



# **BASES Postgraduate Endorsement Scheme (BPGES)**

## **Handbook and Guidance**

**October 2024**

**FAIRNESS**



**PROFESSIONALISM**



**HONESTY**



**RESPONSIBILITY**



**EXCELLENCE**



*“Promoting **excellence** in **sport** and **exercise sciences**”*

## Introduction

This document sets out the **BASES Postgraduate Endorsement Scheme (BPGES)** criteria, which are required for postgraduate course endorsement. These criteria align to the standards set by BASES for Accreditation as a Sport and Exercise Scientist. These are the standards that BASES has produced for the autonomous, safe, and effective practice of sport and exercise scientists. They are the minimum standards we consider necessary to protect members of the public. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) applying for BPGES must demonstrate how their course(s) and curricula are designed, taught, and assessed to be inclusive, and to ensure learners meet these standards of proficiency that apply to practice within specified domain(s) of expertise. HEIs are expected to map their curricula to relevant domain(s) of expertise. The domain of expertise is the area or areas of the profession in which learners will be given the opportunity to acquire the relevant knowledge, skills, and professional experience to practise lawfully, safely and effectively in a way that meets the requisite standards and does not pose any danger to the public or to themselves.

## Why has BPGES been developed?

Multiple requests have been made to BASES expressing an interest for postgraduate endorsement of integrated, and standalone, master's courses. These have been founded on the recent endorsement of the BASES Postgraduate SEPAR Endorsement Scheme (PSES) for Sport and Exercise Psychology.

## How BPGES builds upon and extends BUES

The BASES Undergraduate Endorsement Scheme (BUES) awards endorsement to sport and exercise science degree courses that provide undergraduates with the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills essential to enter the profession. The BPGES extends this opportunity, enabling institutions to align their master's provision to demonstrate advanced, specialist and critical knowledge and skills at the forefront of the academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice, essential to enter the profession at a more specialist level.

## Equity, diversity, and inclusion

BASES is committed to widening participation in scientific research, education, practice, and the workplace with the goal to create greater opportunity for any individual in sport and exercise science to fulfil their potential, irrespective of their background or circumstances.

<https://protect-au.mimecast.com/s/ng1SC1WLPxcpYgV2qfLNMIc?domain=bases.org.uk>

Postgraduate courses submitting for endorsement must demonstrate how the design of their course(s) and curricula, their approaches to teaching, learning, student support and assessment, including research and work-related opportunities, ensure an equitable and inclusive student experience.

At BASES, we are committed to Fairness, Professionalism, Honesty, Responsibility and Excellence. We strive to improve our ways of working to be more inclusive and diverse, to accelerate our impact on society and live up to our Values. Therefore, BASES endorsed programmes will be reviewed against the following themes:

1. **Teaching and Learning:** how the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion are embedded into the learning outcomes, teaching, and assessment of the postgraduate curriculum.
2. **EDI Targets and Outcomes:** measure, assess and reflect on annual equity, diversity and inclusion targets. This should demonstrate how your institution 'closes the loop' embedding actions from one year into the design and delivery for the subsequent year.
3. **Representation of Teaching Staff and Guest Speakers:** to increase diversity of thought, skills and experiences to enrich learning.
4. **Partnerships with Students:** engage a diverse range of students and stakeholders in the co-design of the curriculum to ensure that equity, diversity and inclusion underpin the learner experience.
5. **Personal and Professional Development:** ongoing active engagement to increase awareness and understanding and act around intersectionality and inclusion within the teaching and learning environment.

## Climate change and sustainability

BASES is committed to help address the Climate Change Emergency and has signed up to both the United Nations Sports for Climate Action Framework and the Pledge to Net Zero. The Association has pledged to:

- promote greater environmental responsibility
- reduce its overall climate impact
- educate for climate action
- promote sustainable and responsible consumption
- advocate for climate action through communication

Postgraduate courses submitting for BASES postgraduate endorsement are expected to uphold the BASES values for climate change and sustainability and must evidence how their Department/Faculty/Institution is committed to Climate Change and Sustainability. They must demonstrate how the design of their course(s) and curricula, and their approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, including research and work-related opportunities, meet the pledges made by the Association for climate change and

sustainability. Finally, they must explain how students become aware of professional expectations around sustainability and self-reflect on their sustainability attributes.

## **Domains of expertise, environments, and access to professional experience**

We recognise that domains of expertise, environments and access to professional experience will vary between HEIs. We do not dictate how HEIs should meet our standards. There is normally more than one way in which each standard can be met, and the way in which you meet our standards might change over time because of improvements in technology or changes to staff or to changes in your teaching or research environment. We ask that you make informed, reasoned decisions about your postgraduate provision to ensure that it provides an excellent and inclusive, student experience and environment, that helps individuals meet the requisite standards.

## **Service users**

We recognise that HEIs and accredited members work in a range of different settings, which include applied practice in sport and health, education, research, and roles in industry. Throughout the generic standards we have used the term '**service users**' to refer to anyone who uses, or is affected by, the work undertaken by individuals gaining professional experience. We recognise service users will depend on how and where professional experiences are undertaken, and that different professions sometimes use different terms. For example, if you work in applied practice, your service users might be your clients, or your staff if you manage a team. The term also includes other people who might be affected by your practice, such as carers and relatives. □

## **Design of the BPGES application form**

The range of postgraduate degrees offered within the sport and exercise science subject area is diverse. Many degree pathways provide taught subject specific knowledge in one of the BASES disciplines (e.g., physiology), whilst other degrees offer an interdisciplinary, or research/applied context. Due to this variation, it is not appropriate to list specific discipline elements to be mapped to (unlike the BUES criteria); the mapping exercise would be overly complex and long. Instead, applicants are expected to identify the specific elements appropriate to Scientific Knowledge, or Technical Skills: Development & Application within their course and map this to the following elements, where shown, on the application form: **Theory, Problem-solving, Measurement and evaluation, Complexity, and Originality.**

## What does BPGES mean by the term 'advanced' knowledge and skills?

The BPGES application does not detail which knowledge or skills are deemed *advanced* (i.e., beyond what is expected at Level 6 on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications). This is deliberate. For some master's degrees, knowledge and/or skills mapped in the BUES criteria may be taught at Level 7. It is entirely possible that such a skill is applied to a different context (e.g., progressing from a controlled laboratory environment to 'in the field' testing, or working with specialist groups in a clinical setting). The expectation is that institutions articulate how the specified knowledge or skills, align to the Framework for Higher Education Qualification Level 7 descriptor, and meet the specified masters learning outcomes.

## The need for an overview document

Where several degrees from the same institution are seeking BPGES endorsement, it is appropriate to submit an overview 'top level' document to capture elements which are common across all postgraduate degrees (i.e., initiatives / practices which sit outside a specific degree). This overview document should be used to capture generic content aligned to elements: Learning, Teaching and Assessment; Professional Development; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; Staff Profiles, Professional Accreditation, and Staff Affiliations ([template here](#)). Aspects of the course, which are specific to a particular named degree, should not be included in the overview template but included on the course specific application form.

## Eligibility to apply for BPGES

When reviewing a course, BASES will consider the curriculum, the practical experience gained by students, the research environment, and the resources and facilities of the institution. The award of BPGES will be restricted to Level 7 master's courses, and exclude PG Certificate, PG Diploma, Professional Doctorate and PhD awards. Further details are provided below.

**Postgraduate Taught 'Generic' (MSc)** – a course where the taught content includes *more than one of the three core disciplines of sport and exercise sciences* (Physiology and/or Psychology and/or Biomechanics). Applicants are expected to meet *most of* the knowledge, skills and applications elements stated in each criteria, across the three sport and exercise science disciplines.

**Postgraduate Taught 'Specialist' (MSc)** – a course where the taught content is focused specifically towards *one core discipline of sport and exercise sciences*, either Physiology or Biomechanics. Applicants are expected to meet *most of* the knowledge, skills and applications elements stated in each criteria for the single sport and exercise discipline. Please note, courses, which include the word 'Psychology' in the named Award, are

excluded from this endorsement route. **Endorsement for postgraduate Sport Psychology, Exercise Psychology or Sport and Exercise Psychology courses must be submitted through the [BASES Postgraduate SEPAR Endorsement scheme \(PSES\)](#).**

- **Research (MRes, MPhil)** – Whilst MRes and MPhil degrees are not automatically excluded from the BPGES, it is recognised that there is variation in the volume of taught elements within these programmes. Coupled with the individual nature of student specialism within these programmes, it is recommended that before you begin the application, you first make contact with the BASES office to arrange to speak with a member of the HE Endorsement Group to explore the suitability of any application.
  - Where a programme is suitable, you will be expected to utilise your programmes learning outcomes, in combination with the activities undertaken within the programme of study. Institutions are expected to fully meet *most of* the elements stated in each criterion.

## **The distinction between BASES Postgraduate Endorsement Scheme (BPGES) and BASES Postgraduate SEPAR Endorsement Scheme (PSES)**

Through completion of a PSES endorsed master's degree, students are eligible for entry onto SEPAR. Through SEPAR, Sport and Exercise Psychologists in Training (SEPiTs) will acquire knowledge, skills, and experience relating to competencies that confers eligibility for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a Practitioner Psychologist. *Students undertaking a psychology-focused MRes/MPhil may need to complete additional training to fully meet the criteria for becoming an HCPC Practitioner Psychologist.*

BASES are conscious of the dangers with BPGES being confused with PSES and implications this may pose for the HCPC approved training route for Sport and Exercise Psychologists. To avoid confusion, any master's degree which has the word 'Psychology' in their title will not be eligible for the award of BPGES. It is recognised that some Psychology based master's degrees will not be eligible for PSES and those degree pathways may want to speak with BASES to further explore their options. Modules which contain psychology content as part of a generic sport and exercise science course are permitted for mapping onto BPGES.

## How to Apply

The BPGES application form can be found [here](#) also via the BPGES section of the website.

HEI's may apply for BPGES for multiple postgraduate programmes. To avoid repetition in writing and reviewing, where several degrees from the same institution are seeking BPGES endorsement, the submitting HEI may provide an overview "Top Level" document to capture common aspects such as learning environment, opportunities for professional development, equality, diversity and inclusivity, and climate change and sustainability.

## When can applications be submitted?

There are two application deadlines each year for BPGES submissions:

- 31 January
- 31 May

## Professional accreditation and affiliations of academic staff

In addition to evidencing sufficient coverage of the knowledge and technical competencies, to ensure that postgraduates are made aware of relevant professional issues and are able to draw on the knowledge and skills of staff with current professional experience in sport and exercise science, the programme team must comprise at least 2 staff members with relevant professional accreditations, one of which needs to be a BASES Accredited Sport and Exercise Scientist (pedagogy, support or research), and collectively must deliver a substantive proportion of the programme (i.e., >33% of the provision [delivery and / or student support]). Within the application form, the staffing profiles of those primarily responsible for delivering the programme must be included, and the hours they deliver to the students, must be documented clearly.

## Completing the application form

Applicants are required to complete the BPGES application form to demonstrate that a course meets the criteria for endorsement. The process is as follows:

1. Applicants map their MSc. programme against the BPGES criteria for scientific knowledge, technical skills (application and development), interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary learning opportunities, research knowledge and skills, opportunities for professional development, and staff profiles.
2. Applicants must provide evidence to support the mapping (i.e., cross reference module and programme handbooks, module and programme learning outcomes, programme specification, assessment strategies etc.). All evidence (i.e., course documentation) must be included in the application.
3. At the end of each section, there is an opportunity to narrate any unique features of the MSc. provision. If the programme is endorsed, this information will appear on the BASES Course Finder, enabling the USP's of the programme to be marketed to prospective students.

4. Finally, within the application, providers must document the details of staff members who will be responsible for delivering the programme. Within the table, it must be evidenced that at least two members of the programme team hold the relevant professional accreditation (i.e., a BASES Accredited Sport and Exercise Scientist (support, pedagogy, or research), and their proportional contribution to the delivery of the programme must be indicated.

## Supporting documentary evidence

It is up to the provider to select relevant documentation to support their application. There are no mandatory requirements or specific documents that must be submitted, but the following are the types of documents that are likely to provide relevant supporting evidence:

- Programme specifications
- Module descriptors / guides (including scheduled contact hours)
- Teaching schedule (including detailed overview of session topic)
- Laboratory manuals
- Work placement handbook
- Student handbooks

It is requested that applicants provide an easy to follow narrative within the application form, which directs or links the reviewer to the relevant supporting evidence within the application. Any applications which are unduly difficult to follow, overly onerous for the reviewer, or limited in detail, will be returned to the provider.

## Application assessment and feedback

Each BPGES application is reviewed by the HE Endorsement Scheme Advisory Group. Reviewers will assess the application and the supporting documentation, and will make one of the following four decisions:

1. **Endorsed:** the course / programme has been judged to fully meet the endorsement criteria.
2. **Endorsed with recommendations:** the course / programme has been judged to meet the endorsement criteria. However, the reviewers have identified some areas where there is potential improvement in coverage / provision, which will be detailed in the recommendations provided.
3. **Deferred pending additional evidence:** the course / programme has been judged to meet most of the endorsement criteria. However, there are some aspects of the application where further evidence or clarification is required for the reviewers to make a final decision. In their feedback, the reviewers will provide details of the additional information or evidence that is required. Upon receiving the requested information from the applicant, the reviewers will make a decision on the final



outcome of the application (“Endorsed”, “Endorsed with recommendations” or “Not endorsed”).

4. **Not endorsed:** The course / programme has been judged to not meet the endorsement criteria. In this scenario, reviewers will not ask for additional evidence or information, as it has been judged that the programme / course structure, content and / or provision does not meet the BPGES criteria. 80% of the application fee will be returned after a decision on Not Endorsed. The reviewers’ decision and feedback will be provided to the applicant on the BPGES Review Feedback Form.

## Support and advice on completing the application form

Queries relating to BPGES applications should be initially directed to the BASES office by emailing [education@bases.org.uk](mailto:education@bases.org.uk) or calling 07838 153258.

If more dedicated support or guidance is required, applicants can request advice from a member of the HE Endorsement Scheme Advisory Group.

## BPGES endorsement renewal

If endorsed, a MSc. programme will hold BASES – BPGES endorsement for a period of five years, at which point a renewal endorsement application must be submitted. For renewal, the same BPGES application form must be completed in full, though where only minor changes have been made to the course, it is acknowledged that much of the information and documentation submitted will be the same as the previous application.

## Changes to degree programmes

If modifications are made to the Programme, or if the programme team changes (so there is no longer BASES Accredited staff delivering the content) - within the five-year endorsement period- BASES must be informed of these changes. It is the responsibility of the named contact for the endorsed course to immediately outline the changes by emailing: [education@bases.org.uk](mailto:education@bases.org.uk).

Any changes outlined will be reviewed by a member of the HE Endorsement Scheme Advisory Group, resulting in one of the following outcomes:

**No action required:** If the changes outlined are deemed not to impact on the degree course meeting the BPGES criteria.

**Re-application required:** If the changes outlined are deemed to be significant enough that it is no longer clear whether the course meets the BPGES criteria for BASES endorsement, the reviewer will recommend that a re-application is required. A period of three months will be given to complete and submit a new application form. The re-endorsement fee will be adjusted based on the number of years since the previous endorsement application was submitted.

## Endorsement fees

The BPGES endorsement fee for a single MSc. programme is £1,800 + VAT. This covers the cost of the application review and assessment process, and the five-year period of endorsement.

For additional courses, routes or pathways that are part of the same 'programme framework' and therefore submitted within the same application, the endorsement fee is £400 + VAT for each additional named route/pathway. To be classed a part of the same 'programme framework', all the different routes/pathways must share common 'core' modules making up at least 75% of the total course content.

If an application for endorsement is not successful 80% of the total application fee will be refunded. Where a course(s) is rated by reviewers as "**Partially met**" on the application form, the HEIs will be provided clear feedback, and invited to re-submit further evidence within three months, as part of the original BPGES application. If the additional evidence submitted subsequently confirms the course meets BPGES criteria, the course will be endorsed. If evidence produced is insufficient, and BPGES criteria remain unmet, the course will not be endorsed.

Where a course(s) is rated by reviewers as mostly "**Not met**", the course will not be endorsed. HEIs will be offered clear feedback and expected to address areas of concern before re-submitting a new application for BPGES. If an application for endorsement is not successful 80% of the total application fee will be refunded. Full fees will be payable for any future BPGES application.

Once the review process is complete, the BASES office will email the course lead to advise them of this and will be able to issue the final documents and add the course(s) to the BASES website and/or course finder only once the final balance (if applicable) is made.

## Alignment to future BASES accreditation for individual practitioners

Through completion of a BPGES endorsed master's degree, graduates will be able to map towards several key areas of BASES individual accreditation. The table below provides an outline of the alignment to BASES accreditation. However, completion of a BPGES course does not confer individual accreditation. We do however recognise some courses may integrate opportunities to work towards accreditation, whilst studying for a PG award but the final submission for individual BASES Accreditation, remains separate to BASES course endorsement. Graduates may use evidence achieved through their PG course, including professional practice hours, as evidence towards future individual Accreditation. Graduates interested in BASES Accreditation as a Sport and Exercise Scientist should follow this link: [BASES Accreditation](#)

### BPGES ALIGNMENT TO BASES ACCREDITATION

		1 Scientific Knowledge	2 Technical Skills	3 Application of Knowledge and Skills	4 Understanding and use of research	5 Self- evaluation and professional development	6 Communication	7 Problem solving and impact	8 Management of self, others and practice	9 Understanding the delivery environment	10 Organisation and Management
2.0	Scientific Knowledge	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	
3.0	Technical Skills: Development and Application		X	X	X	X		X		X	
4.0	Application of Knowledge & Skills: Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary			X	X		X	X	X	X	X
5.0	Research Skills and experience			X	X		X	X		X	
6.0	Professional Development and Practice				X	X	X	X	X	X	

