Bath Insights Internship Programme Project Brief

Project title: Student Athlete Research and Performance Data Systems Internship

Department: Vice Chancellor's Office

Project theme: Data

Capabilities: Collaboration; Communication; Critical thinking; Data literacy; Drive and initiative

Project brief: Colleagues from the Department of Sports Development and Recreation (DSDR) and The Department for Health are developing a Student Athlete Living Lab to strengthen its sport research capability and enhance understanding of the factors that contribute to athlete performance, wellbeing, development, and long-term success. The Living Lab will provide an evidence-based platform to support research into student athletes, generating insights that can inform performance support programmes, athlete development pathways, and future research funding opportunities.

A key requirement is the ability to collect, manage, and analyse athlete data effectively. Currently, performance, health, wellbeing, and development data are captured across multiple systems and platforms, limiting opportunities to undertake comprehensive longitudinal research and understand the relationships between interventions, athlete experiences, and performance outcomes. It will also be important to link this information with central university student data (e.g. entry grades, educational background, markers of socioeconomic status and degree progression) to form a holistic view and support reporting of graduate outcomes.

Project aim: The intern will undertake a review of the datasets, systems, and software currently used to collect and manage student athlete data. The project will identify opportunities to improve data integration and recommend a preferred system or platform that could support future sport research, athlete monitoring, and performance analysis through the development of the Student Athlete Living Lab.

Alignment with University goals: This project supports the University's ambitions to be a leader in sport, athlete development, and high-impact research. By establishing a clearer understanding of how athlete data is collected, stored, and utilised, the project will help create the infrastructure required to undertake robust sport science and athlete performance research.

The outputs will contribute to a longer-term vision of developing an integrated research platform that enables researchers and practitioners to explore how training, competition, health, wellbeing, and support interventions influence athlete performance, academic achievement, and longer-term graduate outcomes. The project will also help position the University to secure future external research funding by demonstrating a coordinated and scalable approach to athlete data management.

Scope and feasibility: The project has been designed to be achievable within an 8-week internship and suitable for students with limited prior work experience. The focus will be on engaging stakeholders, reviewing existing datasets and systems, conducting desk-based research, and producing evidence-based recommendations. The outcome will be a practical roadmap towards a unified athlete data system capable of underpinning future sport research and enhancing the University's ability to monitor and support athlete performance.

Main outputs or deliverables:

By the end of the 8-week internship, the intern will deliver:

1. A review of current athlete data collection practices across the Student Performance Sport (SPS) programme, identifying:
    - Performance and competition data
    - Physical health and physiological data
    - Training and workload data
    - Injury and rehabilitation data
    - Wellbeing and welfare data
    - Personal development and athlete support data
    - Central university student data

2. A mapping of existing data systems and platforms used across the athlete performance pathway, detailing:
    - What data is collected and why
    - Where data is stored
    - Who owns and accesses the data
    - How systems connect (or fail to connect) with one another
    - Opportunities to streamline data management

3. A gap analysis identifying data that would strengthen future sport science and athlete performance research but is not currently captured consistently.

4. An evaluation of current and potential data management solutions, assessing their ability to:

- Support longitudinal athlete tracking
- Integrate multiple datasets
- Enable performance analysis and reporting
- Support sport research projects and publications
- Facilitate future funding applications and research collaborations
- Meet data governance requirements

5. A final report and presentation recommending a preferred system or platform that could serve as the foundation of the Student Athlete Living Lab and support future athlete performance research.