

PhD Studentship: Women's Health and Athletic Performance in Elite Cricket

Funding: The studentship is for three years (full-time) and provides a tax-free UKRI standard stipend (£20,780 per annum in 2024/2025), plus full tuition fees at the UK rate. Funding is available for home (UK) applicants only.

Start date: January 2025

Location: Based in Chelmsford with Essex Women's Cricket, in collaboration with England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and the University of Essex.

About Us

This PhD is a collaborative partnership between Essex Women's Cricket, the ECB and the University of Essex. Essex Women's Cricket is one of eight counties awarded Tier 1 status as part of the ECB's restructured women's domestic game, marking a major investment in professionalising the sport. As the primary women's team representing the East of England, Essex is at the forefront of delivering elite opportunities for female cricketers, supported by a strategic vision that spans grassroots engagement through to performance at the highest level. Based in Chelmsford, the team competes in national competitions including the T20 Blast and One-Day Cup and benefits from partnerships with the University of Essex and Essex Rebels to enhance athlete development.

The ECB is the national governing body for cricket in England and Wales, overseeing all levels of the game, including the England Women's national team. As part of its long-term commitment to transform women's cricket, the ECB is investing into the women's domestic structure. This PhD is part of that strategic investment, aiming to enhance knowledge around women's health and athletic performance in elite environments.

This embedded collaboration ensures the research is grounded in a live professional sporting environment, maximising its relevance and impact.

About the Project

Despite increased attention to female athlete welfare, gaps remain in how physiological and psychological aspects of the menstrual cycle are understood and integrated into training and performance strategies. This project aims to address these gaps by examining the complex interaction between menstrual phases, menstrual related symptoms, health and performance in applied cricket environments.

The successful student will work closely with practitioners at the ECB and Essex Women's Cricket to contribute to a growing evidence base that supports individualised, informed training and monitoring practices for female athletes. The project will include a mix of retrospective and prospective data collection and may involve athlete tracking, wellness monitoring, and training prescription in relation to women's health indicators. The role also provides scope to engage with Essex Women's Performance Services Team to enhance professional development alongside the research.

Academic supervision will be provided by Dr Emily Cushion and Dr Jamie Tallent at the University of Essex, alongside staff from ECB Women's Performance Pathway and Essex Women's Cricket.

Responsibilities

In addition to leading the research, the successful candidate will:

- Contribute to the implementation of applied research in a high-performance sporting environment.
- Support the monitoring and analysis of athlete wellness and performance data.
- Assist with training load tracking and the interpretation of performance trends.
- Liaise with coaching, medical, and science staff to integrate research findings into practice.
- Take advantage of opportunities to develop applied skills as part of Essex Women's Performance Services Team (e.g., physiotherapy, strength and conditioning, performance nutrition, lifestyle support).

Eligibility

Applicants should:

- Hold a Master's degree in sport and exercise sciences, physiotherapy, data science, or a related discipline.
- Possess strong data analytics skills, experience with R, Python, MATLAB or advanced Excel, with the ability to manage and analyse large datasets would be advantageous.
- Have experience handling quantitative data (e.g., performance or wellness monitoring).
- Ideally have some experience working within a performance environment.
- Be working towards or willing to work towards UKSCA accreditation would be beneficial.

How to Apply

Application deadline: 30th October 2025.

You can apply for this postgraduate research opportunity [here](#). **Please also ensure you email Dr Jamie Tallent to confirm you have applied (jamie.tallent@essex.ac.uk).**

Applications must include:

- A research proposal (max 600 words) outlining your ideas.
- A full CV.
- A cover letter.
- Academic transcripts for undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview early November 2025.

For an informal discussion, please contact Dr Emily Cushion: emily.cushion@essex.ac.uk or Dr Jamie Tallent: jamie.tallent@essex.ac.uk