



Choosing Careers with BTEC Sport



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Studying a BTEC in Sport and Exercise Science provides many opportunities for further education and employment. Covering a range of units such as physiology, psychology and biomechanics, the course looks at the scientific elements of sport. We spoke to Robyn Pinder, about her current role and her advice who others looking to study and get into STEM roles.



How did your BTEC course equip you for a career in STEM?

My BTEC course opened my eyes to the many exciting STEM career opportunities available. The BTEC provided me with some fantastic practical experience, and I developed a range of transferable skills.

What advice would you give to women considering a career in the STEM sector?

Don't be afraid to ask questions and to ask for opportunities.

Get comfortable operating outside of your comfort zones.

Seek out networking and mentorship opportunities.

Are there any women in STEM that you look up to? If so, who and why?

There are some inspiring women in STEM but the woman I look up to is a close friend of mine called Beccy Straker. I met Beccy in my first week of university and we've been close friends ever since. She's a fantastic scientist currently working as a lab technician and associate tutor at Cardiff Metropolitan University whilst reading for a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Sport Biomechanics. Beccy's work ethic and knowledge is admirable but what I admire most is her passion to teach young people and get them engaged with maths and physics.

Just over a quarter of the people working in STEM in the UK are female. Why do you think women are so underrated in STEM fields?

For me, there are two main reasons (i) social bias and (ii) FE and HE opportunities. In terms of social bias there still seems to be this lingering stereotype that women are less competent than men in STEM jobs which is of course not true. In terms of FE and HE, more needs to be done to ensure that courses and programmes accommodate women and promote an inclusive culture whilst studying.

What would you say to encourage any girls thinking of studying a STEM subject and pursuing careers in the sector?

The same advice I would give to women considering a career in STEM. Find a support system, whether that be a mentor or a women in STEM network to be a part of. Ask for and seek out opportunities to be involved in STEM projects and put yourself out of your comfort zone where possible.

What's your favourite thing about working in higher education?

Seeing students achieve success in their desired careers. I'm lucky enough to work with a diverse group of students, some of whom don't believe they can achieve their goals. Supporting students and seeing them flourish in their desired industry is extremely satisfying.

