

Performance banded physical education classes to improve fitness and mental health outcomes in youth

Our School of Sport, Rehabilitation and Exercise Sciences is offering a part-funded studentship with a research assistant stipend of £5,616 plus travel and expenses, for a maximum of 12 months. Student fees are not included.

The start date is October 2020.

Physical Education (PE) classes are the primary source of physical activity that children experience and provide an environment in which to shape a positive association with physical activity for life. This research will see University of Essex work with secondary education schools to develop and enhance their current PE curriculum and delivery.

Traditionally, PE has employed chronological age “cut-off “criteria to divide children into their respective classes. In the United Kingdom for example, birthdate relative to the academic school year (September 1st to August 31st) is used to form different age groups. For students competing in chronological age groups, variation in physical maturation among counterparts can be considerable. Because of this, students who mature in advance of their peers can experience a competitive advantage because of their superior size and athleticism, despite being the same chronological age and in the same school class.

In an attempt to ‘level the playing field’ practitioners in National Governing Bodies in sport have manipulated both training and competition environments to negate this maturational effect and, this end, approaches such as Competitive Engineering (CE) have been utilised.

The primary aim of the trial is to investigate the impact of a 10 month CE intervention (performance banding) delivered during PE upon; physical activity levels within PE, psychosocial outcomes and fitness levels. To date there is no school-based evidence to test whether performance banding can improve enjoyment, global mental health, physical activity within PE lessons and fitness levels.

About us

This project will be supervised by three experienced members of research staff from the School of Sport, Rehabilitation and Exercise Sciences: Dr Ben Jones (lead supervisor), Dr Jason Moran (Co-Supervisor), and Dr Ed Hope (Co-Supervisor). To have an informal discussion about the studentship, get in touch with Dr Ben Jones bjonesa@essex.ac.uk

How to apply

Application closing date: 14th September 2020

You can apply for this postgraduate opportunity [online](#).

Applications MUST include the following documents to be uploaded:

- Research proposal of no more than 600 words, outlining suggested research focus(es), approach(es) and/or studies that applicants would be interested to include within their MSc.
- CV
- Covering letter
- Transcripts of undergraduate programmes.



