

# Unit 3: Sport and Exercise Psychology

<b>Unit code:</b>	<b>K/600/0040</b>
<b>QCF Level 3:</b>	<b>BTEC National</b>
<b>Credit value:</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Guided learning hours:</b>	<b>60</b>

## ● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to develop the learners' understanding of how psychology can be applied to sports performance and exercise environments.

## ● Unit introduction

Success in sport can come down to the tiniest of margins – whether it is scoring one penalty more than your opponent or crossing the line 0.01 of a second ahead of your competitor. Increasingly, sports performers are aiming to gain every advantage they can over their opponents. This involves employing professionals to advise about training, conditioning, nutrition and mental preparation. The field of sport psychology is playing a more prominent role in sport.

The aim of this unit is to develop learners' knowledge of sport and exercise psychology and how it can be applied to influence the performance of individuals and teams. This unit is particularly important for learners who would like to work in activities which improve sports performance, such as sports coaching or in fitness instruction, which involve motivating customers and ensuring they keep to their training programme.

Initially, learners will look at personality, which is seen as the basis for behaviour, and how this is a key factor in choosing sport and subsequent level of achievement. Another major contributing factor in successful performance is the motivation of the individual and how this can be developed and influenced. Learners will also examine the dimensions of the term 'aggression' and analyse the role it plays in influencing sports performance.

Learners will then study the impact of stress, arousal and anxiety on sports performance and how they can produce a positive or negative impact. The terms will be differentiated and theoretical concepts examined.

Learners will develop an appreciation of the role that group dynamics play in sport and the factors which contribute to the effectiveness of sports teams. Factors such as group development, dynamics, cohesion and leadership are all examined in terms of how they influence group effectiveness and the sporting outcome.

Finally, learners will study the growing area of exercise psychology, which is important, as many learners may wish to be involved in delivering fitness sessions to people in gyms rather than sports performers. This will involve looking at the reasons people give for wanting to exercise and then examining the stages they will go through during this period of behaviour change.

## ● Learning outcomes

### On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know the effects of personality, motivation and aggression on sports performance
- 2 Know the impact of arousal, stress and anxiety on sports performance
- 3 Know the psychology of group dynamics in sports environments
- 4 Know psychological factors that affect people in exercise environments.

# Unit content

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## 1 Know the effects of personality, motivation and aggression on sports performance

*Personality:* definitions; types (type A and type B); theories, eg Marten's schematic view, psychodynamic, trait, situational, interactional views; effects on sports performance (athletes versus non-athletes, athletes of differing skill levels, team versus individual, type A versus type B)

*Motivation:* definition; types (intrinsic, extrinsic); theories, eg need achievement theory, attribution theory, achievement goal theory; factors contributing to a motivational climate, eg behaviour of leader, physical environment, influence of significant others; factors affecting motivation (individual personality, situation, interaction of personality and situation, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards)

*Aggression:* definition; Gill's criteria for aggressive behaviour; types of aggressive behaviour (hostile and instrumental aggression, assertion); causes of aggression, eg instinct theory, frustration-aggression theory, social learning theory

## 2 Know the impact of arousal, stress and anxiety on sports performance

*Arousal:* definition; relationship between arousal level and performance; theories (drive theory, inverted U hypothesis, catastrophe theory); effects of changes in arousal level, eg attention, concentration, aggression

*Stress:* definition; eustress and distress; symptoms of stress on the body (sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems); causes of stress (internal, external, personal, occupational, sport as a source of stress)

*Anxiety:* definition; types (state, trait); symptoms (cognitive, somatic); causes; effect on performance

## 3 Know the psychology of group dynamics in sports environments

*Group processes:* eg group or team, stages of group development (forming, storming, norming and performing), Steiner's model of group effectiveness, Ringelman effect, social loafing

*Cohesion:* definition; types of cohesion, eg task cohesion, social cohesion; factors affecting cohesion, eg environmental, personal, leadership, team factors; relationship between cohesion and performance

*Leadership:* eg qualities, styles (autocratic, democratic, consultative); behaviour (prescribed leaders, emergent leaders); theories (trait, behavioural, interactional); social facilitation, eg audience effect, co-action effect, home advantage

## 4 Know psychological factors that affect people in exercise environments

*Psychological factors:* eg reasons why people exercise, reasons for not exercising (barriers to exercise), determinants of exercise adherence (personal, demographic, environmental, cognitive), behaviour change models (transtheoretical model, health belief model, theory of planned behaviour)

## Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
<b>P1</b> describe personality and its effects on sports performance [IE1]	<b>M1</b> explain personality and its effects on sports performance	<b>D1</b> analyse personality and its effects on sports performance
<b>P2</b> describe motivation and the factors which affect the motivation of athletes [IE3]		
<b>P3</b> describe the types and causes of aggressive behaviour	<b>M2</b> explain the types and causes of aggressive behaviour	
<b>P4</b> describe arousal and its effect on sports performance [IE5]	<b>M3</b> explain arousal and its effect on sports performance	<b>D2</b> analyse arousal and its effect on sports performance.
<b>P5</b> describe stress and anxiety and their symptoms and causes		
<b>P6</b> identify four different factors which contribute to the psychology of group dynamics	<b>M4</b> explain four different factors which contribute to the psychology of group dynamics	
<b>P7</b> identify three psychological factors that affect people in exercise environments. [IE4]	<b>M5</b> explain three psychological factors that affect people in exercise environments.	

**PLTS:** This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

## Essential guidance for tutors

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### Delivery

The aim of this unit is for learners to know about the psychological dimensions of sport and apply this knowledge to their own experiences or their observations of elite sports performers. A wide range of delivery methods can be used in the unit, including lectures, learner presentations, learner group work, practical activities, work sheets, videos and internet research.

Gaining an understanding of the effects personality has on sports performance will require a mixture of tutor-led input and individual learner research to develop an understanding of personality theories, their strengths and limitations and how personality can affect sporting performance.

Motivation work can be delivered in a practical manner to enable learners to analyse how they are motivated and how they can motivate other people.

The relationships between arousal, stress, anxiety and sports performance will require a mixture of tutor-led input and individual research to develop an appreciation of the terms 'stress', 'arousal' and 'anxiety'. Learners need to be clear about the theory which examines the effects these psychological factors have on performance.

Group dynamics should be explored from a theoretical and practical perspective. Learners should be encouraged to examine the groups of which they have been members and how they developed to become effective or ineffective.

The theoretical framework of group dynamics and leadership is important to appreciate, as is the understanding that groups work as processes rather than static entities.

Learners will need to become aware of the development of exercise psychology alongside sport psychology and the important areas of study within exercise psychology. Through a combination of tutor-led input and individual research, learners need to appreciate the reasons why people exercise and give up exercise, and the challenges they face in implementing change.

## Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction to unit and the study of sport and exercise psychology.
<b>Assignment 1: The Effects of Personality, Motivation and Aggression on Sports Performance (P1, P2, P3, M1, M2, D1).</b> Tutor introduces the assignment brief
Personality – presentation of definitions and theories of personality and discussion of their strengths and weaknesses: how personality affects sports performance. Assessment of own and others' personality and analysis of test results.
Motivation – learners can research definitions of motivation: types and theories of motivation and the factors which affect the motivation of athletes.
Motivational climate – learners can examine sporting environments and identify how a motivational climate has been created.
Aggression – learners to choose and examine real life situations and apply the definition of aggression and categorise the behaviour into hostile, instrumental aggression or assertion.
<b>Assignment 2: The Impact of Arousal, Stress and Anxiety on Sports Performance (P4, P5, M3, D2).</b> Tutor introduces the assignment brief.
Stress, arousal and anxiety – learners to research and present definitions of each term, their causes and their relationship to sports performance. These can be presented to the group.
<b>Assignment 3: Group Dynamics in Sports Environments (P6, M4).</b> Tutor introduces the assignment brief.
Learners to research group dynamics, cohesion and leadership and how they influence sports performance.
Observation of group situations in sports – learners can observe group behaviour and any changes in group behaviour.
<b>Assignment 4: The Psychology of Exercise (P7, M5).</b> Tutor introduces the assignment brief.
Learners to research the reasons people give for starting and giving up exercise and categorise these responses.
Learners to present in groups the models of behaviour change and illustrate how they work.
Learners to appreciate the wider role of exercise in improving psychological wellbeing and mental health through researching articles and literature.
Review of unit and the role of the sport psychologist – interactive lecture and group discussion.

## Assessment

This unit can be assessed through a series of structured assignments, each involving a blend of theoretical knowledge and application to their own sporting performance or the performance of others. This will enable learners to appreciate the value of psychology in practical scenarios.

For P1, learners must first describe personality and then how personality affects sports performance. The description must include – as listed in the *Unit content* – a definition, personality types and personality theories. Then learners can examine important issues in personality, such as the personality differences between athletes and non-athletes, individual and team performers and performers of differing skill level/expertise.

For P2, learners must describe the factors that affect the motivation of athletes; this must include a definition of motivation, types of motivation, motivational theories and factors which contribute to a motivational climate. Learners will also need to consider how motivation affects sports performance.

For P3, learners must apply Gill's four criteria for aggressive behaviour and be able to differentiate between the types of aggression (hostile and instrumental) and assertive behaviour. They can use real examples from sport to illustrate these differences. They will then examine the theories which seek to explain the causes of aggressive behaviour.

For P4, learners must define arousal and then describe relevant theories of arousal and the effect it can have on sports performance. This should incorporate personal experience as well as their observations of sports performers.

For P5, learners must describe stress and anxiety, their causes, symptoms and how they affect sports performance. The description must include definitions and also the other areas listed in the *Unit content*.

Criterion P6 looks at group dynamics, and requires learners to identify specific factors which influence group dynamics and performance in team sports. This could include aspects of group processes, cohesion and leadership. This could be based on the observation of a game or match; learners could observe the changes in group behaviour according to changes in the match situation or an individual's behaviour in the group.

For P7, learners could select a case study for an individual who wants to become active and take exercise. Learners could put together a report which outlines the reasons they should exercise and how to overcome the factors that may cause them to stop. This should involve reference to models of behaviour change.

Grading criterion M1 links to P1, and requires learners to explain the effects of personality on sports performance. Grading criterion M2 links to P3, and learners need to explain the types and causes of aggression. For M3, which links to P4, learners must explain the effects of arousal on sports performance. For M4, which links to P6, learners must explain the four factors which influence group dynamics and performance in team sports. For M5, which links to P7, learners must explain three psychological factors which affect people taking exercise.

Grading criterion D1 builds on M1, and requires learners to analyse the effects of personality on sports performance. This means learners must make a judgement based on each of the effects that they have described/explained (for criteria P1 and M1). For D2, which builds on M3, learners must analyse the effects of arousal on sports performance. This means they must make a judgement based on each of the effects that they have described/explained (for criteria P4 and M3).

## Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Pearson assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, P3, M1, M2, D1	The Effects of Personality, Motivation and Aggression on Sports Performance	The coach of a sports activity you are involved with has asked you to use your knowledge of sports psychology to influence the performance of other performers in that sport.	Written report.
P4, P5, M3, D2	The Impact of Arousal, Stress and Anxiety on Sports Performance	As an assistant to a sport psychologist you are asked to present information which educates sports performers about the relationships between sport, anxiety, arousal and sporting performance.	Written report.
P6, M4	Group Dynamics in Sports Environments	As an assistant to a manager of a sports team you are asked to give a presentation to the manager and coach about how group dynamics can influence performance.	Presentation.
P7, M5	The Psychology of Exercise	As a fitness instructor, your client has just started an exercise programme and needs support to help them keep to their training regime.	Written report.

## Links to other BTEC units

This unit forms part of the BTEC Sport and Exercise Sciences sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the BTEC Sport suite and the BTEC Sport and Exercise Sciences suite:

Level 2 Sport	Level 3 Sport	Level 3 Sport and Exercise Sciences
		Instructing Physical Activity and Exercise
		Sports Coaching
		Applied Sport and Exercise Psychology



## Essential resources

Effective delivery of this unit requires access to appropriate texts, websites and journals, as well as visual resources to present case studies.

## Employer engagement and vocational contexts

This unit focuses on the background knowledge and skills of sport psychology needed to work in coaching or fitness instruction. Centres are encouraged to develop links with sports clubs who use sport psychologists or have coaches who implement psychological techniques. This could be done through inviting them in as guest speakers or to give demonstrations of psychological techniques.

## Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	describing personality and its effects on sports performance describing motivation and the factors which affect the motivation of athletes describing arousal and its effect on sports performance identifying three psychological factors that affect people in exercise environments.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	researching definitions and theories of personality, motivation, group dynamics and how they influence performance
Creative thinkers	observing group behaviour and changes in group behaviour
Reflective learners	examining their own experiences of aggression and aggressive behaviour
Team workers	researching definitions and theories of personality, motivation, group dynamics and how they influence performance.

## ● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
<b>ICT – Use ICT systems</b>	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	researching theories of personality, motivation and aggression and their effects on sports performance
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	researching the reasons people give for starting and giving up exercise
<b>ICT – Find and select information</b>	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	researching theories of personality, motivation and aggression and their effects on sports performance
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	researching theories of personality, motivation and aggression and their effects on sports performance
<b>ICT – Develop, present and communicate information</b>	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• text and tables</li> <li>• images</li> <li>• numbers</li> <li>• records</li> </ul>	categorising the reasons people start and give up exercise
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	categorising the reasons people start and give up exercise
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	presenting results of individual research into group dynamics or the reasons people start and give up exercise
<b>English</b>	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	presenting theories of stress, arousal and anxiety to the rest of their group giving a presentation on group dynamics
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	researching theories of personality, motivation and aggression and their effects on sports performance
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	making observations of group dynamics and recording their observations.