Development of Sports Participation for Disabled Students: Review

by
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for Edinburgh University Sports Union

bestrandakconsultants@hotmail.co.uk
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To facilitate the reader in drilling down to the right level of information and comment they need, this review is presented in three levels:

1. a concise summary of what we did, the issues that emerged, and our main recommendations;
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1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Specification

Best and Randak Associates were commissioned by Edinburgh University Sports Union (EUSU) to undertake the following:

- An audit and current picture of disabled sport within EUSU and its member clubs.
- A needs analysis identifying and demonstrating gaps in provision, issues and barriers, and determining the current status and future potential for both specific and integrated sports for disabled students that may impact on their potential for sports participation.
- From the audit and needs analysis, a summary of the current picture, identifying strengths and weaknesses and pinpointing possible future actions for developing provision.
- Identification of current partnerships and integration practice together with opportunities for the future within the EUSU club provision and further extension to local clubs and their provision.
- Liaison, consultation and reference to key partners in this area including those within the University, local and regional groups and organisations, and national agencies such as governing bodies of sport, Scottish Student Sport, Scottish Disability Sport and its member Lothian Disability Sport, Edinburgh Leisure, and British Universities and College Sport.
- Presentation of a practical report that identifies opportunities, determines scope and recommends actions for future development on inclusion. This includes training, coach education, and promotion and delivery of disabled sport that is realistic, sustainable and based on partnership support with the individual at the centre. We make recommendations on how EUSU and its partners can create and sustain real opportunities for disabled students, and we outline possible strategic future directions.

Context. University of Edinburgh students with disabilities, identified as those who register with the University's Student Disability Service. The focus was on students whose disability might have any effect on their participation or potential participation in any sport. ‘Sport’ was defined broadly to cover all activities recognised by sportscotland plus related activities provided by EU Students’ Association societies such as Bhangra and Capoeira. This covers a full spectrum of sports and other physical recreations from informal recreational level to elite representation.

Methodology. To meet EUSU’s requirements a range of approaches were employed, including deskwork, liaison with key individuals, questionnaire surveys of disabled students and of University clubs and societies, interviews, focus group and case studies. The review had the full support of the Centre for Sport and Exercise, EU Students’ Association and the Student Disability Service.
Emerging Issues

Issue 1 – Provision for Disabled Students

Whilst this report is a direct result of a laudable self-examination on behalf of EUSU, and follows some excellent initial Disability Inclusion Training provided by Scottish Disability Sport to a group of EUSU club presidents in recent years, the overall view of University provision for disabled sport and other physical recreation is one of paucity and lack of awareness – a position recognised by all.

Issue 2 – EUSU Clubs and EUSA Dance/Exercise Societies

Clubs “appeared to assume that students were all 18-24 years old, able-bodied and physically fit”. Indeed further, clubs promoted “a culture of achievers, competitively focused” and that disabled students were “invisible” with “no provision nor awareness from clubs, their officers, nor from professional staff, towards participation, adaptation and inclusion” (Disabled students). They continue to offer a traditional mainstream approach and promote an exclusive culture which can deter a proportion of disabled students – and also some women and international students.

Issue 3 – Facilities

With some exceptions, facilities were not an issue and were generally recognised as being of good quality and meeting universal access requirements.

Issue 4 – Awareness and Communication – Key and Interrelated

Barriers to participation, adaptation and development were pervasive: “from the Freshers’ Sports Fair, to exercise classes, to clubs, to the Institution itself, there’s clearly little awareness or real programmed opportunities for disabled athletes”. Effective communication is a key issue identified by staff and disabled students.

Issue 5 – EU Sports Union Governance

The Sports Union recognises that it determines the standards for every sports club and participating member. Its leadership requires to be of the highest order as it creates and reflects a modern and contemporary model of practice based on the sporting cornerstones of Fairness, Integrity, Respect and Equity for all within the University.

Issue 6 – EUSU Looking Outwards

Consultation with local, regional and national bodies providing opportunities for disabled sport and other physical recreation has guided discussions towards selecting sports and activities in the broad community in order to offer realistic inclusive opportunities, and specific avenues for participation and pathways to performance. Largely missing from a partnership platform of regional sports bodies is the student population of Edinburgh’s four universities and new integrated college.
Issue 7 – Targeting for Future Progress

Participation opportunities and performance development within the University and within its locale requires a clear development approach supported by selection criteria with internal and external expertise and moves towards active community partnerships.

Issue 8 – EUSU Leading the Way!

Taking hold, leading and driving developments internally within EUSU will require commitment and a skilled person to plan and resource a future for the clubs and the infrastructure that will connect and integrate with external partners and agencies. Key within this review process and consultation was the repeated idea that a collaborative initiative was required.

The Way Forward: Recommendations

We recommend that EUSU should undertake the following to develop, promote and support disabled students in their participation and performance development:

1. **Constitution.** Amend its Constitution to ensure that its role includes a requirement to explicitly promote and support participation by disabled students.

2. **Club Support.** Guide and instruct each of its member clubs to ensure that they actively promote and support participation by disabled students.

3. **Targeted Clubs.** Develop a programme of targeted clubs that may be well placed to offer realistic inclusive opportunities for students who have a disability and wish to participate, compete and realise their potential within sport and other physical recreation.

4. **Awareness and Communication.** Initiate an awareness campaign to promote student disability sport through its club membership and in association with the appropriate University departments and internal services; especially so with the Centre for Sport and Exercise (CSE) and the Student Disability Service (EUSDS).

5. **External Links.** Develop relationships and active partnership with external groups, organisations and other education institutions in order to best deliver sustainable opportunities for disabled students and integrate with established community clubs and groups that provide sporting pathways for participation or performance development.

6. **EUSA Liaison.** Liaise with the EU Students’ Association to develop a similar approach to promoting and supporting participation by disabled students in the societies catering for dance and other physical recreation, and at the King’s Buildings House sports facilities.

7. **Facilities.** Building on substantial progress in accessible facility provision, liaise with CSE to review the current position and ensure that all facilities are optimised for use by the disabled community and provide universal access.
8 **Working Group.** Take leadership in bringing together the appropriate internal and external groups in order to establish a Lothian Working Group to create the necessary infrastructure to provide opportunities for university and college students with a disability to participate and compete locally, regionally and nationally.

9 **Disability Sport Regional Manager.** Further, lead the process that creates a full-time post (working title: Disability Sport Regional Manager) for the four universities and the college in Edinburgh that specifically addresses creating integrated pathways and plans for disabled students within Edinburgh and the broader infrastructure of the Lothian area.

10 **Club Directory.** Support Lothian Disability Sport in maintaining and expanding the Directory of Sports Clubs, and promote the University’s activity opportunities on a yearly basis as it grows its communication efforts through club websites and other media.

11 **Performance Sport.** Continue to support the EUSU/CSE Performance Sport programme as it develops inclusion opportunities for disabled students.

12 **Club Score.** Highlight good practice within its member clubs as progress and inclusive approaches are developed and achieved. Ensure that the Club Score scheme (which significantly influences financial support for EUSU clubs) has disability sport as an added key criterion.

13 **Partnerships and Training.** Actively explore partnerships that will identify and develop volunteers and coaches within the education and local and regional community that can add value to its member clubs. Together with Scottish Disability Sport, discuss and develop an annual programme for the delivery of UK Disability Inclusion Training courses to clubs and groups.

14 **Resources.** Explore internal and external sources of resource support from public, private, commercial and philanthropic bodies which will allow growth and development for disability sport within the Sports Union and together with partners.

15 **EUSDS Links.** Develop further its close working relationship with the CSE and the EUSDS to influence practice and delivery of sport and activity staff training, service adaptation and increased opportunity for students with a disability. Specifically this should include exploring the feasibility of creating a category of ‘reasonable adjustments’ by EUSDS to include sport and other physical recreation in addition to the current academic learning profile categories.

“It’s the willingness, I believe, of the University’s senior management team to see disabled students’ sport flourish, or not, which makes the difference.”

(Physically disabled student)
2: SPORT FOR DISABLED STUDENTS – DISCUSSION

Disabled Students and Their Sports Participation

Nine per cent (nearly 3,000) of the University’s students are self-registered as disabled. ‘Invisible’ disabilities – those not obvious to the observer – account for virtually all of these: only 7% of those registered have physical/mobility or serious visual or hearing impairments (Section 3, Table 1).

“It should be noted that disability sport groupings and classifications do not necessarily directly relate to impairments declared by students in an education context. While the largest population of disabled students declare a learning disability, this declaration includes students with dyslexia which would not have a major impact on a student’s ability to access sport.”

• Clearly the breadth of variety and degree of impairment means that in sport as in all circumstances one size does not fit all, and the provision of opportunities will vary according to a range of factors all centred round the individual participant.

Three-quarters (76%) of the respondents to our survey of these registered students take part in sport or other physical recreation¹. This coincides exactly with the response to a similar question in a recent online survey for disabled students by British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUoS), where 76% of the 90 respondents reported that they participated.

The latest annual Active People Survey by Sport England found that 45% of those in higher education with a limiting long-standing illness, disability or infirmity had taken part in sport and recreational physical activity within the last week compared with 53% without a limiting disability. While our question and that from the BUoS asks more flexibly about ‘current’ participation rather than specifically within the previous week, the Sport England data would suggest an element of self-selection among respondents to both our and the BUoS surveys. Despite our clear encouragement for non-participants to complete the survey, those who do participate may have been more inclined to do so. This does not reduce the usefulness of the results; it simply means that the participation rate of three-quarters of disabled students may need to be read with caution.

• Our survey and the BUoS survey, qualified and extended by the thorough English survey, show that participation rates for disabled students are significantly – but not dramatically – lower than those of their peers who have no limiting disability.

¹ The question was: Do you currently take part, however informally, in any sports or physical recreations? Include cycling, dancing, keep fit, walking 2+ miles. If your sport is currently out of season, tick YES if you expect to take part next season. Please include your current participation in the activities of any of the clubs/societies you have ticked.
• Participation by disabled students is primarily undertaken on an individual basis, while most sport and other physical recreation in a student setting is carried out through groups, clubs and team activities (63% of our survey respondents who take part do so on their own and 37% as part of a club – Section 3, Table 6).

• A quarter (27%) of the survey respondents were members of a EUSU club or EUSA dance/exercise society (Section 3, Table 12).

Issues and Evidence

Issue 1 – Provision for Disabled Students

Our investigation took us to an understanding that the current picture of provision and awareness of sport and other physical recreation for disabled students through the Sports Union is minimal. This appears also to reflect the picture within the University generally: the Centre for Sport and Exercise (CSE), for example, does not provide classes for disabled participants or more broadly for those who do not fit the model of fit and active young people. But the principle of mainstream inclusion through universal access is the University’s aim, reflecting the wish of most disabled students.

There was certainly praise for the support by CSE for individual students who identified themselves as disabled.

“\[I\] started by approaching the University's Sports Centre [in the Pleasance], they were very welcoming and keen to help me access all the facilities. \[W\]hen I visited the sports facility they were very keen to advise and assist me. My sense was that they would do anything I asked for, they were very willing. They already had helped many disabled students to become more active. They have experience of disabled people and we came up together with different ideas to get around the obvious problems. The Sports Centre staff were also looking for a coach for me as I would be keen to compete in Paralympic sport.\]” (Physically impaired student)

While every effort has been made by CSE to support students with physical disabilities, far less has been done for them by EUSU clubs and EUSA dance/exercise societies; but crucially support for students with ‘invisible’ disabilities is reported as deficient across the board. The very fact of invisibility means that it is difficult to know what – or even whether – support is needed, and how to identify need and provide for it.

“We don't know who the disabled students are. How do you contact them? We want to do more for disabled students. The CSE is very aware of the difficulties of attracting the non-participant. We worry about the image: a University committee member said to us, ‘none of our disabled students would want to go to your building because of mirrors and lycra’.” (CSE senior staff member)
Overcoming Barriers

“The beliefs and perceptions of the disabled people themselves and the attitudes of non-disabled people are the biggest barrier to participation.”
(Rankin, Mary-Anne. Understanding the barriers to participation in sport. English Federation of Disability Sport, 2012. More detail given in Section 3, p50.)

“There really should be no barrier to anyone, regardless of their circumstances, getting the recommended dose of exercise.”
(James Brandon, Community Inclusion Officer, on Edinburgh Leisure’s provision for disabled participants. Scotsman, 15 Feb 2014)

Our survey asked students who perceived barriers to their participation to suggest how these might be overcome. These comments are from those with a range of invisible disabilities:

- “Fewer people/ smaller groups.” (Mental health condition)
- “Making sports more accessible, but not exclusionary.” (Specific learning difficulty and social/communication impairment)
- “Classes specifically for disabled students, as one of the biggest barriers is my worry about people not understanding or respecting my limited abilities.” (Mental health condition)
- “The barrier is anxiety. Ideally I feel a club where players of all experience can join and mix in (much like basketball in PE in schools) would be ideal as opposed to confining myself to a single group of people who I may not connect with.” (Mental health condition)
- “More friendly, non-competitive sport opportunities.” (Specific learning difficulty)
- “More flexible training times. Sessions from King’s Buildings.” (Specific learning difficulty)
- “More support, either in a group setting or one on one. I think a group would work best.” (Mental health condition)
- “As my disability is a mental health issue and one of coordination, lots of low-level practice and repetition to get basic ball control/other coordination skills would help me improve – it takes me longer than most people to get the hang of simple stuff like passing, etc.” (Specific learning difficulty and a social/communication impairment)
- “As part of my colitis, I have a lot of problems with fatigue. This means that I have very little energy, so hour-long exercise classes are too long for me at the moment. I wouldn’t be able to last the class and I would feel very awkward turning up for a class, then leaving half-way through, or sitting out. I would like to go to very gentle (emphasis on gentle!) tai-chi or yoga classes.” (Long-standing health condition)
“Previously we knew very little and it wasn’t an issue; now we still know little but it is an issue. The facilities are ready and open and some of the potential barriers removed, but not the connection between service providers and the students they want to work with. There’s a will to engage by the service providers, but they are not sure where to start and how to do it… we might start to bridge the community of students with the providers.”

Overcoming Invisibility

An optional referral system from the Student Disability Service to CSE of its registered students would establish a basic database of (potential) CSE users that would enable classes and support to be targeted:

- “We still lack concrete information on the number and type of disabled students using the CSE’s services. This will be remedied in our ’13-14 Plan as we strive for closer dialogue/collaboration with Student Disability Services.”
- “Good developments in terms of DDA access and compliance, and disability awareness training. Still lack of information on the number and type of disabled students using the CSE’s services.”

As a disabled student interviewee pointed out, this could also provide the basis of a possible new category of ‘reasonable adjustments’ (that currently focus on learning profiles) for disabled students to support their participation in sport and other physical activities. Such an approach would inform the needs/risk assessment undertaken with new disabled users of University sports facilities. Another interviewee commented pointedly on possible closer links between the Student Disability Service and sports providers: “If that’s beyond Edinburgh University, then I want my money back!”

Case Study: BUCS Proposed Model for Referral of Disabled Students

British Universities and Colleges Sport’s disability strategy envisages a change from the current process where student disability services refer disabled students only to academic support, to one where they also refer them to sports opportunities, whether in the sport and recreation department (ie, CSE in Edinburgh University), the Sports Union or the community. These current and proposed processes “are intended to highlight the isolation of disabled students from HE Sport and some of the pieces of positive action that could be taken to open up communication channels and facilitate greater links between departments. Improving the relationship and establishing a referrals system with the University student support service is crucial to increasing participation by disabled students, BUT this must be matched by a commitment to make the provision and programme of activity more appropriate for, and more attractive to disabled students.”

BUCS ‘Into inclusion’ A disability sport strategy for BUCS 2011-2016


3 Review of the CSE QA report by Nadia Mehdi (EUSA Vice President, Societies & Activities), with Dr Tina Harrison (Convener, Student Disability Committee, and Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance) and Dr Gordon McDougall (Dean, Quality Assurance).
Disability Inclusion and Awareness Training

Recent EUSU good practice has led to some delivery of UK Disability Inclusion Training courses to elected office-bearers. This should be continued and expanded in order to ensure that staff and clubs/societies alike are conscious of the demands of this area and are following through with continuous professional development opportunities. Provided that the training is regularly reviewed and quality controlled by Scottish Disability Sport and EUSU, it should go a significant way towards overcoming barriers and invisibility.

Case Study: UK Disability Inclusion Training for JudoScotland Coaches

A working party was established to develop ‘UK Disability Inclusion Training – Judo’. One of the key expected course outcomes was that coaches would feel more confident and competent in their ability to work with judo players with different impairments. The process revealed that there were already a number of experienced judo coaches working with players with a disability. There was a real desire to build on the success of the training course and include disability judo into the national events and training programme.

Issue 2 – EUSU Clubs and EUSA Dance/Exercise Societies

Of the 64 EUSU clubs and 15 EUSA dance/exercise societies, we found only one (Tennis, which has a EUSU Tennis Coordinator) that referred to opportunities for disabled participants on their website and only three others reported in the survey that they made specific arrangements to support disabled participants:

“We would ensure we have a dedicated trek leader available to look after [disabled riders] on an individual basis if necessary, but we would do the same for any trekker who needed that kind of attention.” (EU Exmoor Pony Trekking Society)

“Make the skydiving dropzone instructors aware of their condition for any special training required.” (EU Skydiving Club)

In March 2014 the EU Lawn Tennis Club held a tennis disability inclusion course for six participants, followed by a two-hour disability festival in the CSE sports hall that they hope to hold again in the forthcoming academic year. They plan to promote wheelchair tennis and tennis for hearing and sight impaired participants.

The Triathlon Club actively supports and develops participation by disabled students and is seeking resources for wheelchair and visually impaired participants.

“We would ensure we have a dedicated trek leader available to look after [disabled riders] on an individual basis if necessary, but we would do the same for any trekker who needed that kind of attention.” (EU Exmoor Pony Trekking Society)

This fact reinforced comments from a focus group of disabled students that clubs and University sports services “appeared to assume that students were all 18-24 years old, able-bodied and physically fit”. Indeed further, that clubs promoted “a culture of achievers, competitively focused” and that disabled students were “invisible” with “no
provision nor awareness from clubs, their officers, nor from professional staff, towards participation, adaptation and inclusion”. Survey responses, direct feedback and focus group comments were broadly negative and critical both generally and with specific areas of provision for disabled students.

Going Beyond Tradition

Sports clubs operate on an “expectation of ability”, “lack of information on what they did and who they provided for” and “promoted a language and image demonstrating a lack of awareness and understanding” of the broader student community (Disabled students). Clubs continue to offer a traditional mainstream approach and promote an exclusive culture which can deter a proportion of disabled students – and also some women and international students. Both University staff and disabled students commented on the macho drinking culture of some clubs: "alpha male drinking societies" (Senior staff member); “some of them seem to be just an excuse as a drinking club” (Physically impaired student). Every club has one or even two social secretaries; we found none that has a committee member with an explicit remit for participation by disabled students.

“The student unions are responding to the legislative nudge, the buildings are ready, but are the people?”

Moving Forward

EUSU and its member clubs will require to carefully consider practical approaches as to what they can and wish to do to address sport for students with disabilities. Universally their starting points are on the baseline and their mainstream focus has developed from traditional approaches towards activity and competition. It is understood that whilst all clubs do seek to be open to all and equitable, inclusion for disabled students is an aspiration that must be fully comprehended and realistically approached. EUSU together with other key University institutions will have the principal role here in realising progress on this front over time.

- One of each EUSU club’s (and EUSA dance/exercise society’s) officers should have disability participation as part of their formal responsibilities.

“The focus in most university sports clubs is getting the best guys they can – so how does the institution deal with the rest? Does the sports union provide the teams and sports department the rest? No! But there’s too much attention on the 20% performers and not enough on the 80% participants.”

Incentivising the Clubs

EUSU’s assessment and incentivising tool for its member clubs is ‘Club Score’:

- “Club Score is at the core of the Sports Union’s strategy and decision making; it provides clear insight into the strengths and weaknesses of activities at both an organisational level and a club level… The finances of the Sports Union Clubs
are determined by the Club Score they achieve, excellent performance can equate to as much as a £1,500 boost in funding. The versatility of the Club Score programme is underpinned by the weightings that enable aspects to be more acutely focused upon by the organisation. It further allows for swift adjustments to strategy as may be required by the University of Edinburgh, ensuring that the Sports Union is aligned closely with partner organisations.” (EUSU ‘Club Score’)

Promoting, supporting and developing participation by disabled students should be at the heart of Club Score, and disability should be added to its key indicators. “Need to change the culture of the clubs, with financial threats for not doing so.” (Disabled student)

“We need to look at ourselves. On what basis are the clubs funded? Currently the clubs are optimised for competitive success, which is fine, but the process could result in a process for optimising for a different outcome, then there’s a balance between the two. Participation and performance!”

Issue 3 – Facilities

A report in 2007 commissioned by EUSU and CSE and funded by the Student Disability Service provided an accessibility audit for the University’s sports facilities and, while there are issues that still need to be monitored and actioned, it is clear that these requirements have been widely progressed since then.

- “It will require a long-term commitment from EUSU/CSE to improve, modify or radically alter what is needed to offer a better accessibility of their facilities and services. I hope that they will keep on striving to be inclusive for years to come by regular checks and follow-ups.”

“DDA legislation was useful in terms of provision of accessible facilities, generally that’s been done and to some extent advertised; this has been taken seriously. Most facilities are tuned up for disability.”

Generally the University’s sport facilities were recognised as being of “good quality, with disabled adaptations” and there were few criticisms. Disabled student interviewees did note the following, however:

Changing Rooms. At the Pleasance, it was reported that the disabled changing room has poor light and no mirror and “staff in CSE lacked awareness and understanding” of disabled students’ changing needs and requirements. (Student with mobility and sight impairments)

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4 http://www.ed.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.97989!/fileManager/Overall%20Club%20Score%20Guide.pdf
Wheelchair Access. At King’s Buildings, the gym and squash courts are not wheelchair accessible.

Case Study: King’s Buildings House Gym and Leisure Centre

These are the only sports facilities run by the EU Students’ Association and comprise a gym, two squash courts and a badminton hall with two courts. Use is through a membership system which is also open to the community. Exercise and relaxation classes are available, including pilates and yoga.

The gym and squash courts are only reached down a set of stairs, so are not wheelchair accessible. There are no current plans to improve accessibility.

EUSA is supported by CSE for the induction and risk assessment procedures for disabled users. A blind user was inducted recently and provided with support in using the facilities.

Pool Availability. There was support from disabled students for the need to “increase the opening hours of the St Leonards Swimming Pool, which experiences high demand from users although the opening hours are limited”6. They see greater flexibility of opening hours as a boon, as well as creating quieter times when they feel less intimidated by other pool users:

- “A cutthroat attitude in the Holyrood pool.”
- “Real pressure on the pool which is largely performance based.”
- “I could swim if I had guidance, but the pool’s crowded.”
- “Only aquafit once a week – tends to be crowded at other times.”
- “The pool seems to be closed a lot of the time; available slots in the pool are busy.”
- “If the University pool were open more often – I have a limited time each day when the pain is manageable, so easier availability would make it more likely that I could swim more often.”

Issue 4 – Awareness and Communication – Key and Interrelated

“A lot more informed discussion going on than previously and that trend will continue, no longer marginal but central. The battle of hearts of minds has been done pretty well!”

Improving Awareness

Disabled students found that awareness barriers were pervasive: “from the Freshers’ Sports Fair, to exercise classes, to clubs, to the institution itself, there’s clearly little awareness or real programmed opportunities”. A campaign of awareness and training “with communication, attitude, support and provision” is required. “Staff awareness is key.” “The clubs need awareness training for committee members.”

6 Review of the CSE QA report by Nadia Mehdi (EUSA Vice President, Societies & Activities), with Dr Tina Harrison (Convener, Student Disability Committee, and Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance) and Dr Gordon McDougall (Dean, Quality Assurance).
Disabled students considered that to overcome awareness barriers, they need:

- **Clubs.** “Sport clubs being less centred around alcohol or at least more accepting of people who don't drink and are triggered by drunk people. Generally, it seems that sport clubs or societies focus a lot on group socialisation which is fine, but if you have problems with group interaction (autism, etc), it's simply impossible to find the right way to get involved. It would probably help if there were individual people to talk to in the clubs who aren't judgmental and could help you with finding your way into the group.” (Student with learning difficulty and mental health problem)

- **Classes.** “More opportunities to talk to instructors before classes or in advance of signing up”. (Student with physical/mobility impairment)

Our survey showed that disabled students who do take part in sport and other physical recreation tend to do so in isolation, but would prefer to do so within the University context. Overcoming awareness issues and effective communication are key to increasing their involvement within the University.

- **Type of Sport.** Of those who take part, 63% participate in an individual sport/recreation on their own, compared with 47% who take part in an individual or team sport/recreation as part of a club.

- **Location of Participation.** Of those who take part, 58% do so in the University (as opposed to individually or in the community); but 71% would prefer to do so in the University.

> “There is provision at the Peffermill playing fields for disabled users, but very few disabled groups are using it.” (CSE senior staff member)

**EU Student Disability Service.** As we found through the limited (though valuable) response from our survey of registered disabled students, effective communication is difficult. We understand from the EUSDS that there have been complaints from registered students about too many emails. Nevertheless, the EUSDS email address list is the sole means of directly contacting all registered disabled students. EUSU and CSE will need to discuss with EUSDS the most productive way of getting the message across through this communications tool, alongside the suggestion that students are proactively referred to CSE when they initially register with EUSDS (see Issue 1: Overcoming Invisibility).
Social Media. However, there is clearly a need also to go beyond email to use social media, as EUSU’s Media House will be aware. “As a communication tool within the University, email is now dead. I believe we’re at the stage of employing new young people with social media skills to fill the gap.” (EU PE academic)

Websites. “This equity policy will be made available on the EUSU website.” While this thorough policy document is on the University website, we could not find a link to it or mention of it in the EUSU section. The websites of EUSU and EUSA, CSE, EUSDS and the clubs and dance/exercise societies should all have sections actively promoting and informing about opportunities for disabled student participation. Disabled students found club websites inadequate:

• “There’s an issue of communication and culture – the club websites are pants.”
• “We need template guidance for all the clubs – a standard piece of information on each club website.”

Language and Imagery. “EUSU will give due regard to equity when publishing documents and images, and will strive to ensure that positive images are used to reflect the demographics of The University of Edinburgh.” Disabled students expressed concern that the language and imagery of University clubs and facilities failed to promote universal access:

• In the CSE: Appropriate posters and photos should be on display. “The language and the imagery [eg, photos on the walls] go on about the brightest and best sports people”.
• Among clubs: “We need a more inclusive language for introducing people. The University clubs are less inclusive in their language – an assumption that all students are 18-21 and able-bodied.”

Representative Groups. The EUSA Disability and Mental Wellbeing Liberation Group is one of four student-run groups who work with EUSA’s Equal Opportunities Officer. We did not receive a reply to our emails to the Group, but would suggest that they are consulted when any recommendations are being implemented – either directly (disabilitymw@eusa.ed.ac.uk) or through the Equal Opportunities Officer (equal.opps@eusa.ed.ac.uk).

Freshers’ Fairs. Disabled students considered that Freshers’ Fairs could be used more effectively for getting the message across:

• “A disabled student might not go to a Sports Union fair, but would go to a Societies fair – so we need to address both.”
• “Proactively promote and welcome during Freshers’ Week, but not just then – need to use a number of welcoming opportunities.”

Given the fact that nine per cent of each new student intake are disabled, specific promotion of sport and other physical recreation to them using stalls at the Freshers’ Fairs would be appropriate. Such stalls would need to direct them towards clubs that are geared up in terms of support, attitude and appropriate levels and forms of activity. Those staffing the stalls would need to be sensitive in their approach (with advice from

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the EU Student Disability Service and Scottish Disability Sport) in order to maintain the principle of universal inclusion – and, indeed, could extend to cover all who do not fit the young and fit mould.

| EUSU’s Tennis Coordinator with the EU Lawn Tennis Club organised a disability tennis festival. Although it was advertised on the Club’s website, no disabled students came. Effectively targeted messages remain a key issue and problem. |

**Issue 5 – EU Sports Union Governance**

“EUSU believes that equity is a broader concept than equality. It is not just about equal numbers, but is concerned more with fairness, justice, inclusion and respect for diversity. Sports equity is about making sure that everyone has an equal chance to participate in and contribute to sport or physical recreation if they choose to do so, and that no-one is discriminated against unfairly for any reason, including – but not limited to – gender, race, disability, age, religious or political belief, sexual orientation, social background, ethnic origin, language, marital or civil partnership status or pregnancy. Sports equity is also about recognising and acknowledging that inequalities do exist between people in Scottish sport, taking positive and proactive steps to overcome these inequalities, and thus making sure that any barriers standing in the way of people who are traditionally not involved in sport and physical recreation are removed.”  
*(EUSU Equity policy, 2012)*

EUSU representatives acknowledge their current status, position and responsibilities and the Union’s role as the governing body of student sport. The Sports Union recognises that it determines the ethical standards for every sports club and participating member. Its leadership requires to be of the highest order as it creates and reflects a modern and contemporary model of practice based on the sporting cornerstones of “fairness, justice, inclusion and respect for diversity” for all.

| “EUSU will ensure that it takes steps to promote gender equality, racial equality and disability equality in line with its legislative requirements. This will include the publication of an action plan that sets out how the duties contained within these pieces of legislation will be met.” |
| “EUSU’s Commitments. EUSU will invest in initiatives, programmes and infrastructure (physical and human) that positively impact on the participation and inclusion of under-represented groups in sport, and will continue to target investment at particular aspects of equity in sport.” |
| *(EUSU Equity policy, 2012)* |

Its position requires to be evident within the democratic process of the EUSU’s Constitution and within the staffing structure. Given that there a particular barriers relating to disabled students, we suggest that disability-specific requirements are included within broader equity statements:
The Constitution should contain a form of words to complement its Equity Policy that requires it to actively promote and support opportunities for all disabled students. To this end, Scottish Disability Sport, already an active partner with EUSU, is best placed to advise on this matter.

A template constitution for clubs should contain similar a similar form of words.

The EUSU website’s section on disability (see ‘Getting the Message Across’ under Issue 4 above) should both reference and link to the Constitution, the template constitution for clubs, Equity Policy, and EUSU’s published “action plan that sets out how the duties contained within these pieces of [disability and other equality] legislation will be met”.

A member of staff should have formal responsibility – identified in their profile on the website – for promoting and supporting participation by disabled students. This may well be within a broader equity remit, but disability should be expressly part of their role.

“Most student unions will have a clear remit around equality and diversity and are acting on it. Sport is now part of that discussion. It’s good at university level but not translated down to sports club level.”

Issue 6 – EUSU Looking Outwards

Consultation with local, regional and national bodies providing opportunities for disabled sport and physical activity has guided discussions towards selecting sports and activities in the broad community in order to offer realistic inclusive opportunities, and specific avenues for participation and pathways to performance. Both Lothian Disability Sport and Scottish Disability Sport (East) pursue a complementary approach towards participation and performance development and already present a menu of choice based on a practical assessment of activity strengths in terms of facilities, coaches, volunteers, popularity, opportunities and future potential. Interaction with these organisations (together with local authority partners and Trusts) and their approach of selective activity presents opportunities for students to become involved externally from the University. Equally, this presents a context and relationship whereby EUSU can seek appropriate sports for inclusion development and building capacity with additional resource support from within the University.

“Success predicated on doing some things in their own back yard and then more ‘bang for their buck’ so to speak by looking outward to the local area.”

Most disabled students (71% of our survey respondents) would prefer to participate within the University, and Scottish Disability Sport supports the principle of universities providing for their students where possible. Nevertheless there are a range of opportunities for EUSU to look outwards for links with regional organisations and for specific sports, providing a two-way street where it in turn develops its policies of provision for the local community. For example:
• **Edinburgh Leisure.** The 18-30 disabled age group is being targeted for a participation programme in 2015. “They are the invisible ones – activity levels drop after school and they become invisible, and may not be picked up if their disability gets worse.” (Edinburgh Leisure staff) The project is still being consulted and scoped, but there is potential for students to volunteer.

• **Lothian Disability Sport and Scottish Disability Sport (East).** LDS has a range of member clubs (see ‘Community Clubs’ below) that provide participation and performance opportunities for disabled participants. SDS has a regional structure in place.

• **Scottish Student Sport.** SSS is developing a regional structure. It has been actively involved in providing resources in sports contexts to support those with eating disorders.

• **Boccia.** Edinburgh Leisure is setting up boccia networks as part of its 18-30 disabled programme, and currently has seven of the 18 boccia coaches in the whole of the UK. This is a performance pathway disability sport that has potential for student volunteers.

• **Tennis.** There is a thriving EU Lawn Tennis Club with over 200 members, based at Edinburgh Leisure’s Meadows tennis courts as the University does not have tennis courts. It is considering repeating a disability tennis festival in conjunction with Tennis Scotland, possibly at the Craiglockhart Tennis Centre.

• **Wheelchair Tennis.** The EU Lawn Tennis Club plans to promote wheelchair tennis; and the community ‘Winning Wheels’ Wheelchair Tennis Club is based at the Craiglockhart Tennis Centre which hosts the annual Edinburgh Wheelchair Tennis Tournament.

  **Case Study: Setting up a New Club for Wheelchair Tennis**

  ‘Winning Wheels’ wheelchair tennis club was set up with the help of Edinburgh Leisure’s Tennis Development Officer. Its development is a model for setting up a club. They established charitable status; were successful in applying for funding from several foundations; purchased a range of wheelchair tennis chairs; support players to attend tournaments; and run coaching sessions.

  ![http://parasport.purple-agency.net/core/core_picker/download.asp?id=909&filetitle=Edinburgh-Wheelchair-Tennis-Programme-Case-Study](http://parasport.purple-agency.net/core/core_picker/download.asp?id=909&filetitle=Edinburgh-Wheelchair-Tennis-Programme-Case-Study)

• **Wheelchair Basketball.** The Scottish Wheelchair Basketball Development Officer works in partnership with basketballScotland, Scottish Disability Sport and the Scottish Wheelchair Basketball Development Group to establish regional leagues, women’s and junior development programmes, and support clubs in their development programmes. The Lothian Phoenix Wheelchair Basketball Club is based at Armadale Academy in West Lothian and carries out awareness and come and try sessions aimed at students among others. The EU Basketball Club is looking at the feasibility of organising wheelchair basketball events, liaising with Lothian Phoenix.

• **Community Clubs.** Lothian Disability Sport has a directory of clubs in the region covering 21 sports plus multisports. From an Edinburgh student’s perspective, however, only eight in addition to those described above both cater for adults and are based in the city: boccia (only for those with severe physical impairments
affecting all four limbs) and indoor bowls (physical, learning, visual, hearing impairments) both weekly at the Jack Kane Centre; football weekly with the Spartans Connections FC at Ainslie Park; judo once a month with the East of Scotland Physical and Intellectual Disability Judo Group at the Sighthill Community Centre; fencing (ambulant/wheelchair disability) three times a week with the Salle Holyrood Wheelchair Fencing Club at the Holyrood High School; swimming (physical, sensory and learning disabilities) weekly with the Lothian Racers at the Royal Commonwealth Pool; and table tennis (all disability groups) weekly with the Murrayfield Table Tennis Club at the Royal High School.8

“What infrastructure do we need? A more coordinated approach, a model for galvanising efforts.”

Issue 7 – Targeting for Future Progress

Participation opportunities and performance development within the University and within its locale requires a clear development approach supported by selection criteria with internal and external expertise.

- As a way of starting a short-to-medium term process in this regard, the creation of a Regional Working Group, harnessing many partner agencies to build the required opportunities and structure for EUSU, and targeting the greater area good, is a progressive step. With an aim of building a strong sustainable infrastructure internally over a three-to-five year period, this regionally constructed model across Edinburgh and the Lothians would be the key infrastructure development.

Performance level club programmes from within the University of Edinburgh can grow to include disabled athletes to pathways to Paralympics and integrate elite activity.

- The sports targeted by Lothian Disability Sport, plus Triathlon where the University club actively supports disabled participants (Section 3: Case Studies), can be considered by EUSU and the CSE as priority areas for participation, performance and resourcing to build capacity.

Lothian Disability Sports: Target Sports 2011-15

Priority sports: Athletics, Basketball, Bowls, Football, Swimming, Boccia
Development sports: Archery, Badminton, Powerlifting, Tennis
Participation sports: Golf, Skiing, Table tennis

(Section 3: Case Studies)

8 Lothian Disability Sport  www.lothiandisabilitysport.co.uk/sports.asp
Local and regional structures are already in place through SDS and its East region, LDS with participation branches and clubs, Edinburgh Leisure with its 2015 strategic focus on opportunities for disabled people aged 18-30 and ClubSport Edinburgh as the Capital’s local sports council. Largely missing from this partnership platform is the student population of the four universities and the new integrated college.

Establishing a Regional Working Group, triggered through the recommendations of this Report, will provide a focus for targeting future plans. Growing participation opportunities and the development and deployment of volunteers, coaches, players and performers, will produce an internal dimension for the University and reinforce links to external operations.

Issue 8 – EUSU Leading the Way!

Taking hold, leading and driving developments internally within EUSU will require a skilled person to plan and resource a future for the clubs and the infrastructure that will connect and integrate with external partners and agencies. Consensus on this is evident and widely supported by organisations within the University and by external regional and national bodies.

The outcomes and recommendations of this Report will come off the shelf only if it is driven by a dynamic person committed to the plans in mind.

**Case Study: BUCS Priority Sports for Disabled Students**

**Criteria**
- Potential participants: Sports are recognised as popular with disabled people.
- Impairment spread: Sports geared to sensory and physical impairments.
- Gender equity: Sports that appeal to women as well as men.
- Partner support: National governing bodies and other bodies.
- Delivery: Simplicity of a delivery model that fits into events.

**Sports**
- Phase 1: Archery, Athletics, Rowing (indoor), Swimming
- Phase 2: Football, Netball, Wheelchair basketball

BUCS ‘Into inclusion’ A disability sport strategy for BUCS 2011-2016

“Need more of a joined-up conveyor belt, geographically – a city area is about the right size, a critical mass. Enough opportunities for people to find their own pathway.”

Local and regional structures are already in place through SDS and its East region, LDS with participation branches and clubs, Edinburgh Leisure with its 2015 strategic focus on opportunities for disabled people aged 18-30 and ClubSport Edinburgh as the Capital’s local sports council. Largely missing from this partnership platform is the student population of the four universities and the new integrated college.
This would be a full-time post for tertiary education in Edinburgh/Lothians, with the working title ‘Disability Sport Regional Manager’.

**Case Study: University of Bath**

Students’ Union Sport Executive Disability Sport Coordinator

This new post has been created for 2014/15; its role will include working with club committees and the University’s Department of Sports Development and Recreation to implement inclusive and disability sport within their regular activity; and with the Students’ Union Sport Officer on the delivery and review of the Disability Sport Development Plan.

Key within this review process and consultation was the repeated idea that a collaborative initiative was required. Harnessing the already established efforts of SDS, LDS, Edinburgh Leisure and other local and regional bodies, together with the four universities and Edinburgh College, to share a plan for the future that will provide immediate opportunities for EUSU students and build a regional structure for Edinburgh and the Lothians towards participation and performance development for the disabled.

“A post around a geographical area would be worth looking at. We need things we can measure with real outcomes. How many? What? Where? And having people working together – a real positive potential outcome.”

With shared resourcing, clear management of development and delivery, and a focus through the regional plans of Scottish Student Sport, a dynamic structure can be readily created.

- To this end, the consensus appears to be that the appropriate location for such a post would be with Scottish Student Sport, who may also be best placed to coordinate the proposed Regional Working Group.

“The experiences of disabled students suggest a need to offer a spectrum of opportunities from recreational to competitive activities, for communications to be more targeted, and for a more supportive and understanding environment for participation.”

3: SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Methodology

Context

Following discussions with EUSU and the University’s Student Disability Service, the following parameters for the review were determined:

- **Target Group.** The main focus was University of Edinburgh students with disabilities. Clearly, any benefits resulting from this work are also likely to accrue to people such as University staff, alumni or local community members who use University sports facilities or are members of EUSU clubs.

- **Disability.** Disabled students can choose to register with the University’s Student Disability Service which uses UCAS groupings to categorise disabilities. The focus of our investigation was on students whose disability might have any effect on their participation or potential participation in any sport.

- **Sport.** The 64 EUSU clubs provide activities that have governing bodies recognised by sportscotland. Related activities are also provided through fifteen of the EU Students’ Association (EUSA) societies, some of which are recognised by sportscotland (Ballroom dancing, Scottish country dance, Yoga) and others not (Bhangra, Capoeira, Pole dancing); all were included within the broad definition of ‘sport’. We addressed all levels of participation, from informal recreational through to elite Paralympic.

Approaches

To meet EUSU’s requirements a range of approaches were employed, including deskwork, liaison with key individuals and organisations, two questionnaire surveys, interviews, focus groups and case studies.

Deskwork

- We checked websites and related information for all of the EUSU sports clubs and fifteen EUSA societies: any current policies on provision for disabled students.

- We checked websites and related information for the governing bodies of the same sports: policies and provision for participants with disabilities.

- We checked websites and related information for British Universities and Colleges Sport, Club Sport Edinburgh, Edinburgh Leisure, EU Centre for Sport and Exercise, EU Sports Union, EU Student Disability Service, EU Students’ Association, NUS Scotland, Scottish Disability Sport and Lothian Disability Sport, Scottish Student Sport, other relevant sections of the University of Edinburgh, and others as determined.

- We obtained comparative data from the 2014 BUCS Disability Sport Survey.

- We checked websites and related information for key Scottish universities and colleges and selected universities from the rest of the UK, identifying examples of good practice.
• We reviewed relevant data from surveys and other research.

Surveys

Two questionnaire surveys were carried out using SurveyMonkey:

• **Questionnaire to Disabled Students.** With the support of the Student Disability Service, a questionnaire link was emailed to all students who had registered with them.

• **Questionnaire to the University Clubs and Societies.** All 64 EUSU clubs and 14 out of 15 relevant EUSA societies (the Dance Fitness Society was suspended during the period of this review).

Interviews, Case Studies and Focus Groups

• **Interviews** with a range of key contacts at University, regional and national level. These were undertaken in person or by phone/email as appropriate.

• **Case Studies.** From the above sources a number of examples of good practice were identified as short case studies.

• **Focus Group and Interviews with Disabled Students.** We carried out a focus group and interviews with disabled students, identifying appropriate participants from those who agreed to take part when completing the student questionnaire. This allowed us to explore issues in more depth from the students’ perspectives.

• **Liaison.** We liaised with groups and organisations such as the University Disability Committee, EU Students’ Association, and British Universities and Colleges Sport.
Survey Findings: EU Disabled Students

Our survey was implemented in April 2014 through an email including a SurveyMonkey link sent by the University’s Student Disability Service (EUSDS) to all students registered with the Service as disabled. In July 2013, 2,963 students had registered a disability with the EUSDS, comprising 9% of the student population. The number of survey respondents was 153 or just over 5% of those registered with the EUSDS. Only those registered students who considered that their disability had any impact on their participation or potential participation in sport were invited to complete the survey.

Just under two-thirds (63%) of respondents were aged 18-24 and 37% aged 25 and over; 61% were female.

Category of Disability

Table 1 shows the disability categories of students registered with the EUSDS (who use standard UCAS categories) and of those responding to our survey.

- The highest proportions of respondents had a specific learning difficulty (41%) and/or a mental health condition (26%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: UCAS/EUSDS Student Disability Categories</th>
<th>EUSDS</th>
<th>Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D</td>
<td>1,559</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf or a serious hearing impairment</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A social/communication impairment such as Asperger’s syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorder</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,885</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EUSDS: www.ed.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.125922!/fileManager/SDS%20Disabled%20Student%20Breakdown%202012-13.pdf

Survey: Based on the 110 (out of 153 total respondents) who reported their disability.

A further 78 students are reported by EUSDS in the category ‘two or more impairments and/or disabling medical conditions’, increasing the total registered from 2,885 to 2,963. In the survey, however, they were asked to tick all the categories that applied to them, with the result that the 110 respondents who completed this question reported a total of 143 disability categories.

Of the 17 survey respondents with mobility issues, one identified as a wheelchair user.

The lower proportion of respondents with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D compared with those registered with the EUSDS – and consequently higher proportions for most of the other categories – can be assumed to be because more of those in this category considered their disability to have no potential impact on their sports participation.
There are a number of factors that may explain this low response rate, some of which have implications for the University’s communication about its sports opportunities:

- The registered students were asked only to complete the questionnaire if they considered that their disability was a barrier or potential barrier to their participation in any sport. Thus it is not surprising that less than 3% of the 1,559 students with a specific learning difficulty responded. It is interesting however that this proportion comprised as many as 45 respondents (even allowing for a number who also had another disability); some of their views are reported in Table 37 below.

- Indications are that disabled students generally are reluctant respondents to surveys and perhaps other information – arguably because ‘disabled students’ are not a coherent but an extremely diverse group. A survey in 2007 about accessible sports facilities that also went out from the EUSDS email list secured only about ten responses; and the BUCS website survey for all British university and college disabled students achieved just 90 responses.

- Although an incentive prize draw was provided, no reminder was sent because of concerns that students registered with the EUSDS were receiving too many emails.

Current Participation in Sport or Other Physical Recreation

_Do you currently take part, however informally, in any sports or physical recreations?_9

Three-quarters (76%) of the respondents take part in sport or other physical recreation. This coincides exactly with the response to a similar question in a recent online survey for disabled students by British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS), where 76% of the 90 respondents reported that they participated10. Despite this corroboration, the figure is high. While non-participants were encouraged to complete the EU questionnaire, arguably those who participate were somewhat more likely to be interested than the non-participants. With that caveat, the survey results remain both relevant and informative.

Comparative data are unavailable for the EU students who do not have a limiting disability. However a survey in 2013 found that of English students currently in higher education, 45% of those with a limiting disability had participated in sport and other recreational physical activity recently compared with 53% of those with no limiting disability11. Ignoring educational status but just focusing on all those aged 16-25, the same proportion (45%) of young adults with a limiting disability had participated compared with 54% without a limiting disability12. This similarity would support the accuracy of the English higher education figures.

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9 The question was given this clarification: _Include cycling, dancing, keep fit, walking 2+ miles. If your sport is currently out of season, tick YES if you expect to take part next season. Please include your current participation in the activities of any of the clubs/societies you have ticked._


11 Sport England: Active People Survey. activepeople.sportengland.org/Result#Id=23999&OutputType=1

12 Sport England: Active People Survey. activepeople.sportengland.org/Result#Id=24001&OutputType=1
- Reflecting the population generally, 18-24 year-olds (84% participated) were more likely to take part than older disabled students (65%) (Table 4).
- Swimming, yoga and, with appropriate guidance, gym use are health-promoting activities for those with a wide range of disabilities and these were among the top five sports/recreations participants took part in most often (Table 5). They are relatively popular, but have considerable potential for increased participation among disabled students.
- For nearly two-thirds (63%) of participants their main sport was an individual sport which they took part in on their own rather than as part of a club (Table 6). For a large majority (81%) it was a mainstream activity rather than one which they took part in with other disabled participants (Table 7).

Table 2: Whether currently take part in sport or physical recreation by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base: All respondents</td>
<td>No. of respondents: 108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Whether currently take part in sport or physical recreation by type of disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Learning/Mental/Social</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base: All respondents</td>
<td>No. of respondents: 108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Whether currently take part in sport or physical recreation by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base: All respondents</td>
<td>No. of respondents: 109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Please tick the sport/recreation you take part in most often

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage of respondents to these questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walking 2+ miles</td>
<td>19% (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running/jogging (incl Hare &amp; Hounds)</td>
<td>10% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness &amp; weights, Strength &amp; conditioning, Gym sessions</td>
<td>7% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming, Water polo</td>
<td>7% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>5% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base: Participants in sport/recreation</td>
<td>No. of responses: 104 Activities with 5+ participants are listed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 Those with a learning difficulty, mental health condition and/or social communication impairment are combined into one group and those with a long-standing illness, physical disability and/or sensory impairment are combined into the second group. Those falling into neither group are excluded.
Table 6: What type of sport or physical recreation is it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Sport/Recreation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An individual sport/recreation, on my own</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A team sport/recreation, as part of a club</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An individual sport/recreation, as part of a club</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Participants in their most popular sport  No. of responses: 104

Table 7: How would you describe this activity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An inclusive activity in the mainstream (an activity whereby disabled and non-disabled people participate together)</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A pan-impairment activity (an activity where people of different impairments participate together)</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An impairment specific activity (an activity where participants have the same impairment)</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Participants in their most popular sport  No. of responses: 98

Context of Participation: Individual/University/Community

- A small majority of participants (58%) took part in their main sport on an individual basis rather than located in the University (43%) or community (34%) (Table 8). Significantly, however, 71% would prefer to take part in the University (Table 21).
- Older participants were far more likely to take part individually (69%) than in the University (19%) (Table 11).

Table 8: Where do you participate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation Location</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individually</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the University</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the community</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Participants in their most popular sport  No. of responses: 104

Table 9: Where participants take part by type of disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Learning/Mental/Social</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individually</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the University</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the community</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Participants in their most popular sport  No. of respondents: 83

Table 10: Where participants take part by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individually</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the University</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the community</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Participants in their most popular sport  No. of respondents: 83

Percentages sum to more than 100 because multiple responses apply.
Table 11: Where participants take part by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individually</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the University</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the community</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Participants in their most popular sport  No. of respondents: 84
Percentages sum to more than 100 because multiple responses apply.

EU Club Membership

- A quarter (27%) of the survey respondents were members of a EUSU Club or EUSA dance/exercise society (Table 12).

- Men were more likely than women to be members (Table 14), as were those with learning, mental or social rather than physical impairments (Table 15), and those aged 18-24 rather than older respondents (Table 16).

Table 12: Are you a member of any EUSU clubs or of any EUSA dance/exercise societies?

Yes: 27%
No: 73%
Base: All respondents  No. of respondents: 153  (There are 64 clubs and 15 dance/exercise societies)

Table 13: Which clubs/societies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clubs/societies</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>7½%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football men’s</td>
<td>7½%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pole Dancing Society</td>
<td>7½%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowsports</td>
<td>7½%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga Society</td>
<td>7½%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Club/society members  No. of respondents: 40  Clubs with 3 or more responses are listed
Multiple responses (ie, some respondents are members of more than one club/society)
All 78 clubs/societies were listed in the questionnaire

Table 14: Member of EUSU Club or EUSA Dance/Exercise Society by Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents  No. of respondents: 108
Table 15: Member of EUSU Club or EUSA Dance/Exercise Society by Type of Disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Learning/Mental/Social</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents   No. of respondents: 108

Table 16: Member of EUSU Club or EUSA Dance/Exercise Society by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents   No. of respondents: 109

Wish to Participate in Any or in More Sport or Physical Recreation

• There was significant demand for participation: four-fifths (79%) of all respondents would like to take part or take part more (Table 17).

• This was more the case for those with physical disabilities (89%), and for those groups who were less likely to be sports participants: women and those aged 25 and over (Tables 18-20).

Table 17: Would you like to take part in any, or in more, sport or physical recreation?

| Yes | 79% |
| No  | 21% |

Base: All respondents   No. of respondents: 123

Table 18: Wish to participate by type of disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wish</th>
<th>Learning/Mental/Social</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents   No. of respondents: 108

Table 19: Wish to participate by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wish</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents   No. of respondents: 108
Table 20: Wish to participate by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wish</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents   No. of respondents: 109

Participation Preferences

- Only just over half of participants (Table 8) currently take part in the University, while 71% of all respondents would prefer to do so (Table 21). This was slightly more the case for those with physical disabilities (Table 22).
- Only about a third would like to play a team sport, compared with over a half who would prefer to play an individual sport whether by themselves or in a club context (Table 25). Those with physical disabilities and women tended to prefer an individual sport in a club context (Tables 26-27).
- Over half would prefer to take part in an inclusive mainstream context; virtually none would wish invariably to take part in a pan-impairment or impairment-specific context; while for many (39%) it might be any of the three contexts depending on the sport (Table 29).

Table 21: Where would you prefer to participate in sport or physical recreation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Percentage of respondents to these questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the University</td>
<td>71% (42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individually</td>
<td>46% (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the community</td>
<td>34% (20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more   No. of respondents: 59
Percentages sum to more than 100 because multiple responses apply.

Table 22: Context preferences by type of disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Learning/Mental/Social</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the University</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individually</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the community</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more   No. of respondents: 58
Percentages sum to more than 100 because multiple responses apply.

Table 23: Context preferences by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the University</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individually</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the community</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more   No. of respondents: 58
Percentages sum to more than 100 because multiple responses apply.
Table 24: Context preferences by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the University</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individually</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the community</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more. No. of respondents: 59
Percentages sum to more than 100 because multiple responses apply.

Table 25: What type of sport or physical recreation would you prefer to participate in?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of sport</th>
<th>Percentage of respondents to these questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As an individual, as part of a club</td>
<td>59% (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An individual sport or physical recreation, on my own</td>
<td>54% (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a team, as part of a club</td>
<td>37% (22)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more. No. of responses: 59
Percentages sum to more than 100 because multiple responses apply.

Table 26: Type of sport preferences by type of disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of sport</th>
<th>Learning/Mental/Social</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As an individual, as part of a club</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An individual sport or physical recreation, on my own</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a team, as part of a club</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more. No. of responses: 58
Percentages sum to more than 100 because multiple responses apply.

Table 27: Type of sport preferences by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of sport</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As an individual, as part of a club</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An individual sport or physical recreation, on my own</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a team, as part of a club</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more. No. of responses: 58
Percentages sum to more than 100 because multiple responses apply.

Table 28: Type of sport preferences by age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of sport</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As an individual, as part of a club</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An individual sport or physical recreation, on my own</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a team, as part of a club</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more. No. of responses: 59
Percentages sum to more than 100 because multiple responses apply.
### Table 29: How would you prefer to participate in sport or physical recreation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In an inclusive activity in the mainstream (an activity whereby disabled and non-disabled people participate together)</td>
<td>58% (34)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a pan-impairment activity (an activity where people of different impairments participate together)</td>
<td>2% (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In an impairment specific activity (an activity where participants have the same impairment)</td>
<td>2% (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the above depending on the sport</td>
<td>39% (23)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more No. of responses: 59

### Table 30: Inclusion preference by type of disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Learning/Mental/Social</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In an inclusive activity in the mainstream (an activity whereby disabled and non-disabled people participate together)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a pan-impairment activity (an activity where people of different impairments participate together)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In an impairment specific activity (an activity where participants have the same impairment)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the above depending on the sport</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more No. of responses: 58

### Table 31: Inclusion preference by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In an inclusive activity in the mainstream (an activity whereby disabled and non-disabled people participate together)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a pan-impairment activity (an activity where people of different impairments participate together)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In an impairment specific activity (an activity where participants have the same impairment)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the above depending on the sport</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more No. of responses: 58

### Table 32: Inclusion preference by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25 &amp; over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In an inclusive activity in the mainstream (an activity whereby disabled and non-disabled people participate together)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a pan-impairment activity (an activity where people of different impairments participate together)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In an impairment specific activity (an activity where participants have the same impairment)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the above depending on the sport</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Those who would like to take part in any/more No. of responses: 59
Disability a Barrier to Participation

- Bearing in mind that students were asked to complete the questionnaire specifically “if your disability has or could have any effect at all on your participation – even if you don’t take part at the moment”, then it is interesting to note that only just over half of the respondents saw this effect as an actual barrier to taking part (Table 33).

- Those with physical disabilities (Table 34) and those aged 25 and over (Table 36) were more likely to consider their disability as a barrier to participation.

**Table 33: Do you consider your disability a barrier at all to taking part?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents  No. of responses: 115

**Table 34: Disability a barrier by type of disability**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Learning/Mental/Social</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents  No. of responses: 108

**Table 35: Disability a barrier by sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents  No. of responses: 108

**Table 36: Disability a barrier by age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents  No. of responses: 109
Table 37: How do you think the barrier could be overcome?

- Those who considered their disability a barrier at all to taking part were asked to write in their views on how the barrier might be overcome. The following are the verbatim responses. Some context is provided by adding the respondent's sex, category/ies of disability and whether or not they were a member of a EUSU club or EUSA dance/exercise society. These comments exclude don't knows and those who say nothing can be done (total no. of responses: 61).

- The comments have been listed according to whether they reported having learning/mental/social disabilities or illness/physical/sensory disabilities (the two groupings also used in the above tables) as described in Table 1 above, or a disability that does not fall into any of these EUSDS/UCAS categories. There is inevitably some overlap as some respondents have disabilities in both groupings.

**Learning, Mental and Social Disabilities**

I have poor motor skills and coordination so it can be embarrassing if people I am training with are not aware of my disability. (Male with a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorder; not a club/society member.)

I think of it more as a personal barrier as I only have dyslexia. However, it affects my ability to think strategically and respond quickly. Therefore, even though I would really enjoy learning a team sport, I am scared to do so from previous experience of being picked on for not being good enough and just left on the side. My limited knowledge of university sports clubs puts me off trying any as I do not want to compete against other universities and would need more time spent on assisting me to understand the game and how to improve my ability to participate. (Female with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D; not a club/society member.)

Raising awareness. A more individualised try-out process for admission onto sports teams (taking into account the impact of unseen difficulties on making sense of and responding to requests without prior-warning). A mentoring system (bringing together more experienced students with disabilities with less experienced students). (Female with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D and a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorder; not a club/society member.)

Flexible scheduling of participation to work around unpredictability of disability. (Female with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; not a club/society member.)

I have social anxiety disorder which makes joining and attending sports unions difficult as the atmosphere can be intimidating. Have mainly felt unwelcome or ignored when I attend. (Male with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; not a club/society member.)

Cheaper, more flexible membership. Cheaper to pay-as-you-go at the gym so that when I am ill it isn't expensive to not attend. (Female with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; member of one EUSA society.)

Fewer people/ smaller groups. (Male with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder and a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorder; not a club/society member.)

Lack of confidence to join a class (especially as not now a fresher) and not already really fit. (Female with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; not a club/society member.)
I wish I could have an affordable option for yoga and that I could learn the technique without being too self-conscious. (Female with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; not a club/society member.)

Making sports more accessible, but not exclusionary. (Male with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D and a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorder; not a club/society member.)

Classes specifically for disabled students, as one of the biggest barriers is worry about people not understanding or respecting my limited abilities. (Female with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; not a club/society member.)

Sport clubs being less centred around alcohol or at least more accepting of people who don't drink and are triggered by drunk people. Generally, it seems that sport clubs or societies focus a lot on group socialisation which is fine, but if you have problems with group interaction (autism etc), it's simply impossible to find the right way to get involved. It would probably help if there were individual people to talk to in the clubs who aren't judgmental and could help you with finding your way into the group. (No demographics; with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D and a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder and a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorder; not a club/society member.)

Create opportunities for people with mental health difficulties to do sports with no annoying people/less noise/less nervous surroundings etc. (Female with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; not a club/society member.)

Unsafe. The barrier is anxiety. To my knowledge the basketball teams are for highly skilled players. And the idea of trying out for competitive teams is intimidating. There was the intra-mural basketball league which I signed up for, however was told I would have to contact an existing team to join despite there being "a lot of individual interest". For someone with social anxiety, trying to join in with a pre-existing group of friends is extremely difficult and intimidating. If there had been teams of individuals, then there is a higher chance I would have went through with it. Ideally I feel a club where players of all experience can join and mix in (much like basketball in PE in schools) would be ideal as oppose to confining myself to a single group of people who I may not connect with. (Male with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; not a club/society member.)

More friendly, non-competitive sport opportunities. (Female with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D, not a club/society member.)

More flexible training times. No classes universally on Wednesday afternoons. Sessions from Kings Buildings. (Female with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D and a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorder; not a club/society member.)

Don't participate in team sports where there is expectation. (Female with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D and a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; not a club/society member.)

People should be more willing to accept autistic people, and strange senses of humour. (Female with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D and a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorder; member of four EUSU clubs.)

Not easily; I suffer from issues affecting my hand-eye co-ordination and spatial awareness, and it's not really fair to expect others to have to play down to that. (Male with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D and a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above; member of one EUSU club.)
More support, either in a group setting or one on one. I think a group would work best.  
(Female with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; not a club/society member.)

As my disability is a mental health issue and one of coordination lots of low level practice and repetition to get basic ball control/other coordination skills would help me improve - it takes me longer than most people to get the hang of simple stuff like passing etc.  
(Male with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D and a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorder; not a club/society member.)

It can't be - it makes me inherently bad at 90% of sports that require coordination.  
(Female with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D; not a club/society member.)

Better timetabling of my day so that the necessary tasks are completed before it's time to train.  
(Male with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D; member of one EUSU club.)

Not being able to concentrate and plan ahead.  
(Male with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D; not a club/society member.)

**Illness, Physical and Sensory Disabilities**

I can't run due to previously fractured ankle. Diabetes requires breaks when low blood sugar etc.  
(Female with a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy; not a club/society member.)

More opportunities to talk to instructors before classes or in advance of signing up.  
(Female with a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

My answer suggests overenthusiasm - the truth is that I wouldn't ever expect to do everything I'd like to, all at the same time. As things stand, full time studying and regular exercise are difficult to balance due to illness. The only way I can see to solve that is to finish my studies.  
(Female with a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy and a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder; member of one EUSU club and three EUSA societies.)

I don't participate as it takes me my time and energy to get through the academic demands. Some proactive invitations to 'taster' sessions might shunt me in the direction I know I should be travelling.  
(Female with a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

I have writers' cramps sometimes (tenovaginitis), mainly in individual fingers or the wrists, because of which I sometimes cannot fully participate in both swimming and lifting weights (particular types, where a lot of strength and/ or stability must come from the hand/ wrist). In the swimming pool I once asked whether it would be possible to use these blade-similar instruments which I sometimes see professional swimmers use to reduce the pressure on the individual finger, but they said these are forbidden in open session because they are sharp and increase the speed artificially. I don't know whether that is always the case and whether a compromise can be found there. In the gym, it is rather the atmosphere that makes me hesitant to make use of the weightlifting area. The hyper-masculine atmosphere with regular protein-shake handouts and bodybuilder trainers makes it very unpleasant for those who are, for instance, female and have weak hands to engage in lifting there - even if that would actually be really good for them.  
(Female with a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)
More rigorous scheduling on my part. Better access to certain aid provisions (such as dextrose) at CSE etc. (Male with a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy; not a club/society member.)

Introducing more sessions where coaching and extra support is available from qualified coaches. (Female with a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

I cannot come to the facility on my own as it is on an inclined plane. Plus I cannot propel my manual wheelchair to the facility from my home. (No demographics; with a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

Classes tailored for disabilities. (Male with a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy and a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

Painkillers; low-impact exercise; ease of access to venue; suitable times of sessions. (Male with a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder and a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

Having joints that won't collapse at any sign of physical stress? If that's out of the question, any kind of exercise that minimises stress on the joints, specifically elbow/wrist/ankle/knee. (Male with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D, and a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy, and a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

Having an instructor who is able to offer different variations of exercises is helpful when there are parts of a class I'm not physically able to do. (Female with a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy and a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

By manning up. No pain no gain. (Male with a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

People being more considerate and understanding of my condition. (Female with a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

With coaching and supervision from someone with expertise in type 2 diabetes. (Male with a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy and a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

I'm not sure. I have a chronic ear malfunction so water sports are something I have been advised not to partake in. I would love to be able to do such sports but I guess I have just come to terms with the fact it is not possible now. (Female with a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy; member of one EUSA society.)

My barrier is post-chemotherapy tiredness and getting over the effort to participate. Not sure how to overcome. (Male with a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy; member of one EUSU club.)

Age is a barrier which is impossible to overcome. (Female with a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy; not a club/society member.)
With regular Pilates exercises and physio, my back pain is less severe, meaning I can participate more fully in activities. This problem is expected to gradually lessen in the future, so hopefully I will one day be able to be as involved in sport as I used to be. (Female with a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using the arms or using a wheelchair or crutches – though not a wheelchair user; not a club/society member.)

I have ulcerative colitis, an inflammatory bowel disease. I often need to run to the toilet at very short notice. This is difficult if there are no nearby toilets. Nearby toilets always help! I often get abdominal cramps, and have quite a bit of pain because of that, which can make simple activities difficult for me... and I am reluctant to go along to something, then have to spend a lot of the time sitting out. As part of my colitis, I have a lot of problems with fatigue. This means that I have very little energy, so hour-long exercise classes are too long for me at the moment. I wouldn't be able to last the class and I would feel very awkward turning up for a class, then leaving half-way through, or sitting out. I would like to go to very gentle (emphasis on gentle!) tai-chi or yoga classes. Is this something you might be able to offer? I would also love to roller-skate some day. Maybe that's a bit high-energy for me at the moment, though. (Female with a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy; not a club/society member.)

**Disability, Impairment or Medical Condition Not in the Above Groups**

Designing targeted activities/exercise. (Female with a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above; not a club/society member.)

My barrier is migraines. I can't always predict when I get them, so it makes scheduling something a risk and it worries me that rescheduling all the time might be difficult. I think the only way this barrier would be overcome is by having regular slots available for my activity (eg, yoga classes) with a waiting list system for signing up, so that if I cancel, my position can go to someone else easily and no one misses out (eg, there could be a text system set up to text the next person on the waiting list when a position became available). (Female with a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above; not a club/society member.)

I was an avid swimmer but couldn't keep up with the swim team. It would have been fantastic to have a team that was one tier down. I know others would have participated in it as well. (Female with a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above; not a club/society member.)

If the University pool were open more often or if there were a pool near the Vet School. I have a limited time each day when the pain is manageable so easier availability would make it more likely that I could swim more often. (Female with a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above; not a club/society member.)

I get extreme fatigue so I don't really think it can be overcome. (Male with a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above; not a club/society member.)

By increasing my strength. Concern of an injury setting me back. (Female with a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above; not a club/society member.)
Survey Findings: EUSU Clubs and EUSA Societies

With the support of the EUSU President and the EUSA Societies Coordinator, a SurveyMonkey link to a short questionnaire was sent to all 64 EUSU clubs and to 14 out of the 15 EUSA dance and physical recreation societies (the Dance Fitness Society was suspended during the period of this review). The survey remained open over April-June 2014; prize draw incentives were provided by EUSU.

Respondents

Following reminders from both EUSU/EUSA and the consultants, a total of 53 completed questionnaires were received from 46 clubs and seven societies. The seven responding societies were:

- Bhangra Crew
- Exmoor Pony Trekking Society
- Modern Dance Society
- New Scotland Country Dance Society
- Salsa Society
- Swing Dance Society
- Yoga Society

The following were the 18 non-responding clubs and 7 non-responding societies:

- Cheerleading Club
- Golf Club
- Hockey Club (Men’s)
- Hotair Balloon Club
- Ice Hockey Club
- Jujiitsu Club
- Lacrosse Club (Women’s)
- Motorsport Club
- Polo Club
- Roller Hockey Club
- Rugby Club (Men’s)
- Shukokai Club
- Snowsports Club
- Squash Club
- Sub Aqua Club
- Taekwondo Club
- Underwater Hockey Club
- Weightlifting Club

African and Arabic Dance Society
Ballroom Dancing Society
Capoeira Society
Pole Dancing Society
Reeling Club
Tango Society
West Coast Swing Dance Society

Club/Society Websites

In conjunction with the club/society survey we checked all their websites or Facebook pages. We found information about participation for disabled students on only one, the EU Lawn Tennis Club where information had been posted by the EUSU Tennis Coordinator.

Responses

- None appeared to have any policies or procedures relating to participants with disabilities (apart from the standard equity policy).

- Ten were aware that they had current members who had a disability; for all of them participation was an inclusive activity in the mainstream.

- Four clubs (Basketball, Kendo, Tennis and Triathlon) stated that they had firm plans to promote participation by disabled students.
Case Studies

Targeting Disabled Students: EU Triathlon Club

Edinburgh University Triathlon Club is ambitious to grow, develop and include disabled students as they experience running, swimming and cycling combined into Tri Sport. The club’s new plan for 2014-17 centres on providing participation opportunities for health and fitness through the sport and how these also can quickly connect to performance development towards competing in the World Championship series for disabled athletes and Paralympics – ‘Para Tri’.

With four active coaches at UKCC levels 2/3 and over 100 members, the club is well placed to build its capacity for all. Keen to work with Scottish Disability Sport and Triathlon Scotland for continuing professional development for coaches, the club also recognises that it will require additional resources for wheelchair students for adapted chairs and equipment for the visually impaired. The club’s Coach advocates and promotes disability sport for all: “Inclusion enhances the experience of the able-bodied athletes through exposure to disability and all its varieties and challenges”.

This support for disabled participants is not referred to on the EUTri website.

Source: EU Triathlon Club Coach

Target Sports: Lothian Disability Sport

During 2011-15, we will continue to categorise sports as Priority, Development and Participation in order to make the best use of resources. As anticipated some sports have moved into a different category since the previous plan was written and it is expected that this will continue to be a flexible arrangement. The highest level of assistance will be offered to those sports identified as ‘Priority’ sports with ‘Participation’ sports receiving assistance as and when it is considered appropriate.

Priority sports: Athletics, Basketball, Boccia, Bowls, Football, Swimming
Development sports: Archery, Badminton, Powerlifting, Tennis
Participation sports: Golf, Skiing, Table tennis

Criteria
Priority Sports:
- Scottish Disability Sport/ Special Olympics strand 1 or 2 sport
- regular competitive opportunities
- good participation levels across all local authority areas
- local elite athletes in the sport
- Scottish representative teams in the sport
- national coordinator

Development Sports:
- Scottish Disability Sport/ Special Olympics strand 1 or 2 sport
- lower participation levels than priority sports
- less established at elite level
- competitive pathways available
- links to representative teams/ national coordinator
Participation Sports:
- relevant to local area
- local resources available
- competitive pathway not established
- links to other initiatives

Additional sports may also be included but it is anticipated that these will mainly be 'Participation Sports'.


Community Clubs: Swimming and Wheelchair Basketball

Lothian Racers Swimming Club
Lothian Racers is for swimmers of all ages with physical, sensory or learning disabilities. They train weekly at the Royal Commonwealth Pool with an average of 17 swimmers.

Source: Coach, Lothian Racers

Lothian Phoenix Wheelchair Basketball Club
We currently have 27 registered players (including Juniors), one Associate member and eight members who are currently too young to compete in the BWB leagues. We have seven registered level 1 coaches, three registered level 2 coaches with four pending (who have all passed but are completing log books) and one level 3 Coach. We have a first team currently in Division 2 North, but who have finished second top of the league and will be heading to the playoffs. A second Team in Division 3 North who finished third this season and a Junior Team who took the Bronze in the National Junior Play-offs. Our females are also registered to play with Angels of the North in the women’s league which is also coached by our level 3 Coach. The majority of our players also represent Scotland at the appropriate age level (Under 15s, Under 19s, UK School Games and U23s).

Source: Head Coach, Lothian Phoenix

Fun – but Inclusive? EUSU Team Sport Club

"Any committee member not partaking in suitable drunken debauchery should be fined… This is our regular pub where we meet before all socials etc. Teams also go here after matches for 'Match Teas'. This isn't optional... We have quite a lot of drinking games which we like to invariably start after we've had a few. And to bring back historic tradition, come around 9pm we'll all have an epic race to the Student Union: Potterow, many still wearing our sports kit, to carry on with the evenings banter… Alcohol does play a large part in our nights out, but if you don't drink, that's completely acceptable... Below is a selection of the clubs finest and classiest drinking games. Punishment for an error in all games is consumption of the designated drinking fine or well, any form of dare or embarrassing challenge."

Source: EU Men’s Hockey Club website http://euhc.co.uk/men/socials.php5#
Inclusive Coaching: Scottish Governing Bodies

Inclusive coaching encompasses coach education, coach development and coach delivery. It recognises the difference between the technical (‘what’ to coach) and generic (‘how’ to coach) elements of coaching.

Examples of good practice are where children, athletes and players with different impairments are appropriately and effectively included within mainstream sport. Scottish Disability Sport (SDS) works with sports to develop inclusive coaching practices. Two examples of this kind of work are outlined in this case study.

The Model

In 2011 SDS set up partnerships to develop an inclusive coaching workforce. The aim of the partnership was to help coach/leader education and development to be more inclusive.

**JudoScotland.** A working party was established to develop UK Disability Inclusion Training – Judo (UKDIT- Judo). One of the key expected course outcomes was that coaches would feel more confident and competent in their ability to work with judo players with different impairments. The process revealed that there were already a number of experienced judo coaches working with players with a disability. There was a real desire to build on the success of the training course and include disability judo into the national events and training programme.

**BasketballScotland.** BasketballScotland national tutors completed a UKDIT basketball course. This course enabled tutors to incorporate inclusion into coach education qualifications for basketball.

The model worked because:

- There was enthusiasm from partners to ensure the success of the courses.
- There was a commitment from key officials to include disabled people in their planning processes.
- The SGBs recognised that practices could be improved and there was a desire to encourage inclusion.
- Theory sections were put into practice, bringing the ethos of inclusion to life.

“SDS is delighted to be working in the community on an activity that is available to all, including participants with a disability.” (Gavin Macleod, Scottish Disability Sport CEO)

**Source:** sportsScotland with Scottish Disability Sport Inclusion case studies. Examples of inclusive practice that supports children, players and athletes to become involved in sport. Edinburgh: sportScotland, 2011.

Disability Sport Coordinator: University of Bath

A new Students’ Union Sport Constitution was passed in Feb 2014 which ensures that discrimination, of any kind, is actively opposed and that sports clubs maintain an inclusive recruitment policy.
A new post, Students’ Union Sport Executive Disability Sport Coordinator, has been created for 2014/15. This position is a post on the Students’ Union Sport Executive committee, a committee of 12 elected student volunteers who lead on the strategic direction of SU Sport. The disability sport coordinator role is a new initiative with the following responsibilities:

- Develop an initial knowledge of the disability sporting landscape through liaising with internal and external bodies.
- Work with club committees and the University’s Department of Sports Development and Recreation to implement inclusive and disability sport within their regular activity.
- Work with the Students’ Union Sport Officer on the delivery and review of the Disability Sport Development Plan.
- Organise an inclusive and/or disability sport event at least once a semester to raise the profile of disability sport.
- Organise a yearly Talent ID event in partnership with British Paralympic Association and other relevant bodies.
- Work with club committees to enter disabled athletes in BUCS events.

Source: University of Bath Students’ Union Sport Officer

Disability Sport Taster Sessions: University of Bath

Taster sessions aim to introduce disabled and non-disabled students to disability sport. The initial idea came from discussions at the annual BUCS Conference and the Disability Development Day in November 2013 to find the best format for introducing disability sport to the student population. Discussions with student clubs were key to finalising the list of sports that were offered, as the clubs themselves would be delivering the sessions.

External organisations were involved, British Wheelchair Basketball and Somerset Football Association, and contact was made with a variety of other national governing bodies of sport to gauge support for the event.

All sports were run internally by student clubs, with the exception of blind football which was run by Somerset FA and prior to the event, a training session was set up, with the help of the Students’ Union Community Officer, to give volunteers information about the planning for the day and how to engage with disabled participants. Participation in the Sport Day was open to all students and some disabled people from the local community were also invited to join in to foster an inclusive atmosphere and promote ties between the University and the local community.

There were a variety of activities for participants to get to grips with including wheelchair basketball, seated volleyball, visually impaired tennis, blind football, para-triathlon and adaptive rowing.

“I was genuinely excited to see a university like Bath delivering activities like disability sport and that it is student lead and student driven. It is unbelievably valuable to have an event like this and let people know that Wednesday is a day for everyone to enjoy
sports from BUCS to recreational and even a new and hopefully more frequent event like we've seen today."  

(David Padgen, BUCS Disability Sport Officer)

Source: British Universities and Colleges Sport *Disability models of good practice.*  
www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=16878&sectionTitle=Disability+Models+of+Good+Practice

Community Engagement and Workforce Development:  
University of Gloucestershire’s ‘No Limits’ Sports Club

‘No Limits’ aims to encourage all disabled individuals to discover for themselves the best solutions to play a variety of games, activities and sports. The project also aims to expand the inclusive sports workforce, whilst providing sports students with some authentic learning and coaching experiences. By leading in the delivery of No Limits students will become equipped with a range of skills to support the provision of inclusive sports activities in their future careers and improve their employability.

The club was set up in 2010 by two sports students and continues to be organised by an undergraduate sport student who oversees the weekly sessions and coordination for the club. During the last year No Limits has also worked with a number of community groups and national governing bodies to deliver taster sessions in archery, golf, rugby, dance, football, basketball and martial arts.

The club takes advantage of the talents and interests of university students who act as session leaders and volunteers. The sport students are introduced to the club through the Level 2 module Adapted Physical Activity, a core element of the BSc Sport Education, Sports Development and Sports Coaching degree. Many of the students then choose to continue their work with ‘No Limits’ as a volunteer or through one of the many placement modules on offer.

‘No Limits’ has already expanded to include two satellite clubs in the community and it is hoped that by expanding partnerships more clubs can be developed in the future. It is an example of a higher education establishment working in partnership with schools, colleges, clubs and National Governing Bodies to increase the opportunities for disabled young people to engage in sport and physical activity whilst providing the sport students with real life coaching experiences.

The coordinators of No Limits have plans to expand their reach. They would like to develop more satellite clubs across the county, deliver a parallel disabled adults club, run a summer programme and explore the possibilities of developing an Early Years version of the club which focuses on movement and play activities.

Source: British Universities and Colleges Sport *Disability models of good practice.*  
www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=16878&sectionTitle=Disability+Models+of+Good+Practice

Disability Sport Awareness: University of Central Lancashire

The University’s Disability Sports Project was established to raise awareness of disability sport and to show the barriers faced by participants. Able-bodied participants with disabled participants take part in everyday sports with small adaptations doing
activities such as wheelchair basketball, seated volleyball, boccia, goal ball, table tennis, wheelchair fencing and more.

As a model of good practice it identifies a target audience, links up with the University’s disability service and external disability organisations and clubs (external organisations helped with equipment, bringing participants, exit routes, volunteer opportunities) and plans sports that can be easily adapted for disabled students and also offer different challenges to able-bodied participants.

Source: British Universities and Colleges Sport *Disability models of good practice.*
[www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=16878&sectionTitle=Disability+Models+of+Good+Practice](www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=16878&sectionTitle=Disability+Models+of+Good+Practice)

Wheelchair Racing Academy: University of Warwick

The Academy provides opportunities for athletes of all abilities and experience, including students and the regional community and engages with student volunteers and the athletics club to support running of activities and awareness. Established in June 2011, the Academy has links to the local community via the Athletics Network. Athletes affiliate to the national governing body through Coventry Godiva Harriers and use the clubhouse facilities. Two of the parents volunteer to provide refreshments after training and in turn raise funds for the club.

To establish the group University of Warwick has provided free storage (on a temporary basis) and provides non-exclusive bookings on the track. Wheelchair athletes are allowed to park their cars within the athletics stadium to unload chairs and be directly track-side.

In the long term a dedicated Indoor Training Centre has been proposed for chair storage and indoor training during the winter or doe technical analysis. Almost £30k has been raised from local businesses, charities and private benefactors. One member of staff from Warwick’s Sport Team now supports sessions, alongside five student volunteers who attended a training day. 31 new athletes and coaches attended a subsequent ‘WCR Introduction Workshop’ hosted at the University. The Academy has also linked with Henley College to provide sports science testing during sessions and given a valuable insight to disability sport for students.

Source: British Universities and Colleges Sport *Disability models of good practice.*
[www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=16878&sectionTitle=Disability+Models+of+Good+Practice](www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=16878&sectionTitle=Disability+Models+of+Good+Practice)

Wheelchair Rugby: Southampton Solent University

Solent University has invested within the Paralympic Legacy of ‘Inspiring a generation’ by launching a new wheelchair rugby team. The team is supported by Solent University who have invested £44,000 to help purchase 12 bespoke wheelchair rugby chairs from Roma Medical, with the use of training facilities and ongoing support.

The Sharks were officially launched in March 2013 with a tryout and played a wheelchair rugby session for all spectators, followed by an exhibition of the game with the Team Solent Sharks playing against a GB team.
The team is formed of a development squad and an elite squad. The development squad focus on participation with the sport from a recreational view, involving players of all ages and has been designed to promote health and psychological benefits for all who play through mass participation. The elite team will play within the Super Series, which is a selection of national competitions run by GB Wheelchair Rugby.

Source: British Universities and Colleges Sport. Disability models of good practice. www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=16878&sectionTitle=Disability+Models+of+Good+Practice

Universities Disability Football Project: Football Association

The project is for universities nationally to develop their disability football provision in partnership with the Football Association. The FA would like to identify two or three universities in each of the FA’s eight regions to explore and deliver key opportunities for individuals with a disability. Through the deployment of dedicated FA Disability Talent Selection Consultants nationally, the FA would like to develop partnerships with institutions to generate the following provision/activity:

- Delivery of disability football related modules and courses within or as an addition to undergraduate sport related programmes of study (Talent Selection for Disability Football and Coaching Disabled, Blind and Deaf Footballers Workshops and Courses)
- Delivery of staff continuous professional development (disability talent selection focus)
- Delivery of Talent identification days (higher education ‘England Ready Days’)
- Development of ‘Just Play’ disability football centres
- Development of university disability football teams

Ultimately, the FA Talent Selection Consultants would act as ‘mentors’ for universities to develop and deliver provision. In some cases, the activities described above will be directly delivered by the Talent Selection Consultants whilst, for other initiatives, advice and guidance will simply be provided to steer and inform delivery. The FA Project has an agenda to educate individuals and to identify talented players with a disability. This said, the project will also enable the development of participation focused opportunities for the student population.

Source: British Universities and Colleges Sport. Disability models of good practice. www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=16878&sectionTitle=Disability+Models+of+Good+Practice

National Disability Provision: Scottish Football Association

Players with a Learning Disability

- 180,000 people in Scotland have a learning disability

Players with a learning disability are classified by age and gender and in Scotland by ability banding. There are a large number of footballers with a learning disability participating throughout Scotland. Scottish Disability Sport annually offers five and seven-a-side competitions for branch teams for players with a learning disability. These Scottish championship events are open class events and offer opportunities for
men, women and youths. At an international level, competition is organised through INAS-FID the international body for learning disability sport. World and European Championships are organised on a four-year cycle and INAS-FID are also the body responsible for International classifications. Opportunities for players with learning disabilities also exist through the Special Olympics movement. Competitions at UK and international level exist for five, seven and eleven a side versions of the game. Currently the Scottish FA in partnership with Scottish Disability Sport competes in the Home Nations Championships with an U19 Learning Disability National Squad.

**Players with Cerebral Palsy / Stroke / Acquired Brain Injury**

- 15,000 people enrolled on the Scottish Cerebral Palsy register

Players with Cerebral Palsy / Stroke / Acquired Brain Injury have the opportunity to access international football through the Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association (CP-ISRA). Players with cerebral palsy play a seven-a-side version of the game, utilising a smaller playing area and reduced sized goals. This football format is recognised by the International Paralympic Committee and also allows players to compete at International Level in CP-ISRA World and European Championships. A classification system exists for this section that recognises the variation in functional ability of players with cerebral palsy. With a seven-player team there has to be a balance of class representation on the field at any particular time. In Scotland, a national CP Football squad has been formed and a regular programme of coaching and competition opportunities are now in place.

**Players with Categorised Mental Health Conditions**

- 25% of adults in Scotland develop a mental health condition each year

Currently there are no specialised activities for players suffering with a Mental Health condition. Working in partnership with the NHS the Scottish FA will endeavour to encourage participants with Mental Health Conditions to participate in football related activities. Players can play any form of the game 5’s / 7’s / 11’s in a mainstream environment.

**Players who are Amputees**

Amputees play a seven-a-side version of the game with competition and classification organised by the international body, the World Amputee Football Federation. The rules of the amputee game dictate that no prosthetic limbs are permitted, with players using elbow crutches to manoeuvre throughout the field of play. Goalkeepers are upper limb amputees only.

**Players who are Wheelchair Users**

- 96,000 people require use of wheelchair in Scotland

Wheelchair users, have traditionally involved themselves in different forms of the game. More recently, football associations from across the world are working to provide a unified approach to wheelchair football, with the aim of creating increased international opportunities. The sport can be played by both electric and manual wheelchair users and offers players a unique opportunity to take part in football. The game is played both indoors and outdoors providing it is played on a hard, smooth, level surface for easy manoeuvrability of the chairs, using a standard size 5 or a larger
size 9 ball. Three types of the game are played, namely Wheelchair-football, Electro-football and Power-ball. Wheelchair-football and Electro-football use specially adapted devices that can collect the ball and can also shoot/pass, whereas Power-ball uses attachments mounted onto power-chairs, to push and manoeuvre the football. Development work is taking place to try to provide and develop opportunities for wheelchair football in Scotland.

**Players who are Hearing Impaired or Deaf**

- 500,000 under 60 with a form of hearing loss

The national and international programme for deaf players is well established. There is currently a development programme for deaf footballers in Scotland, which is delivered and managed by the Scottish Deaf Football Association (SDFA). The SDFA have their own league and cup structure that serves the deaf community in Scotland. International football is available through the British Deaf Football Association, European Deaf Sport Organisation and Deaflympics. Players who are deaf must have an average hearing loss of 55 decibels or lower in their good ear and are not permitted to wear a hearing aid on the field of play. Coach development initiatives have been established, allowing players with hearing impairments to attend courses using the services of an interpreter and access coach education resources.

**Players who are Visually Impaired or Blind**

- 38,000 people with a categorised visual impairment/blind

Blind and visually impaired players can now access the Paralympics through a modified five-a-side version of the game. There is also an international route through the British membership of the International Blind Sports Association (IBSA). One of the main differences in this game is the sound adaptation to identify the location of the ball. Players who take part in Blind Sport are classified according to their level of sight into B1, B2 and B3 categories. Players who are B1 classification are blind, players who are B2 and B3 classifications have visual impairments. Every squad consists of eight football players and two goalkeepers. During the course of a Blind Football five-a-side match five athletes play for each team: four are athletes of the B1 category with total vision impairment and the fifth athlete is the goalkeeper who is fully sighted. Players participating in the Visually Impaired football match must be classified as either a B2 or B3 athlete.

**Source:** Scottish Football Association  *Scotland united: Scottish football’s disability future 2012-2017.* SFA, 2013. Developed in partnership with Scottish Disability Sport.

Understanding the Barriers to Participation in Sport: EFDS

The beliefs and perceptions of the disabled people themselves and the attitudes of non-disabled people are the biggest barrier to participation.

Personal perceptions:
- Lack of confidence and self-belief prevent disabled people from even considering trying sport or physical activity
  - Attitudes often linked to bad experiences in past
- Lack of awareness of the opportunities and possibilities that exist
  - Can lead to disabled people believing there are unable to play sport

Attitudes of others:
- Lack of awareness of the opportunities for disabled people
  - And the changes and amends needed to allow them to participate
- Hide behind ‘health and safety’ as an excuse not to make changes

Improving communication channels and identifying key resources are critical to ensure the relevant information is available and accessible.

To improve communication…

Disabled people need:
- To be provided with information in a relevant and understandable format
  - Easy read / braille / audio / text messages
  - Appropriate messages and role models they can associate with
- To provide guidance and assistance in how to communicate when playing the sport
  - Adaptations that can be made (eg, signs) which will allow them to play in a team
- To know where to look for information

Non-disabled people need:
- To know what information is needed and in what format
  - Information must be obvious, clear and provided in the relevant format
- Be aware of communication barriers when playing sport
  - Work with disabled people to develop communication methods to incorporate disabled people in the team
- To know where to place the information

Source: Rankin, Mary-Anne. *Understanding the barriers to participation in sport. Views and opinions of active and non active disabled people.* English Federation of Disability Sport, 2012. 
http://www.efds.co.uk/assets/0000/3833/Understanding_the_barriers_to_participation_20120510.pdf