Pearson

Higher Nationals in Sport: Qualification Guide

A contemporary Sport qualification with clearly defined specialist pathways, industry-relevant content and a strong emphasis on practical, technical and transferable skills that support progression into higher education and careers across the sport and physical activity sector.

FIRST TEACHING FROM SEPTEMBER 2027



What are HNs?

Higher Nationals are practical Level 4 **(Higher National Certificate/ HNC)** and Level 5 **(Higher National Diploma/HND)** qualifications regulated by Ofqual, designed to develop the skills employers need, and allow learners to go straight into work or further study.

Why have we redeveloped them?

The qualifications place a greater emphasis on applied professional practice, inclusive delivery, health and wellbeing, digital technologies, data-informed decision-making and evidence-based practice.

The refreshed HNC and HND structure provides a clearer line of sight to employment and further study, while giving centres the flexibility to design programmes that respond to local skills needs and students' career ambitions. Students can develop broad foundations at Level 4 before progressing into more specialised Level 5 study or degree-level education.

The new Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals in Sport have been developed collaboratively with employers, professional bodies, universities, colleges, subject experts and students. Contributors include:

- CIMSPA
- CASES
- UK Coaching
- UK Anti-Doping
- SportsAid
- The Football Association (FA)
- The Premier League
- Loughborough University
- Plus a range of higher and further education providers

The Coaching and Participation Manager and Health and Wellbeing Coach pathways have also been developed in close collaboration with CIMSPA and mapped to relevant professional standards. These include Sports Coach and Working Inclusively for the Coaching and Participation Manager pathway, and Health Navigator and Working with People with Mental Health Conditions for the Health and Wellbeing Coach pathway.

What's new?

Three distinct pathways

The new suite introduces three distinct and flexible pathways:

- **Sport, providing a broad and adaptable programme**
- **Coaching and Participation Manager**
- **Health and Wellbeing Coach**

These pathways are available across both the HNC and HND, allowing centres to build provision around local employer demand while giving students a clearer connection between their studies, professional standards and future careers.

Contemporary content

New and updated content includes:

- Digital Innovation in Health and Human Performance
- Exercise to Support Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Inclusive Coaching and Accessible Sport Delivery
- Leadership and Management within Multidisciplinary Teams
- Data-Informed Health and Performance Monitoring

Practical and applied assessment

The suite supports more practical and dynamic approaches to learning and assessment. Centres can use practical demonstrations, portfolios, professional discussions, applied projects, case studies and realistic workplace scenarios, helping students demonstrate not only what they know, but what they can do in professional sport and physical activity settings.

First teaching

The HN in Sport is available for **first teaching from September 2027**.

Professional Body Recognition

A learner that completes one of our industry-aligned pathways in Sport will achieve The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA)* professional status of:

HN Sport – Pathway	Coaching and Participation Manager	Health and Wellbeing Coach
CIMSPA Professional Status'	• Sports Coach • Coach Working Inclusively (Working with Disabled People) • Safeguarding and Protecting Children	• Health navigator • Working Inclusively (working with people with mental health) • Safeguarding and Protecting Children

CIMSPA Education Partner

CIMSPA professional status demonstrates industry-recognised competence, supports CIMSPA membership, and gives employers confidence in their skills and readiness for work.

*subject to approval.



HN in Sport
Qualification structure

Scan or select the QR code to visit the qualification page.

KEY

Cell colour identifies the type of each unit in the pathway.

Core Mandatory | Specialist Mandatory | Optional

HNC Sport - Level 4

Credits	Unit #	L4 General
15	401	Fundamentals of Nutrition for Sport, Health and Performance
15	402	Fundamentals of Sport and Exercise Psychology
15	403	Applied Anatomy and Physiology for Sport and Physical Activity
15	404	Applied Research Skills in Sport and Physical Activity (Pearson Set)
15	412	Physical Activity for Public Health and Wellbeing
15		Optional unit
15		Optional unit
15		Optional unit

Credits	Unit #	L4 Coaching and Participation Manager
15	401	Fundamentals of Nutrition for Sport, Health and Performance
15	402	Fundamentals of Sport and Exercise Psychology
15	403	Applied Anatomy and Physiology for Sport and Physical Activity
15	404	Applied Research Skills in Sport and Physical Activity (Pearson Set)
15	405	Coaching Practice and Skill Development
15	408	Community Coaching
15		Optional unit
15		Optional unit

Credits	Unit #	L4 Health and Wellbeing Coach
15	401	Fundamentals of Nutrition for Sport, Health and Performance
15	402	Fundamentals of Sport and Exercise Psychology
15	403	Applied Anatomy and Physiology for Sport and Physical Activity
15	404	Applied Research Skills in Sport and Physical Activity (Pearson Set)
15	407	Lifestyle Coaching
15	420	Exercise to support Mental Health and Wellbeing
15		Optional unit
15		Optional unit

Level 4 Optional units

Credits	Unit #	L4 General
15	405	Coaching Practice and Skill Development
15	411	Digital Innovation in Health and Human Performance
15	413	Work Experience
15	414	Exercise Interventions for Inactive and Sedentary Populations
15	415	Applied Massage Techniques for Recovery and Rehabilitation
15	417	Industry Insights and Professional Pathways in Sport
15	418	Sociological Influences on Participation
15	420	Exercise to support Mental Health and Wellbeing

Credits	Unit #	L4 Coaching and Participation Manager
15	406	Application of Fitness Testing and Training
15	418	Sociological Influences on Participation
15	412	Physical Activity for Public Health and Wellbeing
15	413	Work Experience
15	414	Exercise Interventions for Inactive and Sedentary Populations
15	420	Exercise to support Mental Health and Wellbeing
15	417	Industry Insights and Professional Pathways in Sport

Credits	Unit #	L4 Health and Wellbeing Coach
15	406	Application of Fitness Testing and Training
15	412	Physical Activity for Public Health and Wellbeing
15	413	Work Experience
15	414	Exercise Interventions for Inactive and Sedentary Populations
15	415	Applied Massage Techniques for Recovery and Rehabilitation
15	417	Industry Insights and Professional Pathways in Sport
15	418	Sociological Influences on Participation

HND Sport - Level 5

Credits	Unit #	L5 General
30	501	Evidence Based Practice and Sport Research Methods – Research Project (Pearson-Set)
15	505	Nutrition to optimise Health and Performance
15	512	Inclusive Coaching and Accessible Sport Delivery
15		Optional unit
15		Optional unit
15		Optional unit
15		Optional unit

Credits	Unit #	L5 Coaching and Participation Manager
30	501	Evidence Based Practice and Sport Research Methods – Research Project (Pearson-Set)
15	505	Nutrition to optimise Health and Performance
15	506	Advanced Coaching Pedagogy and Skill Acquisition
15	512	Inclusive Coaching and Accessible Sport Delivery
15	516	Sport and Physical Activity Events Management and Operational Delivery
15		Optional unit
15		Optional unit

Credits	Unit #	L5 Health and Wellbeing Coach
30	501	Evidence Based Practice and Sport Research Methods – Research Project (Pearson-Set)
15	503	Exercise for the Management of Long-Term Conditions
15	505	Nutrition to optimise Health and Performance
15	510	Exercise Therapy and Specific Populations
15	512	Inclusive Coaching and Accessible Sport Delivery
15		Optional unit
15		Optional unit

Level 5 Optional units

Credits	Unit #	L5 General
15	502	Performance Analytics and Tactical Evaluation
15	503	Exercise for the Management of Long-Term Conditions
15	506	Advanced Coaching Pedagogy and Skill Acquisition
15	507	Injury Management and Rehabilitation Strategies
15	510	Exercise Therapy and Specific Populations
15	511	Performance Psychology for Sporting Success
15	513	Applied Sport, Exercise and Environmental Physiology
15	514	Leadership and Management within Multidisciplinary Teams
15	515	Data Informed Health and Performance Monitoring
15	516	Sport and Physical Activity Events Management and Operational Delivery
15	517	Learning through Sport within the Educational Setting

Credits	Unit #	L5 Coaching and Participation Manager
15	502	Performance Analytics and Tactical Evaluation
15	503	Exercise for the Management of Long-Term Conditions
15	507	Injury Management and Rehabilitation Strategies
15	510	Exercise Therapy and Specific Populations
15	511	Performance Psychology for Sporting Success
15	514	Leadership and Management within Multidisciplinary Teams
15	515	Data Informed Health and Performance Monitoring
15	517	Learning through Sport within the Educational Setting

Credits	Unit #	L5 Health and Wellbeing Coach
15	507	Injury Management and Rehabilitation Strategies
15	508	Holistic Athlete Support: Media, Mindset and Wellbeing
15	514	Leadership and Management within Multidisciplinary Teams
15	515	Data Informed Health and Performance Monitoring
15	516	Sport and Physical Activity Events Management and Operational Delivery
15	517	Learning through Sport within the Educational Setting