PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Key Information

Programme Title:	MSc in Human Performance Optimisation (HPO)
Awarding Institution:	Buckinghamshire New University
Teaching Institution(s):	Buckinghamshire New University
Subject Cluster:	Sport & Exercise Science
Award Title (including separate Pathway Award Titles where offered):	Master of Science (MSc) Human Performance Optimisation (HPO)
Pathways (if applicable)	N/A
Other award titles available (exit qualifications):	PGCert Human Performance Optimisation (HPO) PGDip Human Performance Optimisation (HPO)
FHEQ level of final award:	7
Accreditation details:	N/A
Length of programme:	2 Years
Mode(s) of Study:	Part-Time
Mode of Delivery:	Blended learning
Language of study:	English
QAA Subject Benchmark(s):	QAA Characteristics Statement – Master's Degree (2020)
Other external reference points (e.g. Apprenticeship Standard):	N/A
Course Code(s):	MSHPOPBP
UCAS Code(s):	
Approval date:	23rd March 2023
Date of last update:	N/A

2. Programme Summary

The purpose of this programme is to explore scientifically grounded approaches to Human Performance Optimisation (HPO) and provide those who work in extremis contexts (i.e., military, fire service, police, emergency medicine) with evidence-driven strategies by which to optimise performance. HPO represents a broad topic that is too complex to be dealt with adequately by a single discipline or profession. Therefore, this programme represents an interdisciplinary programme of study which draws upon several different disciplinary perspectives and integrates their insights to provide a unified and comprehensive syllabus that addresses the full spectrum of human performance (i.e., applied physiology, performance psychology, cognitive psychology, nutrition, and sleep science). Recent advances in

technology and the life sciences have the potential to enhance human performance beyond the limit of normal biological function. The application of such scientific advances to alter human function and behaviour has significant moral, ethical, and legal ramifications. Therefore, this programme will also facilitate learners understanding and deliberation of these issues.

3. Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

Programme Aims

This programme aims to:

1. Develop a comprehensive understanding of HPO and its application within real world settings.

2. Develop a critical awareness as to the interdisciplinary nature of HPO.

3. Develop the research skills required to analyse, critically evaluate, and translate contemporary HPO research into applied real-world situations.

4. Develop the critical-analysis, creative-thinking, and problem-solving skills required to create evidence-driven HPO solutions.

5. Develop a range of transferable skills in written, visual and verbal communication, collaboration, networking, and project management.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding (K)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
K1	Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding as to the concept of HPO and recognise potential obstacles to its application.
K2	Demonstrate a critical understanding of the key physiological, psychological, and cognitive determinants of human performance.
K3	Critically evaluate the importance of nutrition and sleep as pillars of human performance.
K4	Consider the moral, ethical, and legal ramifications of HPO.

Analysis and Criticality (C)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
C1	Critically appraise human performance from an applied, interdisciplinary perspective.

C2	Analyse, critically evaluate, and translate contemporary research from across the various HPO domains.
C3	Consider the importance of working effectively with other medical and performance professionals, in the promotion of health, wellbeing, and performance optimisation.
C4	Develop a comprehensive understanding of scientific and technological developments related to HPO.

Application and Practice (P)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
P1	Demonstrate an ability to conduct laboratory and field-based testing procedures and use the information gathered to evaluate health, wellbeing, and human performance capabilities.
P2	Apply theories, concepts, and techniques to develop creative, evidence-driven HPO solutions.
P3	Monitor and critically evaluate the effectiveness of HPO interventions.

Transferable skills and other attributes (T)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
T1	Compose, independently an appropriate research question, or aim, which may contribute toward a solution to an identified problem.
T2	Formulate, justify, and implement an effective methodology that addresses a research question or aim using primary and/or secondary data.
T3	Demonstrate independent learning skills and reflection to promote lifelong learning.

Graduate Attributes

The BNU Graduate Attributes of: Knowledge and its application; Creativity; Social and ethical awareness and responsibility; and Leadership and self-development focus on the development of innovative leaders in professional and creative capacities, who are equipped to operate in the 21st Century labour market and make a positive impact as global citizens.

On this programme, attributes are developed through the acquisition of critical knowledge which addresses the full spectrum of human performance capabilities (K1, K2, K3). This programme will also develop learners abilities to analyse and critically evaluate research, practical experience, and technological developments within the field of HPO (C2, C4). Learners will develop their understanding of working as part of interdisciplinary team (C1, C3) and will be challenged to consider the moral, ethical, and legal ramifications of HPO (K4). Learners will also be encouraged to apply theories, concepts, and techniques to develop creative, evidence-driven, human performance optimisation solutions (P2, P3, T3). Finally, learners will develop a range of laboratory and field-based research skills (P1, T1, T2).

4. Entry Requirements

The University's general entry requirements will apply to admission to this programme with the following additions / exceptions:

- Applicants must be working directly for, or with, the military or emergency services (i.e., police, fire service, emergency medicine, coast guard, mountain rescue).
- Due to potential content sensitivities this programme will only be open to UK nationals or nationals from countries who are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) including Australia and New Zealand.
- Applicants will be expected to have achieved a 2.1 or above classification in a relevant undergraduate degree programme (i.e., sports science, sports psychology, policing, medicine, or allied health profession). However, consideration of a candidate with a 2.2 classification may be permissible if aspects of their profile demonstrate an ability to engage and succeed in postgraduate study.

If a prospective student does not meet the entry requirements they will be invited for an interview, and given the opportunity to demonstrate the necessary knowledge and understanding for entry onto the course

Previous study, professional and / or vocational experiences may be recognised as the equivalent learning experience and permit exemption from studying certain modules in accordance with our accreditation of prior learning (APL) process.

5. Programme Structure

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 7 – Year 1	**Core modules:** SES7012 Optimising Physical Readiness (20-Credits) SES7013 Applied Performance Psychology (20-Credits) SES7014 Optimising Human Cognitive Capabilities (20-Credits) SES7015 Advanced Performance Nutrition (20-Credits)	**PGCert,** awarded on achievement of 60-credits at Level 7 **PgDip**, awarded on achievement of 120-credits at Level 7 **MSc,** awarded on achievement of 180-credits at Level 7
Level 7 – Year 2	**Core modules:** SES7016 Sleep Science (20-Credits) SES7017 Contemporary Issues in Human Performance Optimisation (20-Credits) SES7018 Research Methods and Dissertation (60-Credits)	

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. Other option modules may also be introduced at a later stage enabling the programme to respond to changes in the subject area.

6. Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and teaching

This programme is delivered predominantly via online learning activities. However, learners will also be provided the opportunity to attend a 5-day residential period at the end of the first year of the course. Modules are delivered sequentially, allowing learners to progress their studies at a manageable pace completing formative tasks at regular intervals through the year. Teaching is based on an asynchronous, blended-learning approach and includes a combination of online lectures, independent study, regular online forum contributions, tutorials, and a on-site residential block. Learners receive online teaching materials by means of the universities Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) allowing them the flexibility to view programme content at a time of their choice. Furthermore, learners are able to interact with their tutors and peers on-line using the Microsoft Teams platform and via e-mail. Finally, learners have full access to University facilities throughout the programme.

A range of specific learning and teaching mechanisms used on the programme are outlined below:

Online Lectures: Provide information and opportunities for the visual presentation of ideas, concepts, and theories. Learners may be involved in interactive activities which have some of the characteristics of a seminar.

Independent Study: Develops Learners' independent working, autonomy, and self-awareness. The ability to manage projects, manage time and identify own learning needs supported by formal and informal learning opportunities throughout the course. Self-directed study is key to successfully managing and achieving the course learning outcomes.

Online Forum Contributions: Enable open discussion and encourage learners to practice the written articulation of ideas and questions, and to consider other points of view.

Tutorials: Both individual and in small groups help to focus learners on evaluating their own work and identifying directions for study and research. Lecturers will question and advise learners, presenting alternatives and challenging decisions, in to help learners to realise their full potential and to develop critical and evaluative skills.

Practical/Laboratory Sessions: Learners will work in small groups that aim to develop collaborative and communication skills, networking, sharing, and supporting each other to learn and acquire vocational experience.

Assessment

Assessments on this programme are a mixture of case-studies, presentations, practical coaching/teaching assessments and written essays. All summative assessments are mapped to the programme specification and module descriptor learning outcomes. Learners are provided information on the summative assessment elements at the start of each module. Assessment deadlines are provided in assignment briefs with feedback provided within 3 weeks of the submission deadline. The minimum pass mark for all modules on this programme is 50%. Any summative assessment failures are required to re-submitted within 4 weeks of when the initial graded marks are received. In line with university regulations any summative assessment re-submissions will be capped at 50%.

Contact Hours

Learners can expect to receive 1 – 2 hours of scheduled online learning activities per week. During the 5-day residential period learners will receive 6 – 8 hours of scheduled seminars, debates, and practical learning activities each day.

7. Programme Regulations

This programme will be subject to the following assessment regulations:

- [Regulations for Taught Degree programmes (applicable to new BNU students)](#)
- To provide flexibility of learning any assessment failures will be required to be re-submitted within 4 weeks of when the initial marks are released.
- Marks will be presented to assessment board after the first 80 credits (PGCert stage) of the award to confirm credits achieved. The final 100 credits will be presented to an assessment board at the end of award.

8. Support for learners

The following systems are in place to support you to be successful with your studies:

- The appointment of a personal tutor to support you through your programme
- A programme handbook and induction at the beginning of your studies
- Library resources, include access to books, journals and databases - many of which are available in electronic format – and support from trained library staff
- Access to Blackboard, our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which is accessible via PC, laptop, tablet or mobile device
- Access to the MyBNU portal where you can access all University systems, information and news, record your attendance at sessions, and access your personalised timetable
- Academic Registry staff providing general guidance on University regulations, exams, and other aspects of students and course administration
- Central student services, including teams supporting academic skills development, career success, student finance, accommodation, chaplaincy, disability and counselling
- Support from the Bucks Students' Union, including the Students' Union Advice Centre which offers free and confidential advice on University processes.

9. Programme monitoring and review

BNU has a number of ways for monitoring and reviewing the quality of learning and teaching on your programme. You will be able to comment on the content of their programme via the following feedback mechanisms:

- Formal feedback questionnaires and anonymous module 'check-ins'
- Participation in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)
- Programme Committees, via appointed student representatives
- Informal feedback to your programme leader

Quality and standards on each programme are assured via the following mechanisms:

- An initial event to approve the programme for delivery
- An annual report submitted by the External Examiner following a process of external moderation of work submitted for assessment
- The Annual Monitoring process, which is overseen by the University's Education Committee
- Periodic Subject Review events held every five years
- Other sector compliance and review mechanisms

10. Internal and external reference points

Design and development of this programme has been informed by the following internal and external reference points:

- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- The QAA Characteristics Statement for – Master's Degree (2020)
- The BNU Qualifications and Credit Framework
- The BNU Curriculum Framework and Design Model (Blueprint)
- The BNU Grading Descriptors
- The University Strategy, Thrive 2028

Mapping of Subject Benchmark Statement and any relevant Apprenticeship Standard to Programme Learning Outcomes

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard: Master's Degree (2020)	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
Benchmark / Standard requirement	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Enable students to focus on a particular aspect of a broader subject area in which they have prior knowledge or experience through previous study or employment.		X	X	X		X		X	X			X						X		
Enable students to undertake a research project on a topic within the area of interest that makes up the majority of the overall assessment.				X			X				X					X	X	X		
Enable students to learn how to conduct research and undertake training in research methods, often linked to a particular subject or field of study.				X							X					X	X	X		

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard: Master's Degree (2020)	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
Benchmark / Standard requirement	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Enable students to specialise or to become more highly specialised in an area of employment or practice related to a particular profession.	X		X	X			X		X			X	X					X		

Mapping of Programme Learning Outcomes to Modules

Programme Learning Outcome	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
Module Code (Core)	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Level 7																				
Optimising Physical Readiness	X	X				X	X	X			X	X	X					X		
Applied Performance Psychology		X				X	X	X				X						X		
Optimising Human Performance Capabilities		X					X	X				X						X		
Advanced Performance Nutrition			X			X	X					X						X		
Sleep Science			X			X	X					X						X		
Contemporary Issues in Human Performance Optimisation				X			X	X	X									X		
Research Methods and Dissertation							X									X	X	X		