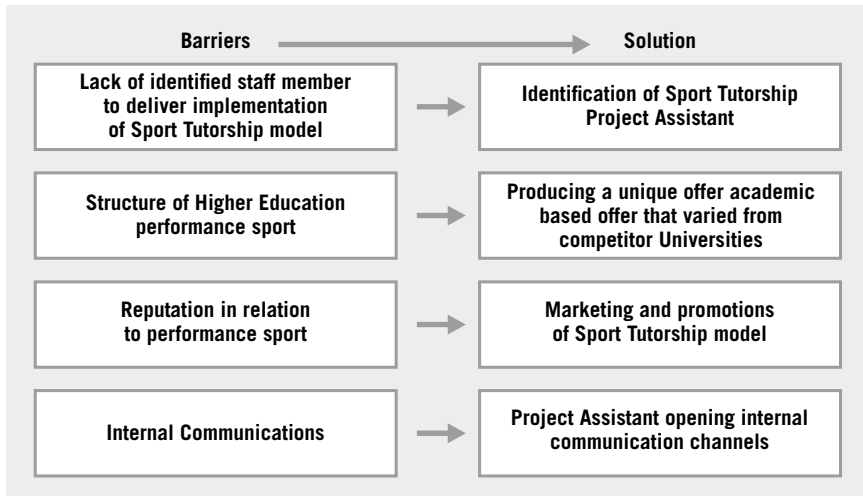
As mentioned, there were several barriers and difficulties faced during the implementation process of the Sports Tutorship model at Leeds Trinity University. Throughout the two and a half year process four major barriers were identified (Figure 7), these barriers were dealt with appropriately and have contributed to the learning and development of the Sports Tutorship model.

### a) Lack of identified staff member for delivery

One of the initial barriers was the lack of an identified staff member to implement the Sports Tutorship model. This barrier emerged through the University having no support structure in place for student-athletes. Meaning that no staff within the sport services were contracted to work with student-athletes. The implementation of the Sports Tutor model began with no designated staff member therefore the causing delays in the implementation process. A suitable staff member was selected from the Sport Development team and additional hours were added to their contract. Their main role would be to administer the project under the supervision of the Project Lead. In Universities where a support structure is already in place, this barrier would not have occurred however for Leeds Trinity University, this introduction was entirely new. Therefore no previous staffing resources were directed towards support student-athletes. This created an awareness within the University regarding the importance of supporting student-athletes.

### b) Structure of higher education performance sport

Leeds Trinity University's status amongst competitor Universities in relation to performance sport and the performance sport structure in England can be considered to be a barrier to the implementation process. Across the country there is a strong structure for the development of student-athletes in Higher Education. The Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS) is funded by Sport England, who are a non-departmental public body under the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. TASS



**Figure 7:** A breakdown of barriers and solutions.

creates partnerships between talented athletes, educational institutions and national governing bodies of sport (TASS, ND; Aquilina, 2013). There are 27 TASS accredited sites across England. Leeds Trinity University is not one of those however the two other higher educational institutes in the city of Leeds are accredited sites. The University of Leeds and Leeds Beckett University are two very well established institutions in relation to sport. Both these Institutions have received a significant investment into the development of performance sport. As each TASS accredited site is allocated academic support, national training centres and professional set-ups to provide student-athletes with a tailored approach to their academic and sporting progressions (Aquilina, 2013). Therefore competing against this image has proved difficult as Leeds Trinity University had no investment in supporting student-athletes. Student-athletes often do not consider Leeds Trinity University, particularly as previously there was no support offer at the institution. The introduction of a unique model for support, through Sports Tutorship has allowed Leeds Trinity University to become recognised for being capable of supporting student-athletes.

### c) **Internal communication channels**

Another barrier that the introduction of the Sports Tutorship model had to overcome was educating students and colleagues internally. It was widely known that with no support structure in place prior to the Sports Tutorship model being introduced, student-athletes could not be fully catered for. Support was provided on an ad-hoc basis upon the individual staff member's choice or willingness. This also created issues as a consistent approach was not being offered. The Sports Tutorship project assistant had to ensure that the introduction of this model was communicated across the University to all staff members, acting as a referral service for current student-athletes and those considering studying at Leeds Trinity University in the future. Educating the institution on the change in supporting student-athletes was challenging however student-athletes are now emerging from departments wider than those studying sport. This indicates progress however this work continued throughout the entirety of the Sports Tutorship project. Ensuring communication channels remain open and fluid are vital in achieving institutional awareness.

## 2.3. Recommendations and lessons learned

Throughout the two year implementation several contributing factors allowed the Sports Tutorship model to be successfully implemented at Leeds Trinity University (Figure 8). These factors form four recommendations that should be considered by institutions who are considering to implement the Sports Tutorship model, particularly those of a similar size and sporting landscape.

### a) **Unique model**

The creation of a unique model tailored to the size and resources available at the institution was key for Leeds Trinity University. As discussed previously, our neighbouring Universities have a strong sport performance infrastructure therefore Leeds Trinity had to adapt to attract and retain student-athletes. The formulation of the student-athlete centred Sport Tutorship model has assisted in this process and provided Leeds Trinity



RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>Offer a unique model</b> Create an offer unique to your institution
<b>Ensure a student-athlete led approach</b> Creation of a supportive environment Creation of awareness of support access routes
<b>Assign a designated staff member to implement Sports Tutor model</b> To recruit and retain student-athletes
<b>A combined approach</b> The use of Sport Development staff knowledge and expertise alongside academic.

**Figure 8:** Recommendations to institutes considering the Sports Tutorship model.

University with the opportunity to engage in a varying approach. It has created a unique offer that student-athletes choose due to the personalised nature of the model.

After the experience of implementing the Sports Tutorship model in a small higher education institution, it is recommended that institutions of this scale do not attempt to compete with those that are well-established but instead offer a unique contribution to the supporting of student-athletes. The introduction of the Sports Tutorship model does exactly this, it does not aim to copy or replicate but instead produces an innovative method of supporting student-athletes and ensuring that potential student-athletes can choose to study at any higher education establishment and be successful.

### **b) Student-led approach**

After consultation with student-athletes, it became evident that an over-estimation had occurred in relation to the amount of contact time student-athletes would require with their Sports Tutors. As discussed in the methodology, a consultation process led to finding that student-athletes utilised the support in different manners. With this in mind, it is recommended that the support is very much student-athletes led. However the Sports Tutors were still advised to keep in contact to monitor whether the student-athletes were coping sufficiently however the model

was careful to avoid an over-bearing approach. It was reported in the consultation that the Sports Tutor contact instilled a sense of backing from staff and the University behind the athlete. It was noted that the model led to student-athletes feeling that the University held a sense of pride in relation to their achievements. This positivity and backing from both the University and student-athletes is recommended as it allowed for the successful development of the model.

The student-athletes led approach is recommended, therefore a key element of this being successful was the creation of awareness of the support available and the relevant access routes. If a student-athletes is not coping sufficiently, they know the route to support. Therefore placing responsibility on the student-athletes to be accountable for themselves and their progress. If required, they would seek support via making an appointment with their Sports Tutor who can systematically work through their issues to find a common solution.

This recommendation of a student-athletes led approach, with the correct guidance and support has been beneficial to the student-athletes at Leeds Trinity University.

### **c) Assign a designated staff member for implementation & combined approach**

It is recommended that a designated member of staff leads on the project in relation to the recruitment and retention of student-athletes. Particularly for smaller institutions, these responsibilities were worked into a current employee's contract within the Sport Development team. This allowed the project to include a sport development perspective too, rather than just the academic. Leeds Trinity University recommend this dual input and perspective, considering the English sport performance climate where many elite athlete programmes are placed within Sport Development departments. The addition of academic perspectives within this Sports Tutorship model ensured it is unique and considers their academic career unlike the majority of models that support student-athletes. This dual approach ensures that student-athletes have a strong support model with the correct expertise and knowledge base.

## 2.4. Sustainability

The Sports Tutorship model implemented has develop throughout the two year period to become sustainable. The main element of ensuring the models sustainability is to have structures in place to allow the continuation of the Sports Tutor role. This tutor time must be managed and worked into the Sports Tutors workload planners. The two year implementation process has allowed the model to be introduced and developed, with the overcoming of barriers and difficulties to ensure the model's sustainability. The support internally from the University has contributed greatly as many are happy to support student-athletes and value the support and expertise of this unique Sports Tutorship model.

The Sports Tutorship model has University-wide backing ensuring it will continue to support student-athletes after the implementation period. A large element of the model's sustainability is ensuring we can continue to support student-athletes in a manner that is beneficial to them. The implementation process has been a two year learning and development process that has led to the formulation of a sustainable and unique student-athlete support offer. This model will continue to operate in the coming years and it has become a staple part of Leeds Trinity University's sporting provision.

## 3. University of Malta (UM)

The University of Malta (UM) is a publicly funded University which was founded in 1769. Over 12,000 Maltese students and 1000 international students attend courses up to EQF level 8 in line with the Bologna Process. The University has 14 faculties and a number of interdisciplinary Institutes and centres providing expertise related to the needs of the country.

The Institute for Physical Education and Sport (IPES) was set up in 2002 to provide courses in Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport and to carry out research in various fields related to these areas. IPES also services the Faculty of Education in the preparation of Physical

Education teachers since its establishment in 1978. The Institute provides a continuous professional development programme and cooperates with various local associations in the training of their sports personnel. It also collaborates with many European Universities and contributes actively in International sport related associations.

### 3.1. Methodology

a) Establishing the target group for a pilot study. Before establishing a Sports Tutorship model and piloting it out with a group of student-athletes, the need was felt to identify the target population. UM wanted the first tutorship model to target the group that needed it most, that is, student-athletes who compete at National and International level, and who dedicate many hours of training a week. Since no database of student-athletes was available at UM, a google form was sent to all the University students, inviting student-athletes to send us their details, the sport practiced and the number of hours of weekly training. Eighteen student-athletes from eight faculties replied and we invited them to an introductory workshop. Concurrently, Sports Tutors were identified who were interested to support student-athletes, and we invited them to join the pilot project.

b) Institution and national bodies' awareness. Raising awareness about the need of a Sports Tutorship model to support student-athletes at University was the next important step. A workshop targeting all stakeholders with a direct interest in such a project was held. Representatives from SportMalta (Malta Sports Council), the Maltese Olympic Committee (MOC), the Malta University Sports Club (MUSC), and the University Registrar's office attended the workshop, together with student-athletes and lecturers. During this workshop, the EU guidelines on the Dual Career of athletes (2008) were presented and discussed, with a particular reference to examples of good practice in other Universities which could be emulated locally. A representative from Registrar's office explained the UM regulations that are particularly relevant for student-athletes, and the support available, together with the procedures to be followed. Present

and past student-athletes also presented their challenges and experiences and an open discussion followed.

c) Studying perceptions of student-athletes. In order to understand further the needs of student-athletes and to cater for them in this project, a study on their perceptions was carried out through a questionnaire. The results were presented in a workshop for student-athletes and lecturers, which also dealt with new technologies available for teaching and learning at University.

d) A pilot project. An open invitation to join a pilot Sports Tutorship project was launched. Nine students from two faculties accepted our invitation and were assigned two Sport-tutors who had accepted our original invitation. A meeting was held to discuss the procedures student-athletes had to follow when they required any kind of support from their Sports Tutors and the project started.

e) Evaluation of the pilot project. Four months later, an evaluation of the pilot study was carried out, in preparation to extend this project to all the faculties. The same questionnaire distributed at the beginning of the project was sent to the nine students participating in the pilot project, aiming to study any changes in perceptions and to evaluate the support given.

f) Creating a database of student-athletes. Since a good database of student-athletes was still not available, all local Sports Associations were contacted, asking them to send us a list of athletes who attended University. However, the response was poor and some associations sent a whole list of athletes without specifying the names of the students.

g) Extending the programme to all faculties. In order to extend this project to other faculties, a new call was issued inviting new student-athletes and Sports Tutors, who are either academics or non-academics. An administrator from registrar's office offered to support us in this project and we started discussing the best way to identify student-athletes. Two seminars were held, one for Sports Tutors and another one for the Sports Tutors and student-athletes. During the first seminar we explained the role of Sports-Tutors and also discussed the contribution of faculties, while during the second one we discussed any challenges of student-athletes and possible solutions.

h) Inviting Deans to nominate a sport-tutor. Since our target for UM was to have a Sports Tutor from every faculty, Deans were contacted where there were student-athletes interested in this project. Whilst with some difficulty, UM finally managed to organise a Sports-Tutor in every faculty where there were student-athletes, with a total of 10 faculties catering for 20 student-athletes.

i) Individual meetings with student-athletes and Sport-Tutors. Meetings with every Sports-Tutor and student-athletes were held and the procedures were discussed.

j) Meeting Rectorate and Parliamentary Secretary for Sport. A meeting was held with Rector, explaining the aims of this project, and the importance of including such a project in the UM Sports Strategy. The aims of the project were also explained to the Parliamentary Secretary for Sport and suggested its inclusion in the National Sports Policy.

### **3.2. Barriers and difficulties**

a) The first challenge faced was to identify the student-athletes attending University. Sending a google form to all the students and inviting student-athletes to send their details was a good start. However, if a list of all the student-athletes is required, the best way that UM found to go about this was to include a question on the University entry form.

b) Another challenge was to attract Sports Tutors to support students. The best way UM found was to contact tutors personally, with those who have an interest in sport. However, if this project is to be extended across University, such a role has to be acknowledged by HR management and an official role should be assigned in every faculty and institute. All respective Deans and Directors would then appoint a Sports Tutor at the beginning of every academic year.

### **3.3. Recommendations and lessons learned**

1. Although all student-athletes acknowledge that it's challenging to balance their academic work and sporting demands and to cope successfully

with both, some student-athletes chose not to seek support and not to come forward to join such a programme. Therefore, this should not be seen as a weakness of the project. However, using all possible ways to promote such a project is important, such as to use traditional promotional methods, including posting printed materials in every faculty's notice-board.

2. Although the support given by sports tutors is very important, particularly if it is related to University demands, this might not be sufficient. Such a project needs to involve clubs and associations from its start, as in some cases they are putting too much pressure on their athletes and do not always understand the demands of academic studies.

### 3.4. Sustainability

The following steps will ensure that the dual career programme will be sustainable, and offered in all faculties, institutes and centres at UM:

1) Set a meeting with the Rector, Human Resources Management, and Registrar to discuss the recommendations put forward by student-athletes and the setting up of a UM dual-career programme committee described below. It is being proposed that every faculty and Institute will nominate a Sports Tutor at the beginning of every academic year and that this person will be allocated at least an hour a week in his/her workload to dedicate to student-athletes.

2) Set up a UM Dual-Career Support Programme committee (DCSP). This committee will run and monitor this programme and liaise with the Registrar's office re any requests for changes in dates of exams to attend International competitions. The committee members will be as follows:

- A dual-career co-ordinator from the Institute for PE and Sport to chair the UM DCP committee and to co-ordinate this programme. This role will be taken by the Director of IPES, the Sports Manager or their designate.
- A dual-career officer at Registrar's/ Admissions office to collect data on new entrants and current student-athletes at all levels (not only elite) and to communicate with Sport-Tutors. A space will be added

in the UM application form where details on involvement in sport, level and number of hours of training will be included.

- A dual-career counsellor at the Counselling Services Unit. The counsellor's duty will be to guide student-athletes applying for a UM Course and to introduce the dual-career support programme.
- A student-athlete representative will represent student-athletes on the UM DCSP committee.

3) The committee will organise an initial meeting every October for all Sport-Tutors, student-athletes, Deans, Directors and Faculty Officers, sport associations and the Olympic Committee.

4) An evaluation meeting will be held at the end of every semester, while regular feedback will be sought through an online forum and individual meetings when requested.

#### **4. University of Rome Foro Italico (URFI)**

The University of Rome Foro Italico is the fourth public university in Rome and is the heir of the Italian Academy for Physical Education founded in 1928. Its urban campus is located in the northern part of Rome, in the historical area of Foro Italico, a 10.000 square meters venue that host the Olympic Stadium and prestigious annual tournaments and competitions.

The University is the only Italian teaching and research institution entirely devoted to the study of sport and physical activity. It is provided with new sport and training facilities along with modern laboratories which support the development of research applied to the interdisciplinary scholarly field of Sport Sciences.

The University is a community of 2.300 students and about 60 scholars who share the ethical and social values of sport. The University includes one Department of Motor, Human and Health Sciences and one Doctoral School which offer courses within the three levels of Bologna Process. These courses are: Sport and Motor Sciences (first level); Sport Management, Adapted Physical Activity (two courses, one in Italian and one in English),



Sport Science and Technique (second level); a Ph.D. Program in Sciences of Human Movement and Sport (third level).

The University is very active in the field of international relations, cooperation and projects development with more than 160 agreements with the most important European and worldwide academic and research centers focused on the study of sport and physical activity. Recently, the University has signed an explicit agreement with Italian Olympic Committee (CONI) aimed to foster active and retired athletes from its federations to follow a bachelor's degree course in Management and Sport Sciences.

#### **4.1 Methodology**

Foro Italico's research and implementation unit of the project has carried out its actions utilizing a method aimed at coupling theory and practice. After a deep analysis of scholarly literature retrieved from psychology and sport sciences scientific databases, a reflection on experiences and good practices of tutorship concerning the dual career of student-athletes attending Italian and foreign universities was developed. Through workshops and so-called "world café" events stimulated by public lectures and discussions, the main legal and pedagogical issues concerning the dual career were identified along with new learning models for tutoring student-athletes. Moreover, the characteristics relating to the psychological and educational features of the good tutor were identified as well as a more efficient online/distance tutoring and teaching system.

The Italian research and implementation unit has found a way to combine Grounded Theory and Action Research seen as hermeneutical approaches capable of better implementing the ESTPORT project. The philosophy of ESTPORT research methodology was a work-in-progress project with the main aim to explore, interpret and understand the issues and topics relating to the tutorship and the dual-career of student-athletes as pedagogical issues. The questionnaire built by the international units of ESTPORT was administered and used to collect, understand and interpret data and results from the research and promotional activities of the Italian group.

The results were disseminated through publications, public conferences and by trying to structure experimental models of implementation of active tutorship in other educational contexts as a future “spin-off ” work of ESTPORT.

In this regard, the University of Rome Foro Italico has structured and put into practice a particular model for tutoring the student-athletes.

The model was called DU.C.A.S.T.UN (Dual Career Academic Support and Tutoring Unit). The model was based on a systemic epistemological approach which tends to see the dual-career of the student-athletes as something which is more (and greater) than the sum of its parts. We could say that tutoring is a part of the system and forms a subsystem in itself.

Foro Italico have focused their research and implementation on new e-tools based on Web 2.0 seen as a means of better tutoring student-athletes and interpreted the issues concerning the dual-career of student-athletes. In light of critical pedagogical models (Donald Schön model of the Reflective Practitioner and the Community of Learning). The university has gradually taken awareness and emphasized, not only the fact of how many victories students have won in sport, but how many of the athletes, with the help of sport, have learned to become winners in their further lives.

The Italian Research unit has also taken cognisance of the importance of coupling quantitative and qualitative research methods to deeply grasp the issues dealing with the dual career of student-athletes. Also, qualitative methodology can be effective to collect data, life stories and narratives, providing first-person accounts of experiences as the first source of data. The research steps to collect data should focus on: significant events in the personal education/professional career of the student-athletes; critical moments in her/his sporting career; personal, professional growth; future intentions in personal and vocational career or life after her/his career.

Moreover, the methodology we have used focused on the ethical issues in tutoring the student-athlete. In this regard, through the word café methodology, we have tried to answer the moral and philosophical question whether student-athletes deserve to be mentored, supported

and assisted during and after their professional career or not. In addition, we have identified the characteristics of the best tutor as a person and learning assistant in light of student-athletes needs and expectations and tried to look at the dual career of the student-athletes, as that under the lens of lifelong learning education. In this regard, the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing e-tutorship for dual career students-athletes were compared. From this it was concluded that Web 2.0-based tools (mainly social networks) were efficient and safe lifelong tutoring environments for use by student-athletes. These tools can also be used to build learning environments in other contexts such as secondary of high schools attended by student-athletes.

The implementation of the tutoring system at URFI (University of Rome Foro Italico) involved a defined, structured, specific pedagogical model, as mentioned earlier (model DU.C.A.S.T.UN). The model was fully experimented with and use with a group of 27 student-athletes attending an intensive bachelor's degree course in sport sciences (in Italian, "laurea di I livello") offered by URFI in cooperation with the Italian Olympic Committee.

For the implementation of the Sports Tutorship Model and as a research environment and scenario, a feedback and evaluation group was created. Du.C.A.S.T.Un is a flexible, systemic, dynamic and smart model which acted as an environment to help develop and implement both for the tutorship and the dual-career of student-athletes. In this research at IRFI, Du.C.A.S.T.Un was shown to work and be run efficiently with a group of student-athletes, ranging in age from 12 to 15. The key features of the model consist of being made of components which act as interactive parts of the same system. The effectiveness of the system is guaranteed by continuous feedbacks and communication among the parts. The model is based on the utilization of Web 2.0-based communication tools, the critical thinking and the mutual help through learning and tutoring active communities. The scope of the model is to highly motivate the student-athletes and to involve her/ him in the learning process through tasks based on emotional involvement. Principal components/actors of Du.C.A.S.T.Un were:

1) Instructors. These were three teachers: Teacher 1, background in Psychopedagogy; Teacher 2, background in Sports Sciences; Teacher 3, background in foreign languages and e-learning. The three instructors acted as mentors and learning facilitators for the student-athletes.

2) Tutors. They were selected on a voluntary basis from the administration staff/Ph.D. students of the University. They have a background in sport sciences (one of them is a sports manager and was a high-level athlete). The primary function of the tutor in the DUCASTUN consisted of:

- Acting as facilitators for the interactions between instructors and student-athletes;
- Assisting the student-athlete about examination dates, legal issues, and regulations concerning the attendance of the course;
- Supporting the Didactic Manager in her/his functions;
- Maintaining communication with URFI's tutoring and job placement office and keeping the student-athletes informed continuously about any changes that can occur in the course.

3) Didactic manager. They had a background in sport and management sciences. Their function was to guarantee the quality of the course in front of the Italian Olympic Committee and the URFI through a continuous feedback from student-athletes and monitoring of the tutoring process.

The goal of DUCASTUN was to create an effective and comfortable tutoring and learning environment for the student-athlete and to help her/him link academic life and professional development. The environment was based on lifelong learning models in which knowledge was not merely theoretical acquiring but something that was a result of practical experiences, both critically understood and interpreted.

The implementation of the URFI's Sports Tutorship model was carried out through a hermeneutical approach, methodologically focused on the following main steps:

- Description and interpretation of the existing situation related to tutorship and the dual career of student-athletes;
- Understanding the reasons that brought the current situation to the current form (analysis of interests and ideologies);

- Sketch of a possible agenda for improving a more active and efficient tutorship system;
- Evaluation of how to put this system into practice.

In this regard, the complicated nature of the student-athlete profile was discussed. The student-athlete can be thought to be like a Centaur, the student-athlete being neither an athlete nor a student if seen as a person who is devoted entirely to all activities that both sport and education demand.

One of the main challenges relating to the dual career of student-athletes consists of identifying effective learning and tutorship models based on virtual and distance communication. The main philosophies which inspired this model and its implementation were those of Personalism, Idealism, and Pragmatism. Within these philosophies, student-athletes' mentors and tutors act as role models which have to be emulated and have to offer students/trainees opportunities to improve their life skills. The actions of the project show that the aim was to develop a valid tutorship system to help the student-athlete to develop as an autonomous and independent person, according to Howard's Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence and that knowledge and learning have to be oriented by values and virtues, implying a practical application.

#### **4.2. Barriers and difficulties**

The main barriers encountered by URFI's research group for the implementation of the tutorship model were those concerning the lack of awareness about the issues and problems faced by student-athletes in this university. The case of URFI – a sport university – can be seen as symptomatic of difficulties and problems which tend to occur in all the European University system. From a legal perspective, in Italian universities, these difficulties are increased and amplified by legal constraints and administrative rules which tend not to favor the process of putting of the student-athlete in the system of traditional university courses. Student-athletes often therefore, face several problems in following these courses.

They are forced to combine sport activities and competitions with their duties as university students without any help from the same university they attend which, usually, tend to focus on a traditional and non-flexible teaching and learning system without any support from distance and Web 2.0-based education.

Other difficulties concern the didactical methodologies used for delivering the content of subject matters to student-athletes and the selection and recruitment of tutors and mentors due to the competencies and skills they need to competently be learning facilitators, counselors, and expert in administrative support.

#### **4.3. Recommendations and lessons learned**

It is necessary not only to select, recruit and train excellent tutors for supporting the tutorship for the dual-career of student-athletes at URFI, but also to identify instructors from its department who are highly motivated more sensitive towards the problems faced by such students. These instructors need to have an open and flexible attitude and be capable of managing new distance and Web 2.0-based learning tools. In addition, they need to take responsibility for the students and to face the challenge of social networks as learning environments. They have to be aware that not all instructors from a university department can adequately cover the function and role required to competently facilitate student-athletes' learning in the complex and fragmented scenarios of modern education. However, the capacity of an instructor and tutor to adapt is a key requirement as well as efforts to enhance the quality of instruction for student-athletes.

However, this can only happen if the legal constraints and barriers which oppose the enhancement of this quality are not rethought by this and all European universities in light of a more democratic, dialogic and inclusive practice. It is suggested here that there will not be any future for the student-athletes' dual career until these constraints and barriers are completely removed and overcome (or rethought in light of a more systemic philosophical approach).

#### 4.4. Sustainability

Feedbacks from student-athletes collected from surveys, interviews, and questionnaires have shown that the DUCASTUN model is effective and highly motivating for student-athletes at Foro Italico. This model is feasible, and its application can be extended to all of the URFI student-athletes. Due to the ETSPORT project, URFI has become aware that it had a tutoring model for its student-athletes which needed to be better identified, improved, developed and implemented. Moreover, the university now understands the importance of training new tutors for putting the DUCASTUN model into practice and transforming it into an efficient and permanent tutoring environment. In a nutshell, it is crucial to make all URFI instructors aware of the importance of tutoring their student-athletes in the best possible way, to teach them to utilize new e-communication and teaching tools and select those who have, or are more interested in developing, specific competencies to tutoring their student-athletes. URFI have identified particular styles of tutoring, and in the future, it will be necessary to find a way to put them into practice. They are convinced that these styles have to be shown by every tutor of student-athletes.

In conclusion, motivation, knowledge, and comprehension of the subject matter the student-athlete is studying, as well as of the process of acquiring them, have to be the pillars of an effective system to tutor and mentor student-athletes. This system has to help them develop problem-solving skills and to discover how to better understand things. Therefore, in the future, the aim will be to implement the tutorship system by teaching tutors to be, and act, as better tutors, becoming learning facilitators and human beings capable of using the emotional capital to motivate their tutees.

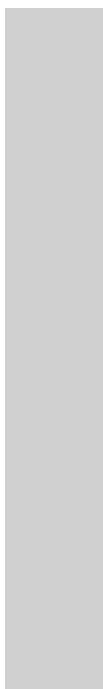




# 4

## **“ESTPORT” MODEL 2.0**

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## “ESTPORT” Model 2.0

This Chapter will show that the same project produced different learning outcomes dependant on the country or the University that hosted the Workshop. This is because differences of laws and academic and sports regulations, made each University learn from its real perspective of action and its daily context.

That is what a European program like ESTPORT is about, helping, sharing, promoting, each one from their possibilities and realities. For this purpose, the Workshops were held to bring together the different partners of the project and, among all, to seek an improvement in the academic and sports life of the European Student-Athletes. Therefore, below is a summary of all the topics and final ideas drawn from each workshop. The main findings taken from all the partners are:

- How to engage the lecturers in the short-term with what we can do to support athletes? - Sports Tutor informs lecturer that they need to put an oral summary on the VLE to go with the lectures for sessions the athletes will miss, but it is a good practice to do for all sessions but perhaps unrealistic at this stage but something to work towards as a university policy. Currently at Leeds Trinity the policy is that there must be a summary of a lecture post session as a minimum in addition to the power point slides or equivalent at least 24 hours before the lecture.
- Develop a Moodle site specifically for Dual Career Athletes to incorporate all issues and support as a place for the – set up a forum for participants to discuss this and to share issues, successes, progress, winnings/news. A one-stop shop for these students on all their needs. Best if could involve students in the design of this through focus groups.
- Adapt student studies where need – students need flexibility from universities and understanding.

- Workshops to include ‘externals’ if haven’t already e.g. National sports federations/governing bodies to help publish the project as well as gain their input.
- Organise student exchanges for dual career athletes - very important for student-athletes to feel part of the student experience so maybe they could look at their training schedule to see if they can fit in an overseas trip.
- Need to review practice in each country as well as the research.
- We need to set one inclusion criteria for research based on a unified definition of what dual-career athletes are – some universities have a wider inclusion criteria that will affect the results of the questionnaire.

## 1. Sports tutor figure

The core element of the European Sports Tutorship Programme is the Sports Tutor. Some of the key points and main features that have been highlighted are:

- We need to help Students/ Athletes to achieve academic and sports excellence
- We need to create training for these sports tutors
- The academic performance of these Student-Athletes must be observed.
- It is beneficial to group the Students-Athletes as they can help each other, they have the same needs.
- Helping these Students/ Athletes is FAIR, it is in the DNA of our University.
- From the UCAM one of the most valuable inputs offered is to use the Google Apps that the University makes available to students enrolled, with a capacity of 25 GB.
- The *Google Drive* is therefore a common tool to easily interconnect the tutor and the Student-Athletes or the Student-Tutor and the Student -Athletes, through this UCAM platform, academic information can be shared between all of them.

- It is also important that we are allowed the use of an integrated tool such as video conferences through *Hangout*.
- Another way of providing several Students Athletes with information and interactive platforms are the unknown *Google-Sites* where they can develop processes related to sports tutoring in a safe environment and away from the instant messaging that sometimes occupies a personal time of the Sports Tutor, although the dedication to a high level athlete is and should be wide and adapted.
- There are many tools that sports instructors can use.
- Novel tools are: Padlet and Symbaloo.
- Blackboard Collaborate and Matterhorn are apps that allow collaborative actions and even record classes up to 2 hours in duration and are examples of free software that allow students to be in contact with their Tutor or Student Tutor in a learning environment.
- It emphasizes the importance of the involvement of the management teams and other teachers to improve the work of a tutor.
- Strategies that student-athletes prefer are presented. The most popular is that the work of the subject is fragmented into parts so that the student can see their progress. This can be done through computer applications.
- Athletes value the importance of the Tutor highly. They see them as a necessary support to help them complete their studies.
- They usually communicate with their Tutor through telephone or email and in their spare time or when the Tutor sees them in person.
- ICT is seen as necessary to facilitate the relationship with the Tutor and the teachers of the subjects, although they emphasize that ICT is not sufficiently used.
- It is very important that there is coordination between the tutor and the coach.
- Key areas the student-athletes require from their Tutor: orientation on enrolment and choice of subjects, postponement of exams, schedules, targeting for each course.

- They prefer that the tutor is someone that they have a close relationship with, who can provide access to notes for example.
- They value the figure of the student tutor very much. It is the nexus of union with the reality of the class that they cannot experience.
- Proposals for improvement:
  - An informative meeting at the beginning of the course where the duties, rights and obligations are reported.
  - Requirements in terms of academic results to continue with their scholar. The requirement does not have to be only for qualifications, but also to reach the goals planned with the Tutor.
  - Possibility to recognize their competences as athletes and validate parts of subjects.
- In general, both tutors and athletes emphasize the importance that the sports tutor and their actions to be developed, are institutionalized.

## 2. Dual career

In addition, some of the main findings on the dual career topic are:

- The athlete-students state the need:
  - To manage the methodologies and tools to the requirements of each sport and grade.
  - Teachers to know the environment of the sports and athletes.
  - Flexible tools that allow an ease interaction with teacher.
  - To work to improve the athletes organization and planning capacities to help their sport and academic performance.
- The governments should:
  - Make aware the importance of forming a dual career process from the beginning.
- Help athletes to find work.
  - Make university level regulations about the dual career student-athlete clear and explicit.
- The regulation about dual career athlete-student at university level should:

- Recognize athlete experiences
- Make a personal sports tutorship programme
- Coordinate the governance at administrative, sports, and educational (university) level.
- Identify funds to support the study of athlete-students.
- To provide access to social security (as amateur athletes).
- To create programmes adapted to athletes-students.
- To create a body to certify the right of a dual career.
- To create a certification (awards) as Sports University.
- To accredit the universities focused on athletes-student dual career.
- To provide legal profit to universities that support student-athletes' dual career.
- To determine the student-athletes' aim to be funded by the dual career sport programme at university level.
- News technologies are a key tool in achieving success in a dual career. They have no limits, only those determined by the user.
- An online platform is necessary that allow the access to: athletes, teacher, coach and sports tutor.
- The athlete-students prefer that an online platform would allow:
  - Access to information quickly and in short time periods.
  - Access to information via mobile tools.
  - Training of the stakeholder to use the platform.
  - Differentiation for different users through online or face-to-face classes.
  - Being able to generate reports to the stakeholder.
  - Being able to show the athlete planning as both an athlete and student.
- The athlete-students perceives sport as a vehicle to study at university.
  - Universities can benefit from the profile of having student-athletes.
- The athlete-students prefer:
  - Mobility practices through Sport-Erasmus Program according to: sport type, athlete level, planning time, athlete time, and resources in the home university.
  - A personal tutor as athletes and not only a sports tutor.

- To feel assurance being in an environment that organizes and considers both the student studies and sport.
- To be integrated in an athlete-student virtual community.
- To have access to recorded classes and document in several languages.
- To not have to face-to-face classes.
- A body in the university to coordinate teachers with student-athletes.
- That they can help their classmates by their experience and knowledge.

### **3. Core features of the “ESTPORT” Model 2.0.**

In the last two years of ESTPORT, UCAM have delivered four workshops with different topics around the dual career. For example, about the legal and policy perspectives and e-learning technologies as a resource to improve the “dual career” of the Student-athletes. Some of the main findings and conclusions that define the ESTPORT model have been:

1. The need to recognise some of the athlete’s competences given their experience and professional career.
2. The need to create a body of paid professional Sports Tutors.
3. The need to create the figure of the student tutor, which is the link between the student-athlete and the other non-athlete students in the classroom.
4. The need to develop specific rules in each university to frame and support the student-athlete development. It is recommended that the coordination of work between the university admissions team, the degree and Academic practice, is improved, particularly when enrolling a student and giving them support in an often differentiated academic calendar and scheduling. Online campus - one of the most important tools for us.
5. The need to understand the issues of national institutes and coaches for their/our athlete-students.



6. To better understand pedagogical considerations:
  - Lecturer needs to know the sporting context e.g. for a swimmer v athlete
  - To know the calendar of student-athlete events and how this clashes with individual study programmes.
  - How to inform relevant staff about student-athletes' needs, particularly to each individual lecturer or programme/course leader.
  - Use of Moodle and area to chat with the students.
  - Good communication from student to teacher but also teacher to student to ensure a quality learning experience e.g. using e-mail.

#### **4. "DUCASTUN" Model (Dual Career Academic Support and Tutoring Unit)**

The 2.0 Tutorship system described earlier in this report, that was used to implement the dual career of URFI's student-athletes, aimed to find a better way to motivate and help student-athletes develop knowledge, comprehension, and reflection. This system was used to help inspire confidence and motivate the student-athletes to learn autonomously and in a critical way. What was important focused was to find a way to work with the preferred learning style for each student-athlete and to utilize innovative communication approaches to help facilitate the whole process.

Currently, virtual and networked environments based on the Web 2.0 technologies can offer new and outstanding possibilities to better mentoring and tutoring student-athletes who follow university courses. Online tutoring is usually practiced utilizing different approaches and methodologies. Main online environments applied in tutorship of student-athletes tend to involve the utilization of VLE (Virtual Learning Environments) such as Moodle and Blackboard, or learning management systems. The ongoing evolution of Web 2.0 technologies and learning methodologies have made the process of online tutoring more accessible, friendly and easier to be carried out. This process seems to perfectly match the characteristics of the specific tutoring and mentoring for student-athletes that is needed.

The online tutoring can help student-athletes to be tutored and mentored both as individuals and as a community of learners. The system can facilitate the achievement of the student-athlete's tutorship, that is to say: critical and self-reflexivity, independent learning, knowledge construction, transformative and collaborative learning based on groups, the community of practice, online interaction, and discussion. The current online tutoring model is based on social constructivist learning principles and critical reflective thinking.

Although the URFI had a Moodle platform for teaching part of the courses in Olympic studies and sport ethics, we decided to use Facebook as a learning platform and tutoring system for our student-athletes. Although this is a commercial networking platform, It was chosen for three principal reasons: firstly, because of the advantages of its easy accessibility. Secondly, because of the dialogic and interactive nature of the relationships between the teachers and student-athletes following the course. Thirdly, in line with contemporary theories of learning online, to highlight the importance of social networking for the human learning from a constructivist ad communitarian perspective.

Accordingly, the two online courses utilized the following e-tools both for teaching and tutoring:

- Facebook was used as the primary platform to host the content of the two courses (lessons and materials), as well as a tool for monitoring students' activities, and to send the main messages related to the course. Moreover, the Facebook group was also utilized to stimulate the communication among participants through a real-time group.
- Whatsapp chat was used to sharing information and (video) chatting. Its primary goal was to create a friendly setting, to post comments or to ask questions which needed quick replies, and also as a venue for sharing pictures and links to videos and podcasts.
- Youtube and Vimeo channels were used to record lessons by the instructors of the courses and by other invited speakers in seminars and conferences held in the framework of the two courses.
- Spreaker platform was used to record and broadcast teachers' lessons through podcasts.

- Dropbox was used as a folder for sharing course materials, files, and documents.
- Skype was used as a way of video-conferencing as well as a video chat for tutoring and final examinations.
- Twitter was used for sending announcements or messages about events and seminars.
- Wordpress blog was utilized as a repository for advice and alert to relevant information from the tutors of the two courses.

To evaluate and monitor the impact of the new e-learning tools and online resources on our student and post-career athletes we have carried out a study based on quali-quantitative research methods.

To verify and understand this impact, the URFI's student-athletes were divided into two subgroups of 11 and 7 people. The first subgroup was a tutorship system based on the e-tools and online tutoring resources mentioned above. Also, a research methodology based on a simplified model of the case study and evaluation of tutoring activities related to the two courses were employed. This assessment was carried out through methods of collecting qualitative and quantitative data, such as interviews, open and closed-ended questionnaires, and focus groups. The data was obtained via:

- 1) A specific questionnaire administered to the students who attended the courses. As mentioned above, the student-athletes were divided into two groups composed of the following number of people: group 1=11; group 2=7.
- 2) Two focus groups, each composed by the principal instructor responsible for the course, by an external observer, and by 5 student-athletes (5 for the first group, and 5 for the second one, so-called "control group").

The questionnaire for students was based on a Likert scale which ranged from 1 to 5 (1 = Unacceptable, 2 = Needs Improvement 3 = Average, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent). The questionnaire also included some open categorical questions (4, 5, 7, 8, 9) composed of two main parts:

- a) The quality of tutoring and mentoring;
- b) The liking and satisfaction with the e-tutoring tools and online resources used in the courses.

Some of the question ‘stems’ regarding the content and quality of the online tutoring were:

- The efficacy of online tutoring was.
- The usefulness of online tutoring was.
- Compared to face-to-face tutorship, online tutoring was.
- Please describe the online or face-to-face tutoring activities that most enhanced your learning, guidance, and support in the courses.
- Please explain the online or face-to-face tutoring activities that were least helpful to your learning, guidance, and support in the courses.
- Overall, I would rate the online tutorship of the two courses as.
- Please provide any additional suggestions, comments, or ideas for improving this tutorship.
- Considering your needs, did the tutorship satisfy them? (yes, no).
- Please provide any other suggestions, comments, or ideas for improving your online tutoring experience.

Among the questions “stems” related to tutors, the following were included:

- The instructors’ and tutors’ preparation, quality, and helpfulness of their feedback for this class were.
- Timely response by the tutor for your questions and help request was.
- The tutor as a discussion moderator and manager of interactions was.

Questions regarding the tutoring tools were summed up in a question that asked students which one of the following instruments (that is, Facebook, Youtube, Spreaker, Dropbox, Skype, Twitter) had to be considered as the most useful one in the course, and why.

The focus group, lasting two hours, consisted of a restricted discussion group to reflect on the main feedback from the questionnaire administered

to the student-athletes. This discussion was assisted and mediated by an external observer/researcher who acted as a moderator for the dialogue/discussion taking notes of the dialogic interactions among the participants. The discussion was intended to ascertain the veracity of the student-athletes' opinions and answers, taking them as guidelines for discussion and critical reflection.

The evaluation by student-athletes from the first group concerning their tutors and online tutoring system quality was wholly positive. They affirmed to feel fully satisfied with the tutoring system results and gratified by the experience of being tutored and mentored online. The same thing can be said about the focus group that confirmed the results from data produced from the questionnaires administered to the first group. Instead, data from the second group have not confirmed what emerged as results from the first one. Student-athletes' questionnaires data have provided valuable feedback for the further development of the tutoring actions. All students who attended the two courses answered the questionnaire. Results from the second group of student-athletes who were provided with a poor quality online tutoring showed a deep dissatisfaction.

The data collected from the questionnaires, discussions and interviews have proved the full achievement of tutoring and educational goals aimed by the online tutorship. In the focus group relating to the second group of student-athletes – that is to say the control group – it has emerged that the student-athletes were not fully satisfied with the tutoring they were provided with. They stressed that, due to the problems and difficulties experienced in being present at URFI for lectures, and teachers' office hours offered, they would have preferred a more intensive tutoring action based on online support, and not just on a face-to-face tutoring work.

Moreover, we think that particular consideration should be given to the percentages related to the liking and usefulness of the e-tutoring tools. The tools student-athletes most appreciated and liked were, the Facebook discussion group, WhatsApp chat, and Skype sessions. The reasons why they preferred these tools was that they were easy to use and based on a friendly interaction. Student-athletes liked more Facebook and WhatsApp because it has allowed them to be involved in a continuous dialogue with

questions and answers/replies and in ongoing support. Students also affirmed that they liked those e-tutoring tools because they were easily available on both tablets and mobile phones. In summary, the student-athletes gave an overall positive evaluation of the tutoring system they were provided and, as it happened in the case of the second group, ask for more of this kind of tutoring they did not experience.

# 5

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

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## Research Findings

This Chapter explains the main findings collected after the application of the ESTPORT questionnaire to the student-athletes from the four universities, comparing data from the pre and post-test. The questionnaire was previously designed and validated by research team (Sánchez-Pato, et al., 2016).

The first purpose of this project was to design and validate a questionnaire about the perceptions of elite student-athletes at university relating to their dual career. In the initial creation of the instrument, constructs were defined and three dimensions were established: academic life, sporting life and sports tutor. After a process of ‘back translation’, experts ( $n = 8$ ) agreed the construct to ensure content validity, the dimensions and the questionnaire questions. Statistical analysis of the items showed adequate comprehension to confirm content validity of participants ( $n = 30$ ). In construct validity ( $n = 73$ ), the results showed correct psychometric quality, internal consistency, reliability and adequacy of the structural model. The instrument had evidence of external validity, since the results were congruent with the main findings of the research. Finally, the “ESTPORT-survey: Questionnaire about the perceptions of dual career student-athletes” (Sánchez-Pato et al., 2016) was found to be a valid and reliable assessment instrument, consisting of 84 questions (in Spanish and English language), that enables the perception of elite student-athletes to be known about their dual career whilst at university.

In summary, this assessment tool had two categories: (a) Socio-demographic and contextual variables (i.e., “Which level in sport do you participate?”); and (b) Dual Career issues (i.e., “Do your studies interfere with your athletic performance?”). The second category contemplated three dimensions about the dual career: “Academic life” (i.e., “How much do you value having access to ‘Distance learning’ as part of the services and feature of your dual career at your university?”), “Sporting life” (i.e., “How much do you

value the ‘Sport monitoring’ services and features as part of having a dual career at your university?”), and “Sports Tutor” (i.e., “How highly do you value these services and features of the dual career at your university ‘Dual career sports tutors’?”). Most of the questionnaire items used a Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”).

The final version “ESTPORT-survey”, about the perceptions of the dual career, were assessed by the student-athletes without the presence of the trainer or teacher. The time approximately for each questionnaire (pre and post) were about 30 minutes (Appendix 8.2. ESTPORT-Survey).

This chapter explains the main findings collected after application of the ESTPORT-survey to the student-athletes from the five universities, comparing data from the pre and post-test.

## **1. UCAM Catholic University of Murcia (Spain)**

### **Methodology**

The aim was to find out whether any differences between the perceptions of the sports students about sport and their academic work exist, as well as that about the support provided by the University.

- *Participants*: There were 108 respondents to the questionnaire. Student-athletes were defined by those who were performing at the maximum level of their sport whilst studying at university. Students at UCAM were exempt from paying tuition fees for the duration of their studies. Participants were mostly performing their sport by representing the university in competition and thought Spanish championships, although there were a high number participating in championships at both European and International levels. Although to a lesser extent, some competed within the Olympic Games. Some students were also either at a professional or semi-professional level thus, gained support from other entities other than UCAM for their dual career, mainly from sports clubs and a lesser extent by the Higher Council of Sport through government aid.

- *Instrument: “ESTPORT-survey”*: The student-athletes were measured using the Spanish version of the “ESTPORT-survey: Questionnaire about the perceptions of dual career student-athletes” (Sánchez-Pato et al., 2016). The instrument was composed of 84 questions about “Academic life”, “Sporting life”, and “Sports Tutor”. The perception of the student-athletes was assessed twice: pre-test and post-test.
- *Procedure*: The student-athletes complete the questionnaires anonymously and individually, in a relatively relaxed situation, without being subject to study or competition pressure, without the presence of the coach or teacher (time: 30 minutes). Questionnaires were accessed online. The subjects did not receive any additional explanation about the purpose of the questionnaire except to the one that appeared within the instrument itself. However, they were given an information document about the project so that they were fully aware about the project ESTPORT itself.

## Academic Life

One of the main motivations of the athletes to study university was to increase the chances of getting a job once their sports career ends. “Enjoy studying” and “wanting to improve their education” are other reasons that athletes responded. Sports performance is an element that seems to influence the performance of athletes, since it is not always easy to achieve whilst having an “academic life”. Additional findings were that students defined themselves as athlete-students rather than student-athletes as sport is seen as the priority before their studies, both for the time they dedicate to their sport and for it being a priority in that moment of their lives.

With regard to the perception of difficulty in matching sports with their studies, student-athletes find it difficult, although they value to a great extent the flexible curriculum that exists at the UCAM, as well as the ability to have distance learning and the existence of the figure of the sports tutor. The expectations of the athletes once they finish, indicate that they would like to work in what they have studied, although still wanted to continue their sports career. Student-athletes recognised the importance of having

the support of both their coach and their families as well as friends and the sports service of the University, being of particular importance. In this university, the athletes mentioned the methodological strategies that the teachers implement in order to support the dual career. It should be noted that the pattern of studying for the athletes was not very different to non-athlete-students, as they take 1-2 years for an academic course compared to 1 year.

With regard to the perception of difficulty in matching sport with their studies, student-athletes find it consistently difficult, although they value to a great extent the flexible curriculum that exists at UCAM, as well as the ability to have distance learning and the existence of the Sports Tutor. The expectations of the athletes once they finish, indicated that they would like to work in what they have studied, although still wanted to continue their sports career. Student-athletes recognised the importance of having the support of both their coach and families as well as friends and the sports service of the University, being of particular importance. In this university, the athletes mentioned the methodological strategies that the teachers implement in order to support the dual career. It should be noted that the pattern of studying for the athletes was not very different to non-athlete-students, as they take 1-2 years for an academic course compared to 1 year.

In relation to the information that the athletes have about their circumstances, there is a great lack of knowledge regarding the national and regional regulations that affect them as high level athletes, since more than half do not have that information. About half of the students at UCAM also do not know the academic regulations of the University regarding elite athletes. This is a key finding to help inform and improve future actions regarding raising awareness about such regulations for student-athletes.

To conclude, the above highlights positive perceptions by athletes about their studies at UCAM, such as: the virtual tools that favour the dual career student, the importance it has for athletes to learn what they are taught in their studies, and the ability for them to be able to finish their studies; the importance of studies to achieve knowledge, as well as obtaining a degree to find a future job once their studies are completed.

## Sporting Life

The sports career seems to present itself as an aid to face the ‘academic race’ and sports training so that they do not interfere with student-athletes’ academic performance, as suggested by previous research (Jonker, Elferink-Gemser, & Visscher, 2009; Lorenzo & Bueno, 2012). This reinforces the present findings that show that the athletes of UCAM have a high load of training, with approximately half of them training 4-5 days a week and between 11 and 20 hours a week. Most athletes here, believed that training does not interfere with their academic performance.

There could be a direct relationship with the teaching support tools that athletes have, being the most used of the virtual campus. In this sense, to obtain positive results by combining sports career and academic training, the literature reflects both the need to promote ethical and sustainable sports practices and the development of an elite sports system, which would be effective in the identification and the promotion of sports talents, respecting the education / training needs of young athletes (David, 2004).

With respect to the sports career, the results stand out that the athletes would like to dedicate themselves to what they have studied once they finish their “sport race”, as well as athletic performance, again highlighting why the athletes not only identify with the Sports Tutor to provide support to achieve their dual career, but are also aware of the importance of studying for their future career to enable them to make a living when their sports career ends.

## Sports Tutor

One of the key gaps in the literature currently around the dual career, is to know how best to enable student-athletes to be successful in gaining a career post studying, by not allowing their sporting performance to negatively affect their future careers. The figure of the personal Sports Tutor was introduced with them aim to help achieve this, by providing individualized advice about their academic studies and particular sport, thought to be one route to achieving success for the dual career student

(Álvarez, Pérez, López, & González, 2014; López de Subijana, Barriopedro, & Conde, 2015; Vilanova & Puig, 2013). Therefore, it was necessary to know the perceptions of the dual career student-athletes about the “Sports Tutor”.

In this research, differences were found between the perceptions of the amateur, semi-professional or professional athletes, with the latter preferring the Sports Tutor more than the other two groups. Overall, the student-athletes valued the services and features highly, regarding the dual career at this university. A strong relationship with the Sports Tutor was found, shown by regularly keeping in touch, mainly by email. According to the perceived results, the student-athletes supported the interaction between the Sports Tutor and the Sports University Service as a mechanism that was good to facilitate the dual career. In addition, they presented high scores of perceptions about the relevance of the Sports Tutor, mainly because they needed someone who would listen to them and who was available for this purpose.

Other high scores by the student-athletes were for the need of a Sports Tutor for “personal support” more than for “academic support” or “time management”. Most of the student-athletes showed that they prefer the Sports Tutor to advise/help them with how to contact teachers, how to justify any academic assistance on the basis of training and/or competitions, or how to overcome aspects of teaching and learning (e.g. seminar help, placement support), among others. Finally, the student-athletes perceived the “student-tutor” or “peer-tutor” highly, mainly as a way to help them to prepare for exams and to inform them of any changes generally. To sum up, the student-athletes perceived the Sports Tutor as a mentor to guide the academic, sporting and personal life of their dual career.

## **2. University of Rome Foro Itálico (Italy)**

The findings below illustrate a summary of the student-athlete perceptions at the University of Rome Foro following the implementation of the Sports Tutorship model.

## Methodology

There were 139 identified as student-athletes from those who have competed in the Olympic Games, as well as having participated within regional, national, European and World competitions and contests. From this sample, a sub-sample of 26 was taken, made up of those student-athletes who had only competed within the Olympics and in international competition. This was to provide a comparative analysis with the subsample at UCAM of similar types of students.

The student-athlete at the University of Rome Foro Italico is not officially enrolled as this category of student, this happens after detecting and selecting student-athletes who are then provided with individual support; and any BA degree or MA degree regulations are also tailor-made to the different needs of different athletes.

No significant differences were found between the perceptions of student-athletes' academic and sporting life before the implementation of the DuASTUn model. The following details findings post implementation of the Sports Tutorship Model.

## Academic Life

Most of the student-athletes affirmed that their studies and their athletic performance affected each other due to the difficult of organising both their time dedicated to their studies and to their sports competitions and training. They tended to consider themselves mainly as athlete-students and not as student-athletes. The main barriers perceived for the dual career were the fact that both students' work and training schedules were not flexible and that lecturers of their university didn't implement learning and teaching strategies that supported having a dual career. Moreover, URFI's student-athletes were not aware of the national and regional legislation regarding elite athletes and they claim to be unaware of the academic regulations of the university regarding the student-athletes.

From the questionnaire, the biggest problem was the lack of information about the rights and guidance for the student-athletes as well as a lack of

involvement of university instructors in supporting this kind of students and in using personalized and distance learning tools. The student-athletes felt the Sports Tutor should help them manage administration and legal issues, inform them about annual exams and provide them with new and flexible learning methodologies.

## **Sporting Life**

The application of DUCASTUN model – derived and developed from UCAM's tutorship model – to a small sample of student-athletes from CONI (Italian Olympic Committee) showed the effectiveness of the UCAM's model ESTPORT and its sustainability and possible adaptation to another context. The data from the questionnaire administered to the sub-sample demonstrated that when the tutorship system has a Sports Tutor seen as an administrative support and the lecturer/instructor as a facilitator and a counsellor (capable of using Web.2.0-based communication technologies and social network as flexible learning environments), then the Tutorship system is really effective. Its effectiveness can be measured and evaluated in terms of showing student-athletes' satisfaction and increase in motivation towards their studies and athletic performance who feel part of a learning community in which their rights are respected, and their skills and competencies recognized and enhanced.

## **Sports Tutor**

To conclude, DUCASTUN and UCAM's tutoring models represent an example of how the personalised pedagogy of care, inspired by educationists such as Paulo Freire, Don Lorenzo Milani or the Spanish Víctor García Hoz, can be updated, put into practice and to turned into a pedagogical model capable of enhancing the skills for life in the new generations of young athletes.



### **3. University of Malta (Malta)**

The findings below illustrate a summary of the student-athlete perceptions at the University of Malta following the implementation of the Sports Tutorship model.

#### **Methodology**

Twenty-one student-athletes filled in the preliminary questionnaire. As a follow-up study, six student-athletes who participated the ESTPORT pilot study filled in the same questionnaire. A comparison of the main results in both studies in Malta is presented below. Most athletes in the preliminary and the follow-up studies consider themselves to be amateurs or semi-professionals, have been in high performance competition for more than five years, are currently attending a first degree course of 3-4 years, dedicate about 22 hours of lectures and extra study, up to 20 hours of training, and work part-time for up to 15 hours a week.

#### **Academic Life**

Student-athletes were asked if their studies interfere with their athletic performance, and the majority of the respondents in the preliminary study replied that it does, particularly during the exam period and when lectures clash with their training times or when they need to compete in international competitions. On the other hand, most of the student-athletes in the follow-up study replied that it doesn't, stating that the sport-tutors helped them when they needed to be excused from lectures, particularly given attendance at the University of Malta is compulsory. Findings from the questionnaire before and after the implementation of ESTPORT, illustrated that student-athletes found that their athletic performance affected their academic studies, as they needed to dedicate many hours on training and because they were then too tired to study after their training sessions.

## Sporting Life

Student-athletes responded that they considered their studies to be more important than their athletic career, stating that it's very hard to earn a living from sport in Malta. However, while the majority of the respondents in the preliminary study described balancing their sporting life with their academic study as hard, most of the respondents in the follow-up study described it as normal. Almost all respondents in both studies replied that they have support from their family, coaches and friends in this order and lecturers were placed fourth. However, a much larger percentage of student-athletes who participated in the ESTPORT pilot study chose the lecturers as the individuals that support them to achieve balance between sports and studies.

Students were also asked about the barriers in achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies. A larger percentage of students in the preliminary study, when compared to the follow-up study, attributed this challenge to their University lack of flexibility in their schedule. While very few students in the preliminary study replied that their lecturers implement teaching and learning strategies that promote dual career, half the student-athletes in the follow-up study stated they do, and explained that lecturers were flexible, moved times of lectures to accommodate their training and gave assignment titles very early to allow planning ahead.

## Sports Tutor

When the respondents were asked if they are aware of the academic regulations of University regarding student-athletes, half the respondents of the preliminary study stated they were not, while the other half said they didn't know if there are any. On the other hand, the majority of the student-athletes in the follow-up study insisted they were aware of the regulations.

Compared to the respondents of the preliminary study, less students in the follow-up study stated that their academic commitment interferes

with their training. The most difficult aspects to co-ordinate with their studies mentioned in both studies was daily training, training camps and competition. A majority of the student-athletes in the preliminary study stated that after they finish their athletic career they would like to continue to be involved in sport, while about a fourth of them stated they would like to work in a job they studied for. On the other hand, all student-athletes in the follow-up study would like to remain in sport.

The final set of questions were directed towards the sports tutorship model. Student-athletes in the follow-up study stated that their sports tutor contacted them mainly during lectures or by email and that he mainly facilitated their academic success through dealing with other lecturing staff. They also said that they need the sport-tutorship service to have someone to listen to them, for academic support, to help them in time-management, and to liaise with University staff. They felt the main areas they would like the sports tutor to advise them on were changes in exam dates and solving administrative issues.

#### **4. Leeds Trinity University (United Kingdom)**

We are going to expose the Pre and post-survey discussion, in relation to three dimensions: academic and sport life and sports tutor.

##### **Methodology**

The pre implementation surveys were distributed to 10 student-athletes, who were identified via the internal recruitment methods discussed in the implementation methodology. The post-implementation study was completed by 14 available student-athletes currently studying at Leeds Trinity University, and 3 graduated student athletes who had experienced two years of sport tutor support. For both surveys the student athletes ages ranged from 18-23. Pre-implementation an even gender split was seen. Post implementation an increase in female student-athletes completing the survey was seen, 53% were female and 47% male. Although a small

sample, this allowed a comparison to be directly drawn between pre and post. Identifying that the Sport Tutor model had benefitted and was valued by the student-athletes studying at Leeds Trinity University.

Every student-athlete identified three main support groups for achieving a good balance between sporting life and studies. These were, family, coaches and friends. A fourth support group was Sport University Service, in the post-implementation survey 100% of student-athletes identified Sport University Service as a key support system. This supports Leeds Trinity University's decision to ensure a dual approach between academics and sport development.

### **Academic Life**

There were varying responses to identifying barriers to achieving a good balance between sporting life and studies; this variation indicates how the demands placed on each student-athlete are very different. Therefore they cannot be supported in the same manner.

### **Sporting Life**

Another indication of the varying demands was the deviation in training hours between student-athletes in both their pre and post implementation surveys. The varying ranging of hours dedicated to training each week indicates once again, the importance of a student-athlete led model.

In the pre-implementation survey, only 20% of student-athletes recognised the support available, post-implementation this rose to 100%. Every student-athlete identifying the support channels available demonstrates that the core of implementation relating to create awareness was successful.

### **Sports Tutor**

In the pre-implementation findings, it was evident that student-athletes recognised there was a tutorship system being implemented however

none had utilised it. Three had spoken with their Sports Tutors, but this was in their position as a lecturer rather than tutor. Post-implementation, 100% of students recognised they had a designated Sports Tutor and 85% had utilised them. Student-athletes had also began to recognise the contribution that Sports Tutors had offered in achieving academic success.

This brief discussion of pre and post implementation survey results indicates that Leeds Trinity University has successfully created awareness of the model among student-athletes. It can be argued that the results in relation to utilisation of support link heavily to the student-athletes led approach adopted throughout the implementation process.

## 5. University of Thessaly (Greece)

The findings below illustrate a summary of the student-athlete perceptions at the University of Thessaly following the implementation of the Sports Tutorship model. The purpose of the survey was to provide information regarding the academic life, sporting life and the Sports Tutor of students-athletes of the University of Thessaly. Two surveys were conducted: a) before the implementation of the Sports Tutorship model, and b) after the implementation of the Sports Tutorship model.

### Methodology

- *Participants*: A sample of 46 students-athletes from the Department of Physical Education Sport Sciences of the University of Thessaly was selected for the purpose of this study. Seventeen of them were females and twenty-nine were males. Their mean age ranged from 18 to 24 years ( $M=20.60$ ,  $SD=1.52$ ).
- *Instrument*: For the purpose of the present study a specific questionnaire was designed (Sanchez-Pato, A. et al., 2016). The questionnaire consisted of 49 items and provide information regarding socio-demographic data, academic life, sport life and sports tutor of the students-athletes.

- *Procedure*: The method chosen for the purpose of the present study was that of self-completed questionnaires. Researchers informed all students that their participation was completely voluntary and the individual responses would be held in confidence and they will be held in confidence an only for academic purpose. Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

Findings revealed that there were no procedures for the dual career of student-athletes in the Department of Physical Education & Sport Sciences. After the Sports Tutor was implemented through Sports Tutorship model, it was evident that there were student-athletes at the University and all participated in National Championships, while five participated in International Competition and in University championships. Twenty-two of the student-athletes considered themselves as amateurs, twenty-one as semi-professionals and three as professional athletes, and all of them reported that they were high-level athletes.

In terms of their 'identity' all considered themselves as student-athletes versus athlete-students and 80% believed that their studies were the most important part for them. In addition, all student-athletes thought that their studies interfered with their athletic performance while 80% of them believed that their athletic performance interfered with their studies.

## **Academic life**

Regarding their academic life results showed that 80% plan further studies while 20% employment in the area of their study. All of them have no support from their coach to study, while they have support from their family to their studies. The most important barriers towards achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies are: a) The university is far away from my home, b) The university is far from my training site c) I am usually tired d) Students' schedules are not flexible. None of the students-athletes know the state legislation regarding the elite athletes.

## **Sporting Life**

Regarding their sport life results showed that training sessions per week vary from 6 to 10 sessions, while, training hours per week vary from 5-10, to more than 20 hours.

All of them find it difficult to coordinate daily training with their studies, and all of them plan to continue to be involve in sport.

## **Sports Tutor**

After the implementation of the Sports Tutor, findings from the second questionnaire follow-up showed that students felt there was frequent contact with the Sports Tutor mainly by e-mail, SMS, personal and group meetings. Student-athletes also felt the Sports Tutor helped them in solving issues relating to the exam calendar, changing exam dates, how to contact teachers and how to solve administrative issues. Students also reported that Sports Tutor is a very useful service, for their academic support, for their personal support, for time management and for liaising with the university.

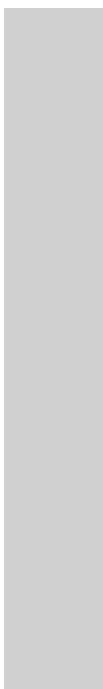




# 6

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY**

Antonio Sánchez Pato, Antonio Calderón,  
Emanuele Isidori, Elena Conde Pascual





## Conclusions and Summary

The issue of the dual career of students-athletes is a relatively new area of study. The importance of dual career students-athletes is now recognized by the EU. The students-athletes realize the importance of their dual career. Results from the present study (after the implementation of the programme) showed that students-athletes found it very helpful, want to continue, and be a part of such new university rules. As mentioned earlier, research on the dual career in the area of sport is limited. Only recently has it become an area of research, but many problems remain unsolved. Future research should include other variables, in order to examine and describe better the issue of students-athletes dual career.

The new tools provided by Web 2.0 allow the student-athlete to share knowledge and open contents, and to develop abilities and skills to create learning communities that foster interpersonal communication. Through these resources, both the dual-career and post-career student-athletes can develop skills for their future work and be supported in their retraining. Data from this study have shown that the easy Access to mobile phones and tablets explains the success of online tutoring tools. All this raises the question of the necessity to rethink the tutorship of student-athletes in light of the advent of these new forms of communication which are transforming the social network in online learning and tutoring environments. In line with that, this study also shows the necessity to rethink the tutorship provided to the student-athlete in terms of a specialized e-pedagogy whose aim is to make virtual environments comfortable learning environments for them.

In the future, it will be necessary to study the tutorship for the dual career of athletes taking into account all the multidimensional aspects and pedagogical challenges and framing it within the concept of 'sport guidance' which must be supported and enhanced by web technologies. Particularly, it should be aimed at developing social skills, learning communities, social-critical competencies, and a constructive dialogue

among people. These are considered to be the foundations and principles for an effective mentoring and tutoring system.

For this reason, both e-tutoring and e-mentoring have to be seen as a part of a large process of guidance and orientation for athletes, universities, communities and families. Web technologies allow rethinking tutoring practices addressed to student-athletes as a form of human capital capable of empowering and helping them to enhance their skills as both persons and professionals in the frame of the continuous educational system. New online tutoring and e-learning technologies are capable to better link the learning process of student-athletes to the educational agencies that support them in all the stages of their professional and personal life. Moreover, they are also capable of making student-athletes' learning process and tutoring more flexible and efficient in terms of time and goals.

An important milestone is the EU Erasmus calls, which are allowing us to develop specific projects in different EU countries on the dual career topic. This initiative is crucial. Therefore, I propose to create a forum for discussion and a place that brings all these projects together with the main Associations and Institutions around the Dual Career, under the guidance of the "*InterSport Group*". The goal should be to design the European model of sustainability for the Dual Career student-athletes in all its dimensions and to develop European policies based on the "good practices" tailored to the idiosyncrasies of each country, each institution and each sport.

A common challenge for universities, should be the development of a program of 'Sports Erasmus', enabling high level athletes to have a European experience with an assured quality in their academic affairs (such as classes and exams) as with their sport development (i.e. training and competitions).

In conclusion, ESTPORT research and implementation unit has shown how e-tutoring and its web technologies must be seen as an essential part of the methodology aimed at helping athletes.

Finally, we have concluded this handbook by highlighting some important bullet points that will be useful for any institution that is willing to incorporate the Sports Tutorship model (ESTPORT) into a higher education context.

1. It is necessary that the project of sports tutorials be approached institutionally and not occasionally, according to the good “will” of the Sport Faculty.

2. It is very important that it becomes a permanent service to all student-athletes who “fit” under the proposed criteria available not only for students of the sports departments but also for the students of the other departments.

3. It is necessary to raise awareness among teachers and student-athletes about the concept of mentoring so that they gradually become an integral part of everyday life.

4. It is critical to select, recruit and train excellent tutors to support dual career mentoring as well as identify instructors who are highly motivated and more sensitive to the problems facing that particular category of students.

5. Sports tutors should also be open-minded and flexible, able to manage new tools for distance learning and based on those such as Web 2.0, to get in line and, finally, to face the challenge of social networks as learning environments.

6. Sports tutors should maintain contact with student-athletes to monitor whether student-athletes are doing enough, but care should be taken to avoid over-directing.

7. The sports coach contact should instill a sense of support from the staff and the university behind the athlete. It is necessary for the model to make the athletes feel a sense of pride in relation to their achievements. This positivity is advisable since it allows the successful development of the model.

8. It is recommended to determine the selection criteria of the student-athletes group who could participate in the Sports Tutoring Model. This will lead to achieve the best “correspondence” of the sports tutor-athletes relationship. It is appropriate to launch an open invitation with a clear description of the needs and requirements. This step will facilitate the entire process of identifying the correct “target” group and avoid misunderstandings between student-athletes and faculty members.

9. It is important to identify the particular needs of each participant by formulating with the tutor the “roadmap” for each student-athlete.

Support services should be classified into two different thematic areas: a) educational b) professional and occupational.

10. In order to meet the needs of student-athletes, online tutoring is important to overcome the issue of student-athletes' busy schedules and training that mean they cannot always meet their Sports Tutor in person.

11. It is necessary to put the responsibility on the student-athlete to be responsible for themselves and their progress. If necessary, they will seek support through making an appointment with their Sports Tutor who can work systematically through their problems to find a common solution.

12. Student-athletes need a career-oriented "toolkit" to obtain important information about their future both in terms of postgraduate studies and career options available for their future. It is recommended that the career toolkit contains information on postgraduate course listing, career guide with a detailed description and guidelines for preparing their resume and covering letter as well as a CV template.

13. An evaluation phase is needed so that tutors can monitor both the student-athlete's participation in the programme and their progress.

14. Tutors need to be monitored during the testing period, not only to assist student-athletes, but also to ensure that the model works correctly and successfully meets initial objectives.

15. It is necessary to continuously promote the "Sports Tutoring Model" with the aim of disseminating and sensitizing the positive effects of its implementation in a permanent way, revealing all the advantages and multiple effects not only for student-athletes, but also for the institutions and stakeholders.

16. A sustainable framework for the model of sports mentoring dictates that its concept will always be subject to consideration and continuous adjustment to the changing conditions of the economic and social environment.

17. In order to ensure this continuous reform, a multidisciplinary committee should be introduced to evaluate the validation of the model and its functional adjustment to the conditions proposed by the new environment.

18. The introduction of a support system for student-athletes is very important for the continuation of their career. This system can include financial support for elite students (scholarships), medical support and psychological help, helping them to overcome problems that are approaching (for example, a transition period in their careers).

19. Although the support provided by sports coaches is very important, especially if it is related to the demands of the University, this may not be enough. Such a project needs to involve clubs and associations from the outset, since in some cases they are putting too much pressure on their athletes and do not always understand the demands of academic studies.

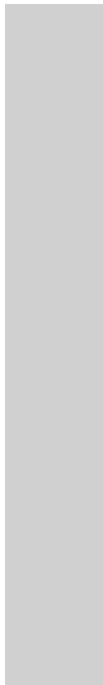
20. Finally, to emphasize that one of the main objectives will be to implement the tutoring system, academic/teaching tutors to be and act as the best tutors, being learning facilitators and human beings capable of using emotional capital to motivate their students.





# 7

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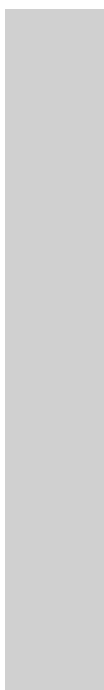
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# 8

## **APPENDIX**





# Appendix

## 1. Spanish Dual Career Policies<sup>1</sup>

### 1) Organic Law of Universities (Art. 90 and 91). General framework:

- Central Government and Autonomous Community – Competences:
  - General coordination of the sports activities of the universities
  - Articulate formulas to make compatible the studies of high level athletes with their sports activities.
- Universities: they will provide instruments for the effective compatibility of the sport practice with the academic formation of the students.

### 2) Regulatory development:

#### 1. Access to university studies

- a) Reservation quotas
  - RD 412/2014, of June 6, which establishes the basic rules of the procedures for admission to undergraduate university education.
  - RD 971/2007, of 13 of July, on high level and high performance athletes, in public universities:
    - General: 3% of the places offered
    - Physical Activity and Sport Sciences, Physiotherapy and Primary Education (PE Mention): 5% additional.
- b) Exemption physical access tests for the teachings in Physical Activity and Sport Sciences. (RD 971/2007).t. (RD 971/2007).

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<sup>1</sup> By Almudena Vicente Buendía.

## **2. Sports Tutor**

- RD 1393/2007, of October 29, establishing the management of official university education.
- Universities should be provided with guidance procedures for new students to facilitate their incorporation into the university and university education.
  - Art 62, RD 1791/2010, of December 30, by which approves the Statute of the University Student.
- Universities will promote the compatibility of students' academic and sports activities.
- Universities will facilitate access to university, guidance and monitoring systems, and compatibility of studies with sports practice for students recognized as high level athletes.
  - Sports Tutor - Art. 9.11, RD 971/2007, of July 13, on high level and high performance athletes
- To compatibilize studies with training and assistance to competitions
  - o Academic tutorials to support students whose sports obligations prevent them from continuing their studies with normality.

## **3. Academic regulation**

- RD1791 / 2010, of December 30, by which approves the Statute of the University Student.
  - Universities in their own regulations to protect athletes High Level / High Performance in:
    - Requests for change of schedules
    - Coincidence of exams with competitions
    - Permanence regime
- UCAM regulations:
  - Regulation of permanence of Degree and Master
  - Compatibility of studies and sports practice High Level / High Performance
  - New Entry Students + Part time enrollment: min 30 ECTS

- Modification of official calls for evaluation tests
  - Attention to the condition of sportsman High Level / High Performance: general practice in all university degrees of the UCAM.
    - A) General procedure (Degree in Physical Activity and Sport Sciences, among others)
      - Application to the University Department
      - Internal management of the application, through the sports tutor
      - Setting of alternative date of evaluation by the professor of the subject
    - B) Specific procedure in some degrees: published on the website of the degree (Section: schedules and examinations)
      - Degrees in Primary and Secondary Education:
      - Application deadlines
      - Obligation to notify the professor
      - Possible modifications in the format of the evaluation test with respect to the established in the Teaching Guide
    - Degree in Law:
      - Application deadlines
      - Specific request form
      - Presentation of the application by specific channels (technical secretariat or e-mail alu.ucam.edu).

## 2. ESTPORT Questionnaire<sup>1</sup>

### A) SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND CONTEXTUAL VARIABLES

[In this block, the questions are related to variables of interest to know about the context of student- athletes]

**15) Gender**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

**2) Years: \_\_\_\_**

**3) Civil status**

- ☐ Single
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ Divorced

**4) Have you got children?**

- ☐ Yes (how many?)\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ No

**5) Which sport do you practice?\_\_\_\_\_**

**6) In which Sport level (multiple answers) competition do you participate?**

- ☐ Local Championships
- ☐ National Championships
- ☐ University Championships
- ☐ Continental Championships
- ☐ European championships
- ☐ World Championships
- ☐ GSSE and Mediterranean games
- ☐ Olympic Games

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<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the “ESTPORT-Survey” is to analysis the problems, needs and demands from students/ athletes, as well as the Universities’ own practices, methodology, and programmes in place in the field of dual career. The ESTSPORT-Survey includes two blocks: (A) Socio-demographic and contextual variables; and (B) Dual Career issues

- 7) **How do you consider yourself?**
- ☐ Amateur
  - ☐ Semi-professional
  - ☐ Professional
- 8) **At what point in your career are you?**
- ☐ Beginning of competition (less than five years in top-level competition)
  - ☐ High-performance competition (more than five years in top-level competition)
- 9) **What do you study?**
- ☐ Vocational Education
  - ☐ Degree (which?) \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ Master's degree (which?) \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ PhD (which?) \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) **How long are you studying at the university (in years)?** \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) **Do you receive a scholarship?**
- ☐ Yes, it is a full scholarship of: \_\_\_\_\_ € / £
  - ☐ Yes, it is a partial scholarship of: \_\_\_\_\_ € / £
  - ☐ No, I am free of charge
  - ☐ No, I do not receive any money
- 12) **If yes, what institution gives you the scholarship?**
- ☐ My University
  - ☐ Sports Governing Body
  - ☐ National Government
  - ☐ Olympic Committee
  - ☐ Other institution: \_\_\_\_\_
- 13) **Where do you train?**
- ☐ University facilities
  - ☐ Other facilities (where?) \_\_\_\_\_
- 14) **Do you work?**
- ☐ No
  - ☐ Yes (where?) \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ If yes, how many hours a week? \_\_\_\_\_

## B) DUAL CAREER ISSUES

[In this block, the questions are related to specific aspects of your dual career (as student-athlete). It is divided in three sections: (1) Academia life; (2) Sport life; and (3) Sport-tutor<sup>2</sup>]

### 15) Why did you choose to study at University?

- ☐ To increase my job prospects
- ☐ Because I enjoy studying and want to educate myself
- ☐ For social interaction
- ☐ For a university experience
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 16) Do your studies interfere with your athletic performance?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

### 17) Does your athletic performance interfere with your studies?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

### 18) Do you consider yourself as?

- ☐ Student-athlete
- ☐ Athlete-student

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

### 19) What is most important for you?

- ☐ Your studies
- ☐ Your athletic career

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

### 20) What is the level of difficulty to adjust your sporting life with your academia?

- ☐ Very easy
- ☐ Easy
- ☐ Regular
- ☐ Hard
- ☐ Very hard

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<sup>2</sup> The Sport-tutor is the person who has the responsibility to help you in adjusting your academic and your sport career (dual career)



**21) How do you value these services and features of the dual career at your university? (leave blank if not applicable)**

Mark with an "X" 1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree

- ☐ Flexible curriculum 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Distance learning 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Sport monitoring 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Dual career counselors 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ No services are available

**ACADEMIC LIFE**

[In this block, the questions are related to specific aspects of your academic life (as student-athlete)]

**22) What are your expectations for the end of your studies?**

- ☐ Further studies
- ☐ Employment in my area of study
- ☐ Athletic career
- ☐ Graduate employment
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**23) Do you have any support from your coach to study?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**24) Do you have any support from your family to study?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**25) What are the barriers towards achieving a good balance between your sporting life and your studies?**

Mark with an "X" 1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree

- ☐ The university is far from my home 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ The university is far from my training site 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ I find myself unable to balance study and training time 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ My current job does not allow me to study enough 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ My current job does not allow me to train enough 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ I have to take care of my family 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ I am usually tired 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ I lose the rhythm of the course 1-2-3-4-5

- ☐ I lose touch with my classmates 1-2-3-4-5
  - ☐ The cost of education is high 1-2-3-4-5
  - ☐ I do not have enough university support 1-2-3-4-5
  - ☐ Students' schedules are not flexible 1-2-3-4-5
  - ☐ Training's schedules are not flexible 1-2-3-4-5
- 26) Who supports you towards achieving a good balance between your sporting life and your studies?**
- ☐ Family
  - ☐ Coach
  - ☐ Friends
  - ☐ Lecturers
  - ☐ Peers
  - ☐ Sport University Service
  - ☐ None of the above
  - ☐ Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- 27) Do your Lecturers implement learning and teaching strategies that promote dual career?**
- ☐ Yes (what type?) \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ No
- 28) How many years do you spend in achieving one whole level?**
- ☐ 1year/level
  - ☐ 2 years/level
  - ☐ 3 years/level
  - ☐ 4 years/level
  - ☐ 5 years/level
- 29) How many hours do you spend per week studying?**
- ☐ Attending lectures \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week
  - ☐ Extra study \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week
- 30) Do you know the state or regional legislation regarding the elite athletes?**
- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
  - ☐ I am not aware that there any

31) **Do you know the academic regulation of your university regarding the student-athletes?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not aware that there are any

32) **Choose between 1=Strongly disagree and 5=Strongly agree**

- ☐ The university has virtual tools to promote dual career 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ It is important for me to learn what is taught in my studies 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ I am willing to invest time to get excellent grades in my studies 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ I will be able to use what is taught in my studies on different aspects of my life outside the university 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ I get more satisfaction from getting high marks in a subject than winning a game in my sport 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ I have some doubts about my ability to get high grades in my studies 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ I am sure I can get a degree 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Is not important for me to have better results than other students in my studies 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ The content of most of my subjects is interesting to me 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Getting a degree is the most important reason for which I am studying at the University 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ It is not worth the effort to get an excellent grade in my studies 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ In an academic environment, I find it more difficult to cope with difficult tasks 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Studies are important to acquire knowledge and skills 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Achieving a degree is important to enrich my knowledge 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ It is important for me to get a degree and that will help me to find a job 1-2-3-4-5

## SPORT LIFE

[In this block, the questions are related to specific aspects of your sport life (as student-athlete)]

### 33) How many training sessions a week?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 34) How many hours do you train per week?

- ☐ Less than 5
- ☐ Between 5 and 10
- ☐ Between 11 and 15
- ☐ Between 16 and 20
- ☐ More than 20

### 35) How much do you feel your sporting career helps you to cope with your studies? 1-2-3-4-5

Mark with an "X" 1=Disagree; 5=Very much agree

### 36) Does your academic commitment interfere with your training? 1-2-3-4-5

Mark with an "X" 1=Disagree; 5=Very much agree

**37) The University offers services of:**

<b>My University offers (yes or no)</b>	<b>I use it (yes or no)</b>	<b>Evaluate it (1= low quality to 5= high quality)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Nutritionist		
<input type="checkbox"/> Exercise Physiologist		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sports doctor		
<input type="checkbox"/> Physiotherapist		
<input type="checkbox"/> Performance Rating		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sports Psychologist		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sports Facilities		

**38) What teaching tools do you normally use?**

Mark with an "X" the level of use 1= not use a tool, 5= very used

- ☐ Virtual Campus 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Forums 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Tasks 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Chats 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Videoconferences / Skype 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Facebook 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Twitter 1-2-3-4-5
- ☐ Others\_\_\_\_\_ 1-2-3-4-5

**39) What is the most difficult aspect to coordinate with your studies?**

- ☐ Daily training
- ☐ Training camps
- ☐ Competitions
- ☐ Others:\_\_\_\_\_

**40) What are your expectations after finishing your athletic career?**

- ☐ Continue to be involved in sport
- ☐ Work in what I studied
- ☐ To live on my savings

## SPORTS TUTOR

[In this block, the questions are related to sports tutor. If you answer “no” to question 41, you do not need to continue. Thank you very much]

- 41) **Does your university have a sports tutor system?**
- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
- 42) **My sports tutor contacted me in this year to advise and/or support:**
- ☐ Yes
  - ☐ In classroom
  - ☐ By phone call
  - ☐ By text message
  - ☐ By email
  - ☐ No
- 43) **My sports tutor kept in communication with me 1-2-3-4-5**  
Mark with an “X” 1=Few times; 5=A lot of times
- 44) **My sports tutor deals with my lecturers regarding issues towards letting me have success on my courses? 1-2-3-4-5**  
Mark with an “X” 1=Few times; 5=A lot of times
- 45) **My sports tutor facilitates my academic success through dealing with the lecturing staff? 1-2-3-4-5**  
Mark with an “X” 1= Not at all; 5= Yes a lot
- 46) **I need this service:**
- ☐ Having someone who listens to me and is available
  - ☐ For academic support
  - ☐ For personal support
  - ☐ For time management
  - ☐ For liaising with university
- 47) **Would you like your tutor to advise you on:**
- ☐ Access to studies (Administrative Consulting)
  - ☐ What subjects I should select
  - ☐ Exams calendar
  - ☐ Change in exam dates

- ☐ Justification for assistance on the basis of training and / or competitions
- ☐ How to contact teachers
- ☐ How to solve administrative issues
- ☐ The use of virtual campus
- ☐ Teaching methodologies

**48) Do you have a student-tutor?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**49) How does the “student-tutor” help you?**

- ☐ We do not have the “student-tutor” in my university
- ☐ They facilitates me the note-taking
- ☐ They informs me about exams
- ☐ They help me with the workload and labs
- ☐ They informs me of any changes about my studies





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**"ESTPORT" Consortium.**  
Kick-off Meeting. UCAM.  
January 2015



**Damián Quintero**  
World Karate champion





**Sete Benavides**  
World Canoe Champion



**Elsa Baquerizo**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place European Volleyball  
Championships



**Mireia Belmonte**  
Swimming Olympic Gold Medal



**Javier Hernaz**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place World Canoe Championships

**Fran Pérez**  
Team captain  
Ucam Murcia CF,  
2<sup>nd</sup> division

**Miguel Ángel López Nicolás**  
World Race Walking Champion







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