

College of Life  
and Environmental Sciences

# What do Birmingham postgraduates do?



## School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences

*First destinations of postgraduates*

---

- Analysis of first employment destinations for the College of Life and Environmental Sciences
- Employability data for Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences postgraduates, 2007–11
- Illustration of the range of occupations undertaken by our postgraduates

# Foreword

I AM DELIGHTED TO INTRODUCE 'WHAT DO BIRMINGHAM POSTGRADUATES DO?' WHICH LOOKS IN DETAIL AT THE FIRST DESTINATIONS OF OUR SPORT, EXERCISE AND REHABILITATION SCIENCES POSTGRADUATES AND AT EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS FOR ALL POSTGRADUATES WITHIN THE WIDER COLLEGE OF LIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES.

In addition to providing accessible information on employment destinations of our postgraduates, this publication is also designed to give an insight into the kinds of employment sectors and jobs for which a postgraduate degree at Birmingham can prepare you.

Pursuing a postgraduate degree offers you the opportunity to explore your chosen area of interest in depth, as well as developing your knowledge and understanding in a subject area about which you are truly passionate. Beyond the transferable skills that you will take with you into the workplace, your postgraduate qualification will give you the chance to engage

in critical enquiry, to grow as a scholar and even to become an expert in your field.

Here, we show you how your postgraduate qualification can help you make that knowledge and expertise work for you after graduation. First of all, we give you an overview of the employability and first destinations of postgraduates across the wider College of Life and Environmental Sciences as a whole. Then for the school that is relevant to you (Biosciences; Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences; Psychology; or Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences) you will see a snapshot of the achievements of our postgraduates six months after graduation. All data is taken from the results of a 'Destinations of Leavers' survey issued to our postgraduates after this time.

You will be able to see, by department, how many of the postgraduates who replied to this survey successfully entered employment and/or further study within just six months, along with a range of the diverse and exciting



career opportunities that will be open to you after studying for a postgraduate degree in your chosen area.

Accompanying the data are case studies in which recent postgraduate alumni share their experiences of postgraduate study at Birmingham. Here, our alumni talk about the value inherent in postgraduate study, the knowledge and skills they developed during their degrees and where their qualifications have taken them since graduation.

I hope you find the information presented here useful and our alumni stories inspiring. We very much look forward to welcoming you to our campus soon.

Dr Ivan Sansom  
Director of Education  
College of Life and Environmental Sciences



## College of Life and Environmental Sciences

# Employability

The College of Life and Environmental Sciences spans an extensive breadth of disciplines, with expertise which aligns strongly with key international challenges, including lifelong health and wellbeing, food security, energy security and living with environmental change.

The College conducts internationally recognised teaching and research, hosts exciting initiatives in new fields of study, fosters effective collaboration between schools and has excellent research facilities.

The College uses training, fieldwork and its high quality facilities to enable students to gain generic and discipline-specific skills while studying exciting topics from ecology through to cancer research and forensic psychology.

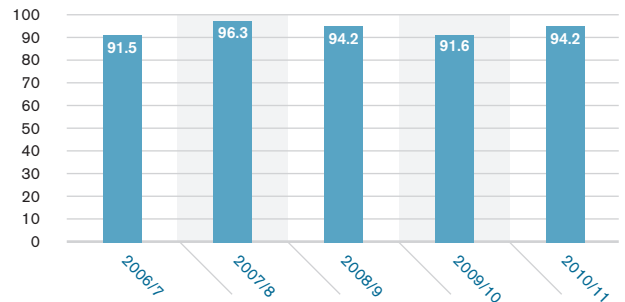
The College comprises four schools:

- School of Biosciences
- School Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES)
- School of Psychology
- School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences

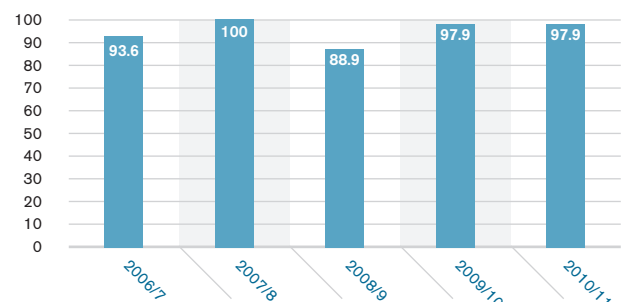
Over the last five years, 93.6% of taught postgraduates and 95.7% of research postgraduates from the College of Life and Environmental Sciences have been in work and/or further study just six months after graduating.

The two charts to the right show the breakdown of these statistics for each year, for taught postgraduate and research postgraduate respondents.

**Percentage of Life and Environmental Sciences taught postgraduates in work and/or further study six months after graduation**



**Percentage of Life and Environmental Sciences research postgraduates in work and/or further study six months after graduation**



SOURCE: *Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education Institutions*, Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2007–11

‘Studying at Birmingham lived up to my expectations in every way: the academic courses (both BSc and PhD) were thorough, the sporting life was superb and the campus was a true red brick centre of learning.

‘Since finishing my PhD, I spent eight successful years with an occupational physiology consultancy firm, including four years working in the United Arab Emirates. During this time I continued to publish physiology-related work in peer reviewed journals and worked with a wide range of clients including the British Army, Royal Air Force, UK Emergency Services and the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces. More recently, I have moved back into sports science and work on a daily basis with athletes, helping them to optimise performance. In addition to giving me an internationally recognised qualification, my PhD gave me a series of skills that I use every day in my job. These include:

working to deadlines; independent research; laboratory techniques; athlete testing; report and journal writing; oral communication and presentation skills; and data handling and statistical analysis. If you are interested in studying exercise physiology, health or sport science at postgraduate level, you won’t regret applying to Birmingham.’

**James Carter, PhD Sport and Exercise Sciences, graduated 2004**  
*James’s PhD looked at the effect of carbohydrate feeding on exercise performance and capacity in thermo-neutral and hot environments. He is now Head of the Gatorade Sports Science Institute UK, working for PepsiCo.*



**LEARN MORE** [www.birmingham.ac.uk/sportex](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/sportex)

## College of Life and Environmental Sciences

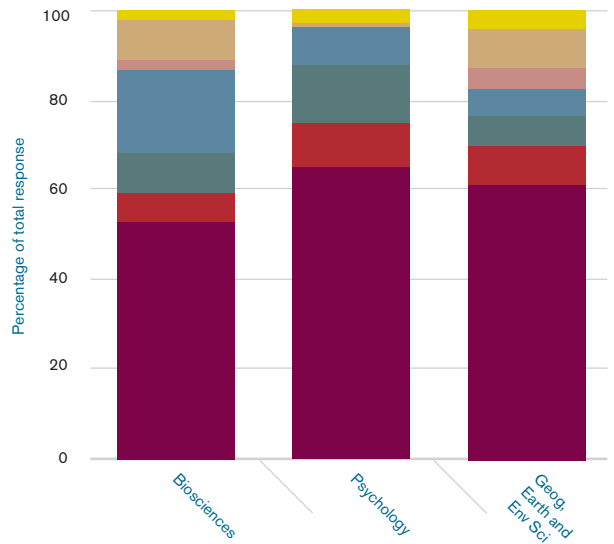
# Postgraduate destinations

### Taught postgraduate destinations\*

The chart to the right summarises the destinations of Life and Environmental Sciences postgraduates from the 2010/11 academic year, six months after graduation:

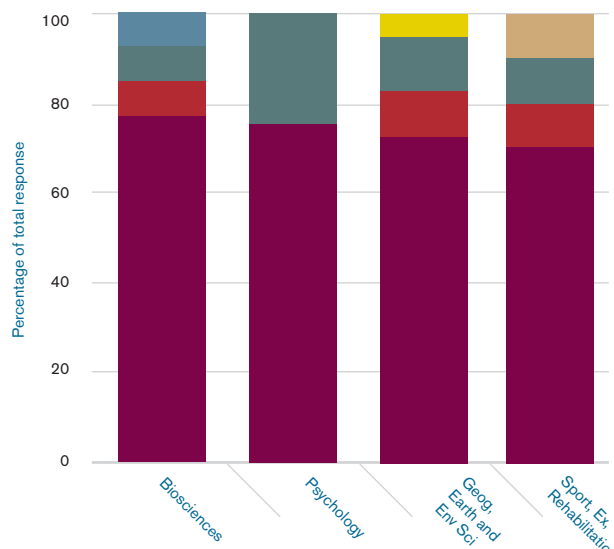


\* (The School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences began offering taught Masters degrees in 2012; as a result, no data is yet available for taught postgraduates)



### Research postgraduate destinations

The chart to the right summarises the destinations of Life and Environmental Sciences postgraduates from the 2010/11 academic year, six months after graduation:



SOURCE: Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education Institutions, Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2007–11



'In my PhD I studied the response to medical vaccinations and to short-term stress tasks and examined how this related to individuals' levels of stress, their personality, and social support

levels. I really benefited from the research training and the opportunity to put my health psychology research skills into practice in the context of more physiological outcome measures such as antibody levels and blood pressure responses to stress. I was able

to further develop my skills for disseminating science both in the academic world and to the public. The variety of disciplines covered in the School gave me access to knowledge, training and skills that I would not have had access to in an ordinary Psychology department.

'It was a shock coming back into full-time education after working in the health service and only studying part-time, but I was glad that I did. Being a postgraduate was very different from my experience as an undergraduate as it offered much more independence as well as opportunities like teaching and presenting science in the media.'

**Anna Phillips**, PhD Sport and Exercise Sciences, graduated 2005

*Anna enjoyed Birmingham so much that she stayed on in the School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences, first as a research fellow then as a member of academic staff. She is now Reader in Behavioural Medicine.*

**LEARN MORE**  
[www.birmingham.ac.uk/sportex](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/sportex)



# School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences

## EMPLOYABILITY

A significant number of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences postgraduates go straight into sport-related employment, with many working as instructors, coaches, personal trainers and physiotherapists.

### Highlights:

- Over the past five years, 96.8% of taught postgraduates in the area of Rehabilitation Sciences (Physiotherapy) went on to work or further study within six months of graduation\*
- Over the past five years, 96% of research postgraduate respondents from Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences successfully found work or further study within six months of graduation

Postgraduate study offers the crucial opportunity to specialise in order to prepare for some sports science-related careers, whilst the occupations entered by our postgraduates can frequently provide the experience required for more senior and managerial positions within the sports science sector.

Other postgraduates from this subject area use transferable skills developed through their studies (including analytical, problem solving, team work and communication skills) to enter employment in a wide variety of roles including marketing, recruitment consultancy and insurance. Other students go on to pursue courses that will enable them to enter areas as diverse as law or physiotherapy; teaching also remains a popular choice.

The two charts to the right show results from Destinations of Leavers surveys for our Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences postgraduates over the past five years.

## RANGE OF OCCUPATIONS

Below is an overview of the kinds of employment sectors, organisations and professions that recent Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences postgraduates have entered, based on responses to 'Destinations of Leavers' surveys conducted six months after graduation.

### Range of employment sectors

- Administration of financial markets
- Computer programming activities
- Higher education
- Manufacture of irradiation, electromedical and electrotherapeutic equipment
- Manufacture of sports goods
- Market research and public opinion polling
- Medical and dental practice activities
- Plant propagation
- Specialist medical practice activities
- Technical testing and analysis

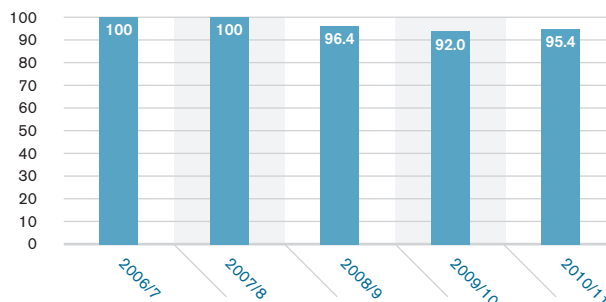
### Range of employers

- Copenhagen Muscle Research
- Giraffe Recruitment
- Health Protection Agency
- Hitachi Medical Systems UK
- Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals
- Onassis Cardiac Surgery Centre
- Rensberg Stock Broker
- Royal Air Force (RAF)
- The Altitude Centre
- The Cleveland Clinic Foundation
- Unilever PLC
- University of Bath
- University of Birmingham
- University of Brisbane

### Range of occupations

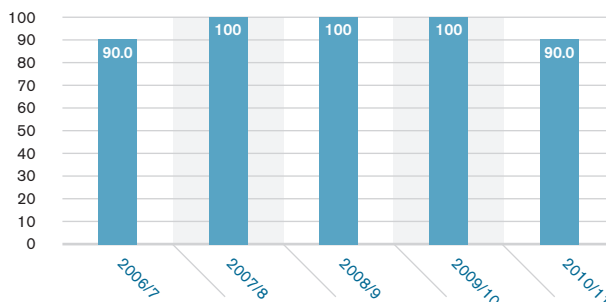
- Altitude Performance Specialist
- Consultant in Aviation Medicine
- Global Claims Manager
- Investment Banker
- Lecturer
- Medical Secretary
- Physical Education Officer
- Physiotherapy/Rehabilitation
- Postdoctoral Research Fellow
- Research Scientist
- Scientific Study Adviser
- Toxicologist
- Trainee Clinical Vascular Scientist

Percentage of taught postgraduate respondents in work and/or further study six months after graduation



\*Please note: taught Masters programmes in the areas of Sport and Exercise Science were first offered by the School in 2012; as a result, data is not yet available for taught postgraduates from this subject area. Nevertheless, the Department of Physiotherapy, which has offered taught programmes for a number of years, moved in summer 2013 from the College of Medical and Dental Sciences to the School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences. For information therefore, the data given for taught postgraduate respondents is taken from programmes in Physiotherapy only.

Percentage of research postgraduate respondents in work and/or further study six months after graduation



SOURCE: Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education Institutions, Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2007-11