In my role as Research Lead for Sport at Myerscough College, I head up a team of staff conducting research into the interrelated themes of physiological, psychological, and sociological characteristics of elite performance. This group seeks to answer important questions such as:

- How can sports performance be optimised?
- What are the training needs of adolescent sportspeople?
- What support structures do aspiring professionals require?

The vocational nature of HE in FE provision has helped foster industry links ripe for research related purposes. For example, the research group has secured consultancy work with the Ladies European Tour (LET), International Management Group Golf Events (IMG), and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews (R&A). This has enabled research at Myerscough to make a direct and ‘real world’ impact on the sport industry by investigating, for example, the effect of professional sport on participant welfare and identifying key factors that can help improve the lives of the athletes involved. This line of research enquiry helps to build a picture of the social influences of elite sport performance, which is an underrepresented area in academia. Furthermore, these industry links have helped secure grants to conduct consultancy projects in the sports industry.
The research group has helped shaped the experience of Myerscough students, by embedding industry based research experience and activities both from a vocational and academic standpoint. The skills developed by conducting HE research in FE institutions, therefore, has helped secure further projects, involving students, with national governing bodies such as England Golf. The research theme has also resulted in the development of a Research Associate Studentship position examining the effect of eye focus on golf putting performance. Furthermore, the research activity has inspired undergraduate dissertation work in this area for students on the sport related suite of degree programmes. In this project, students devised a questionnaire, as part of their degree programme, to assess spectator experiences and sponsorship impact at the Ricoh Women's British Open (RWBO) and Ladies European Masters (LET) events on the LET. The students facilitated successful completion of the questionnaire, and compiled a report which has been presented back to the LET and other industry related bodies.

The unique nature of courses offered at Myerscough College, which includes sports specific pathways such as Golf Management / Coaching / Performance or Football and Rugby Coaching, combined with a strong practical element of sports teams, has helped foster important collaborative links with much larger universities. Larger universities do not always have readymade access to
participation groups for research purposes, which is a key strength of HE in FE institutions. Myerscough has strong partner links with the University of Chester, Liverpool Hope University, and Manchester Metropolitan University. Myerscough also has more formal links with the University of Central Lancashire, under the branding of the ‘International Institute for Golf Education’ (IIGE) and has signed a bilateral agreement with the University of Coimbra. This research area has led to publication of a number of peer reviewed journal articles, thus directly impacting on education at Myerscough College and the wider sports industry, examples including:


The practical nature of college based scholarly activity is particularly favourable in acquiring new knowledge which can be incorporated into lecture and seminar materials in a much more accessible manner, thus directly impacting on the student learning experience. Furthermore, students on sports programmes at Myerscough are directly involved in several research projects and this helps impart a greater research awareness in them.

For further information please contact:

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