



# MA/Postgraduate Diploma/ Postgraduate Certificate in Sport and Christian Outreach

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Course Leader: Professor Andrew Parker

## Background and rationale

Churches and church organizations are reviving their interest in sport and physical activity as a means of outreach, especially amongst young people. Historically churches have played a key role in promoting sport, and church-based organizations have more recently identified a renewed interest in sports ministry and outreach. Whether working as professionals or volunteers, outreach staff need the knowledge and skills to enable them to work in partnership with various sports agencies. Unique to the UK higher education market, this dynamic range of new courses offers accreditation in the intellectual, practical and professional aspects of sports mission, ministry and outreach.

## Course content

The Sport and Christian Outreach programme offers students the unique opportunity to understand, critique and develop practice in

the realm of sport and spiritual development. These courses form the centrepiece of a range of new faith-based initiatives hosted by the University's Faculty of Sport, Health and Social Care, aimed at developing research, knowledge transfer, community development, education and training in this resurgent field. The Faculty also draws upon the international reputation of Redcliffe College (Gloucester) as a provider of excellent missionary training. Modules are tailored towards Christian community work in sport and theology. Some modules are theoretical, some teach practical skills, some are generic with other sports management areas. Both the Certificate and the Diploma include work-based, experiential modules that assess practical skills alongside knowledge, beliefs and values. The University of Gloucestershire provides support and assessment in finding and working in these placement situations. Module provision is as follows:

## Course benefits

The programme is located at the University's state of the art Oxstalls Campus. Students, in both full time and part time modes, enjoy challenging and interactive teaching and learning strategies. A range of lectures, seminars, and field visits are managed alongside work or community-based learning opportunities. The Course aims to:

- Develop critical and reflexive understanding of the relationships between sport, faith and spirituality;
- Develop strategic and leadership skills for church, outreach and community settings;
- Facilitate in-depth understanding of political, ethical and theological issues relating to contemporary sports mission and ministry;
- Enable students to construct and manage robust research and evaluation programmes that facilitate an enhanced understanding of contemporary practice in sports mission and ministry.

## Career opportunities

As a vocation sports ministry has a long history, much of which has its roots in the 'muscular Christian' ethos of the Victorian era. In recent years, however, there has been a resurgence in this field with major providers seeking to professionalize and accredit workers who aim to use sport as a tool for evangelism or community development. Analysis of the needs of agencies within this sector suggests that graduates entering sports mission/ministry require: (i) a socio-political understanding of the role of sports in relation to community development; (ii) the ability to analyse and work with the major delivery agencies; (iii) an understanding of the principles of evaluation and evidence-based practice; (iv) a 'strategic' or 'enabling' orientation, and (v) a critical and reflective understanding of their faith. The programme equips students with the intellectual and practical tools to meet these various requirements. To encourage and

support workers in the field, the University has joined forces with the Joseph Rank Trust to establish a series of bursaries under their Active Faith, Active Sports initiative (see: <http://www.ranktrust.org/>). This scheme offers grants to support the employment of workers on sports mission/ministry projects, covering up to 50% of project officer costs for up to 5 years. Applicants may work in rural or urban areas.

## Entry requirements

The programme is designed for those with a relevant first degree in sport or applied theology, or with a particular interest in sports mission, ministry or outreach. Professional experience may be considered alongside formal accreditation.

## Enquiries and applications

For more information about the courses that we offer in this area, and/or for further details about the Joseph Rank Trust's Active Faith, Active Sports initiative, please contact:

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### Postgraduate Certificate (60 CAT Points)

Status	Module code	Module title	CAT Points
■	SCO 401	Sports Ministry: Society and Theology	20
■	SCO 402	Mission and Sport	20
▲	SCO 498	Independent Study	20
▲	APH 408	Work Based Learning	20

### Postgraduate Diploma (60 CAT Points)

Status	Module code	Module title	CAT Points
■	SCO 499	Methods of Enquiry	20
●	SD 404	Theology of Religions	20
●	SD 405	Christian Spirituality in a Worldwide Context	20
●	SD 406	Strategic Management	20
●	SD 407	Community Development in Sport and Physical Activity	20
●	SD 408	Contemporary Coaching Practice	20
●	SD 409	Leadership and Managing Change	20
●	SD 410	Professional Ethics	20
■	SCO 444	Dissertation	60

■ Compulsory module    ● Core module    ▲ Option module