CASES Postgraduate SEPAR Endorsement Scheme (PSES)

Handbook and Guidance

October 2023

FAIRNESS PROFESSIONALISM HONESTY RESPONSIBILITY EXCELLENCE

Overview

CASES, the Chartered Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences, is the professional body for sport and exercise sciences in the UK. The CASES Sport and Exercise Psychology Accreditation Route (SEPAR) programme was launched in February 2020 and is the latest Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approved training route for Sport and Exercise Psychologists. 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 HCPC as a Practitioner Psychologist.

To gain entry onto SEPAR the registrant must hold graduate or professional membership of CASES and be able to evidence: i) underpinning psychology knowledge[1]; and ii) a MSc. in Sport and / or Exercise Psychology. For the M-level qualification, registrants must have successfully completed a programme which has sufficient coverage of the relevant knowledge based HCPC Standards of Proficiencies (SoP's; 13.52-13.57) for Practitioner Psychologists. To date, SEPAR applicants (whether UK-based or International) have been required to complete a mapping exercise to demonstrate that their completed MSc. programme adequately covers such requirements.

Hence, the CASES Postgraduate SEPAR Endorsement Scheme (PSES) has been designed to allow SEPAR registrants to evidence expediently, the completion of an appropriate M-level qualification. In essence, this scheme will support future Sport and Exercise Psychologists choose an MSc. programme that is endorsed by CASES via PSES, and which covers the relevant knowledge based HCPC Standards of Proficiency required for entry onto to SEPAR.

Any MSc. programme which has been approved through the PSES process will remain endorsed for a five-year period unless there are significant curriculum amendments. It will be placed on the CASES course finder, and the provider will be able to use the CASES SEPAR endorsed logo in relevant marketing materials. Any unique features of the MSc. provision (e.g., exposure to specialist sport and/or exercise psychology topics) will also appear on the CASES course finder, enabling the course and its unique selling points (USP's) to be marketed among prospective students.

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[1] See SEPAR application guidance for further details regarding underpinning psychology knowledge
Sport and Exercise Psychology Accreditation Route (SEPAR) | CASES

Criteria for PSES course endorsement

MSc. Sport and / or Exercise Psychology providers can apply to have their course CASES endorsed through the PSES process by evidencing sufficient coverage of the relevant[2] 17 SEPAR Knowledge Competencies, which have been informed by the HCPC SoP's (13.52-13.57) for Practitioner Psychologists. That is, programmes must be able to demonstrate the development of Level 7 knowledge and understanding relevant to:

1.	**Sport and Exercise Psychology (1.1.1 – 1.1.6)** **Relevant competencies for all MSc. programmes** The nature of sport and exercise psychology; motivation, confidence, and participation for sport; physical activity and exercise; group and team-based theories; gender, diversity and cultural competence; contemporary topics in sport and exercise psychology; mental health.
2.	**Sport Psychology (1.2.1 – 1.2.4)** **Relevant competencies for Sport and Sport & Exercise Psychology programmes (only)** Performance enhancement; psychomotor learning and sport performance; understanding of special issues in sport psychology; coaching psychology.
3.	**Exercise psychology (1.3.1 – 1.3.3)** **Relevant competencies for Exercise and Sport & Exercise Psychology programmes (only)** Epidemiology of physical activity and health; physical activity promotion strategies; special populations in physical activity and exercise.
4.	**Complimentary Areas to Sport & Exercise Psychology (1.41[3])** **Relevant competencies for all MSc. programmes** The sport sciences and allied professions
5.	**Issues in Professional Practice (1.51-1.53)** **Relevant competencies for all MSc. programmes** Current Issues in the professional practice of sport and exercise psychology. Philosophy, frameworks and models for applied sport and exercise psychology approaches to Counselling.

See Table 1, Knowledge competencies of the SEPAR profile (Appendix 1) for further details.

Professional accreditation and affiliations of academic staff:

[2] There are different knowledge requirements for the endorsement of MSc. Sport and Exercise Psychology, MSc. Sport Psychology and MSc. Exercise Psychology programmes (see Table 2).

[3] Any individual candidates who have completed a BUES course, are automatically able to claim a rating of 2 on the initial SEPAR competency profile

In addition to evidencing sufficient coverage of the Knowledge Competencies, CASES endorsed MSc. provision must be delivered by a team that includes at least two staff with relevant professional accreditations. Specifically, at least two individuals within the programme team must be CASES Accredited Sport and Exercise Scientist (psychology support or research) and / or hold HCPC registration, 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

When can applications be submitted?

Applications can be submitted throughout the year.

How do I submit an application form?

The PSES application form can be downloaded from the "Important Documents" section of the website. Once completed, the form and all supporting documentation should be emailed to: education@CASES.org.uk.

Completing the application form

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

1) Providers must refer to the Guidelines for Rating Knowledge Competencies (see Appendix 2) and map their MSc. programme against the (relevant) 17 Knowledge Competencies of the SEPAR profile (see Table 1, Appendix 1).

2) Specifically, the programme must be rated (from 0-3) against the relevant Knowledge Competencies within Table 1, with each rating justified through evidence (i.e., cross reference module and programme handbooks, module and programme learning outcomes, programme specification, assignment strategies etc.,). All evidence (i.e., course documentation) must be included in the application.

3) To achieve CASES endorsement, there is a need to evidence that the MSc. programme achieves a **minimum rating of 2** across all relevant Knowledge Competencies (see above criteria, and column 3 of Table 1 for "relevance").

4) While a rating of 2 is required across the relevant Knowledge Competencies for endorsement, providers can also indicate a higher rating of 3 (maximum) if they deem it appropriate. If approved by the CASES HE Endorsement Scheme Advisory Group, this will enable graduates to have a stronger competency profile at the initial stage of the SEPAR process. In these cases, the SEPiT will not have to develop those specific higher-rated knowledge competencies to the same extent as others during the SEPAR process.

5) At the end of the Knowledge Competency table, there is also an opportunity to narrate any unique features of the MSc. provision (e.g., exposure to specialist sport and/or exercise psychology topics). As indicated, if the programme is endorsed, this information will appear on the CASES Course Finder, enabling the USP's of the programme to be marketed to prospective students.

6) 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 CASES Accredited Sport and Exercise Scientist [psychology support or research] and / or having HCPC registration).

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 Table 1, which directs 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.

Exemplar:

Theme	**Ref.**	**Competency**	**Sub-Topics for Consideration**	**Rating claimed (1-3)**	**Contributory modules and indicative module content (please submit accompanying module documentation as supporting evidence)**
Sport & Exercise Psychology	1.1.1	The Nature of Sport and Exercise Psychology	Related topics include: History of sport and exercise psychology, understanding and using sport and exercise psychology, understanding of sport and exercise psychology governance (CASES / FEPSAC / BPS / AASP), the relationship between sport and exercise psychology and other sport science disciplines.	2	The history of sport and exercise psychology and understanding of sport and exercise psychology governance (CASES/FEPSAC/BPS/ AASP), is considered at length during the **PSYCH7001** module which runs the entire year **(see Student Handbook; Appendix 1).** During the initial teaching weeks of the module, the history of sport and exercise psychology, its governance, and pathways to professional practice (i.e., HCPC registration) are covered in detail (**see PSYCH7001 teaching schedule; Appendix 2**) Moreover, the relationship between sport and exercise psychology and other sport science disciplines is considered in both a theoretical and applied manner within the work placement module **(PSYCH7002; see module guide; Appendix 3; see Work Placement Handbook, Appendix 4).**

Application assessment and feedback

Each PSES 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 two 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 PSES 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 PSES Review Feedback Form.

Once the review process is complete, the CASES 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 CASES website and/or course finder only once the final balance (if applicable) is made.

Support and advice on completing the application form

Queries relating to PSES applications should be initially directed to the CASES office by emailing enquiries@CASES.org.uk or calling the office.

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

PSES endorsement renewal

If endorsed, a MSc. programme will hold CASES – PSES endorsement for a period of five years, at which point a renewal endorsement application must be submitted. For renewal, the same PSES 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 MSc. Programme, or if the programme team changes (so there is no longer CASES Accredited and / or HCPC Registered staff delivering the content) - within the five-year endorsement period, CASES 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@CASES.org.u.

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 PSES 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 PSES criteria for CASES 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 PSES 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. If an application for endorsement is not successful, 80% of the total application fee will be refunded.

Payment can be made by credit card (please call the office) or via invoice (please provide purchase order number).

International provision

The PSES process is the same for UK and international providers. As SEPAR welcomes internationally based applicants, providers outside of the UK should contact CASES for specific guidance / support if required (education@CASES.org.uk).

Appendix 1

Knowledge Competencies of the SEPAR profile (Table 1).

	KNOWLEDGE (17 competencies)						For reviewer use only	
Theme	**Ref.**	**Notes / Relevance**	**Competency** (i.e., Candidates should know and understand the key concepts associated with the scientific knowledge base)	**Sub-Topics for Consideration**	**Rating claimed (0-3)**	**Contributory modules and indicative module content (please submit accompanying module documentation as supporting evidence)**	**Agreed (Y/N)**	**Reviewer comments**
Sport & Exercise Psychology	1.1.1	**Relevant competencies for all MSc. programmes**	The Nature of Sport and Exercise Psychology	Related topics include: History of sport and exercise psychology, understanding and using sport and exercise psychology, understanding of sport and exercise psychology governance (CASES/FEPSAC/BPS/ AASP), the relationship between sport and exercise psychology and other sport science disciplines.				
	1.1.2		Motivation, Confidence and Participation for Sport, Physical Activity and Exercise	Related topics include: Achievement goal theory (including motivational climate), competence motivation theory, self-determination theory (intrinsic/ extrinsic motivation), constructs of control, attribution theory, and self-efficacy theory, the Sport Commitment model, and burnout in sport.				
	1.1.3		Group and Team Based Theories	Related topics include: Group dynamics; group structure, group cohesion, group productivity, leadership in sport and exercise groups, social loafing, group identity, social identity theory, role clarity/ ambiguity, role overload,				

				collective efficacy, cliques, social support, collaborative coping.				
	1.1.4		Gender, Diversity and Cultural Competence	Related topics include: Cultural context of sport and exercise, athlete lifespan, gender, race, ethnicity, socio- economic status, sexuality, scholarship in sport and exercise psychology.				
	1.1.5		Contemporary Topics in Sport and Exercise Psychology	Related topics include: Mental toughness, resilience, grit, performance psychology, developing life skills, psycho-social factors and talent identification, impression formation and body-language; self-presentation and impression motivation, expectancy effects, using sport and/or exercise psychology in varying occupational domains (e.g., military, arts, business), music and video interventions, Personality-Trait-Like Individual Differences (e.g., perfectionism, optimism, narcissism, trait emotional intelligence), career transitions, psychological contracts, performance thriving, growth, sedentary behaviour, high-intensity interval exercise.				
	1.1.6		Mental Health	Related topics include: The role of physical activity in the promotion of good mental health and wellbeing (self- esteem, affect, stress, cognitive function, enjoyment, quality of life), prevention and treatment of poor mental health (anxiety, depression, substance abuse, schizophrenia and other mental illnesses), mechanisms by which physical activity influences mental health, understanding referral points and roles of critical others as a sport and exercise				

				psychologist, mental health literacy, theories of psychopathology and aetiology of mental disorders, Green space/Blue space exercise and mental health.				
Sport Psychology	1.2.1	**Relevant competencies for Sport and Sport & Exercise Psychology programmes only**	Performance Enhancement	Related topics include: Stress and the stress process in sport, arousal and anxiety theories including the notion of directional interpretations, stress management and stress inoculation, concentration and attentional style, emotional regulation, goal setting, imagery, self-talk, relaxation, self-confidence, coping (adaptive and maladaptive strategies), distraction theories and choking, emotional contagion and labour, using metaphors, Acceptance-Commitment Therapy (ACT), Rational-Emotive-Behaviour Therapy (REBT), Nudge theory, motivational interviewing.				
	1.2.2		Psychomotor Learning and Sport Performance	Related topics include: Cognitive and perceptual processes (e.g., information processing, memory, attention, anticipation, visual perception and motor action), motor learning theories and skill acquisition factors (e.g., schema theory of motor learning, specificity and variability of learning, movement skills, stages of skill development, skill acquisition strategies, practice), developmental factors influencing motor control and learning, motor control, dynamical systems, expert/novice difference and expertise.				
	1.2.3			Related topics include: Injury and rehabilitation, career transitions, working with athletes and carers of				

			Understanding of Special Issues in Sport Psychology	athletes who have physical and mental disabilities, working with young and adolescent individuals, youth sport and sport parenting, gender issues in sports, working with elite athletes, working with officials.				
	1.2.4		Coaching Psychology	Related topics include: Coaching pedagogy, coaching behaviour, the role of the coach and coach-athlete relationships, leadership and coaching styles, understanding coaching environments, enhancing coach performance, working 'through' coaches, coach efficacy and competence, coach and athlete expectations, working with coach-athlete relationships.				
Exercise Psychology)	1.3.1	**Relevant competencies for Exercise and Sport & Exercise Psychology programmes only**	Epidemiology of Physical Activity and Health	Related areas include: The evidence for the current physical activity recommendations, prevalence of physical inactivity in a local, regional, national and international context, public health policy and practice, behavioural epidemiology framework, energy expenditure continuum, measurement of physical activity/sedentary behaviour the epidemiological relationship between physical activity and mental health				

	1.3.2		Physical Activity Promotion Strategies	Related topics include: Models of behaviour change (e.g., trans theoretical model, social-cognitive models, theory of planned behaviour, HAPA, COM-B, dual process theories), PA determinants (e.g., correlates, barriers, social ecological model), measurement of psychological/wellbeing outcomes, designing and evaluating effective interventions for increasing physical activity using appropriate frameworks (e.g., behaviour change wheel, logic models), influencing PA promotion strategies in different settings (e.g., schools & higher education, workplace, GP referral schemes, communities, NHS), motivational interviewing				
	1.3.3		Special Populations in Physical Activity and Exercise	Related topics include: Gender issues in physical activity and exercise, clinical populations (e.g., cancer, depression, HIV, obesity, osteoporosis, diabetes, pregnancy), older adults, children and young people, low socio-economic status groups, families, ethnic and underrepresented groups, disabled people, disordered eating, body dysmporhia, exercise dependence.				

Complimentary Areas to Sport & Exercise Psychology NB. Any individual candidates who have completed a BUES course are automatically able to claim a rating of 2 on the initial SEPAR competency profile	1.4.1	**Relevant competencies for all MSc. programmes**	The Sport Sciences and Allied Professions	Sport and exercise psychologists are expected to be cognisant of disciplines outside of sport and exercise psychology. These may include generic areas such as physiology, biomechanics, sociology, coaching, nutrition, physiotherapy/massage, performance analysis, performance lifestyle and, strength and conditioning that cover knowledge areas associated with, for example: planning and periodisation of training; physiological CASES of sports/performance/participation (e.g., preparation, and recovery); injury and rehabilitation; neuropsychology of performance; performance psychophysiology.				
Issues in Professional Practice	1.5.1		Current Issues in the Professional Practice of Sport & Exercise Psychology	Related topics include: Societal perceptions of sport and exercise psychologists, use of titles, barriers to entry, requirements for private practice (including requisite insurance, tax and business affairs), client/consultant contracts, reporting poor practice/whistleblowing, working with the media and management of social media, working ethically, set-up and management of a business.				
	1.5.2		Philosophy, Frameworks and Models for Applied Sport & Exercise Psychology	Related topics can include: Psychodynamic, behavioural, cognitive, humanistic, existential, positive, acceptance-based and ecological therapies. Educational, developmental, social-educational, psychological skills, and interdisciplinary models.				

	1.5.3		Approaches to Counselling	Candidates should gain a knowledge and critical appreciation of counselling delivery in a sporting or exercise/ health context. Related topics can include: Therapeutic relationships and principles, ethical practice within the counselling setting, counselling skills, sport psychology service delivery (SPSD) heuristic, and motivational interviewing.				
Narrate any unique features of the MSc. provision (e.g., opportunities for observational placement, exposure to specialist sport and/or exercise psychology topics, or learning about disciplines outside of sport and exercise psychology). If the programme is endorsed, this information will appear on the CASES Course Finder, enabling the unique selling point(s) of the programme to be marketed to prospective students.								

Appendix 2

Table 2: Guidelines for rating knowledge competencies

0	**No coverage**	The knowledge competency is not covered at all within the MSc. programme.
1	**Limited coverage**	The knowledge competency is introduced to the students but is peripheral to the programme content.
2	**Adequate coverage**	The knowledge competency is included within the programme to an extent that the graduate can demonstrate Level 7 understanding.
3	**Detailed coverage**	The knowledge competency is included within the programme to an extent that the graduate can demonstrate specialist understanding beyond Level 7 expectations.