

**Research Space**

Journal article

**BASES best kept secret – pedagogy accreditation**

**Burgess, K., Dray, K., Powell, S., Sadler, I. and Timmis, M.**

## **'BASES best kept secret – Pedagogy Accreditation'**

Dr Kath Burgess, Dr Katie Dray, Dr Sarah Powell, Dr Ian Sadler FBASES, and Dr Mat Timmis FBASES discuss their experiences applying for BASES pedagogy accreditation.

### **Introduction**

Whilst scientific support accreditation is likely the BASES accreditation route that most people are aware of, the pedagogy route to accreditation is much less popular. In fact, over the past three years, this has accounted for only 9-12% of accreditation applications and the success rate from these applications has fallen to approximately 40% in the most recent round. Given the number of BASES members who are based in Higher Education Institutions practising in pedagogical roles, these statistics are perhaps at odds with what one may expect given how well aligned the pedagogy route is with those currently 'practising' in higher education. As such, in this article, members of the BASES Education and Teaching Special Interest Group and the BASES Higher Education Advisory Group share their experiences of successful applications through the pedagogy route and highlight the importance of this route to accreditation.

Most people are probably aware of BASES accreditation via the sport science support category, but you can also become accredited based on research or pedagogy-based activity. The research and pedagogy categories seem to be less well understood, which is unsurprising as the BASES accreditation competencies are mainly written with sport science support in mind. Therefore, some greater level of interpretation of how these 10 competencies can be evidenced in these different contexts is needed.

The pedagogy category lends itself well to those providing education to athletes and/or students. There are many members who are working in higher education that this category lends itself particularly well to. At the heart of accreditation is the assurance that the individual is a safe, effective and independent practitioner within their category (support, pedagogy, research) and domain (biomechanics, physiology, psychology or inter-disciplinary) of expertise. However, for the pedagogy category, it is important to stress that accreditation goes beyond 'just' the delivery of taught sessions or modules to students on a degree programme. This article aims to raise awareness of this less well-known route to accreditation but also to clarify what pedagogy accreditation entails.

So what do we mean by going beyond being a lecturer in sport and exercise science? The purpose of the pedagogy accreditation route is to recognise the importance of learning and teaching in the sport and exercise sciences and to accredit those who lead and advance the development of effective strategies that support learners in our field. It might be helpful to consider your learning and teaching activity in terms of the value, reach and impact. The value refers to the benefit for the end user, but this needs to go beyond a single cohort of students. This might include how your expertise has brought value for other lecturers, the institution or sector practice, the clients the students may work with or employers. In terms of reach, this should go beyond your sessions or modules and could be programme, department, institution, cross-institution or professional body. For impact, can you evidence the difference your work and enhancement to practice has made upon sport and exercise science education.

With this in mind, to help applicants we have developed some guidance on the website that identifies 4 minimum expectations for pedagogy accreditation, how these relate to the accreditation competencies and some example activities for how it would be evidenced. This is summarised in table.

Table 1. Pedagogy related evidence for BASES accreditation

Minimum expectation	Link to BASES competencies	Example evidence
<b>1. Appropriate standing or esteem in relation to learning and teaching</b>	1, 5, 8, 9 & 10	PGCert; AHE Fellowship; External examiner; Internal or external committee membership; Research output in pedagogy.
<b>2. Involvement in the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching (SoLT)</b>	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 & 10	Pedagogy Conference attendance or presentation; Institutional learning and teaching enhancement projects; Research output related to learning and teaching; Action research in a specific aspect of learning and teaching; Research-Informed teaching.
<b>3. Leading or involvement in development of curriculum at a subject or programme level</b>	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9	Review and revalidation activity; CPD; BUES application; Knowledge exchange.
<b>4. Driving educational improvement at a subject, programme or departmental level</b>	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9	Analysis and evaluation of higher education-based data; Lead enhancement projects; Lead subject group or programme; Quality assurance/enhancement committee; Evaluation of pedagogic initiatives; 'Student voice' processes

In order to provide examples of pedagogy applications, the case studies below reflect a number of different approaches to accreditation (or reaccreditation) that have been achieved. They highlight the types of activities that have been used as part of the application process but also how each member has come to the decision that pedagogy is an appropriate category of professional practice that reflects their work.

#### **Sarah Powell: BASES Accreditation in Pedagogy and Interdisciplinary**

After launch of our BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise Science in 2018 I felt achieving BASES Undergraduate Endorsement (BUES) was an important marker of quality. I received staff development funding in 2021 for academic staff to apply for the individual accreditation required for the BUES application. I had recently received my fellowship of Advance HE and was preparing an application for senior fellowship. This was a perfect time to pool my efforts and complete BASES accreditation and senior fellowship applications in tandem.

I found preparing the application a large and lengthy task but felt I could meet the areas of competence with my experience. I have been involved in the design evolution of the degree programme, designed

and led five modules, undertaken the Director of Outreach and Director of Part One Studies, as well as membership of education related committees at departmental, faculty and institution level. I am an external examiner, programme consultant and have roles with BASES Outreach Project Group, HE Endorsement Advisory Group, and the Education and Teaching SIG.

I focused the case study on the creation of a novel and innovative compulsory L6 module in Science Communication and Public Engagement. This was a relatively small-scale education project, but an award-winning one with a systematic approach, a deep level of underpinning pedagogical theory, several years of research data and analysis, impacts on cross-faculty provision and outputs presented at national conferences.

My biggest challenge completing the application form was ensuring I could evidence my claims, specifically evidencing the knowledge accrued during my non-BUES undergraduate degree and mapping my Masters in Educational Leadership and Management.

Top tip: Be efficient. If you are seeking recognition for your leadership in pedagogy prepare your applications to Advance HE and BASES in tandem.

### **Mat Timmis – Initially accredited in Pedagogy and reaccredited in Pedagogy**

I've always understood pedagogy accreditation as something which recognises those who evidence their passion and commitment to advancing learning and teaching practices within our subject, going beyond their immediate teaching practice.

For me, the opportunity to lead the development of an innovative blended learning degree, working with industry and institutional stakeholders was the start of my journey to pedagogy accreditation. Additionally, gaining responsibility within my Department for teaching and learning, enabled me to demonstrate evidence of leading and supporting others in developing the Sport and Exercise Sciences curriculum.

I am fortunate that my institution actively supports the scholarship of learning and teaching through offering small pots of funding. Through accessing this funding, I was able to work with colleagues to undertake pedagogic research which resulted in sustained changes in our course design. The research was subsequently presented at various learning and teaching conferences and added valuable evidence to meeting the pedagogy accreditation criteria.

These previously highlighted experiences formed a substantive part of my successful Senior Fellowship application to Advance HE and (for me) being recognised through Advance HE provided the final piece in the jigsaw to have sufficient confidence in applying for Pedagogy accreditation.

My role has evolved since initial accreditation. For re-accreditation, I drew on my wider institutional and sector facing learning and teaching roles, however, still ensured that I translated my work to the benefit / impact of the Sport and Exercise Sciences subject.

Top Tip; Keep a file for 'evidence'. Whenever someone recognises your work/efforts or data evidences you are making an impact, capture it and keep it safe – it saves you hunting for this evidence as your accreditation deadline looms!

### **Katie Dray - Pedagogy Re-Accreditation (switch in category of professional practice).**

My original accreditation in the previous cycle was in the discipline of psychology and the category of support. However, during the 5 years that followed, like lots of academics, I experienced a significant shift in my role. It became harder to seek support to maintain the 150 hours per year of support-based practice as my institution reshaped and altered its approach to consultancy work. In a concurrent shift, my career goals around establishing my expertise within the learning and teaching space became more prominent as I began to undertake more roles with responsibility for enhancing the effectiveness of learning and teaching strategies in my own course and further afield in my school and faculty environments.

There were a number of activities in the reaccreditation period that were important in accruing the experiences required for a shift in my category of professional practice from support to pedagogy. Taking on the director role for my course allowed me to engage more fully with the quality assurance processes required to develop and implement effective learning experiences for my students. It also allowed me to lead on a number of scholarly projects I wanted to trial, and to monitor their impact on the student experience. I was able to share these projects more widely within, and outside of my own institution through publications and conference presentations that I was able to cite in my application. During this period, I was also active in seeking to make external connections, taking up external examining opportunities and joining committees and groups that were learning and teaching focused, which has allowed me to contribute to published outputs with a view to increasing my 'standing'.

My pro-active approach to CPD was also helpful in securing accreditation for this category, being able to demonstrate a commitment to enhancing my skills in learning and teaching specifically. During this period, I also applied for Senior Fellow status with Advance HE and found I was able to translate much of the material I had used to meet those criteria to making my BASES reaccreditation application.

Top Tip; Utilise peers and other accredited individuals to find out more about how you can use your experiences in an application.

### **Kath Burgess Pedagogy (Interdisciplinary) Accreditation as an initial submission**

I was looking for recognition outside my own institution to evidence and enhance career development. Having recently become a Senior Fellow with Advance HE I realised a lot of criteria for BASES Pedagogic accreditation were similar and I personally saw immense value in the discipline specific nature of this pedagogic accreditation. In addition, having BASES accredited staff is beneficial when making applications to BASES for course endorsement. When deciding to make my application I was in the position where through my 15 years working in Higher Education, I had the experience required to meet the accreditation criteria, but this needed to be documented and evidenced. I had the benefit of recently being through senior fellow accreditation, and as part of this, I had undertaken a useful exercise where I created a timeline of my career. From my very first teaching job to present I outlined everything I had done, all the different modules I had taught, modules/courses I'd created, additional roles I had had, projects I'd been involved with, people I had mentored publications I had authored etc., literally everything I could think of. This in itself was a cathartic and rewarding exercise reflecting on my career. Once I had this timeline I reviewed each of its elements and how I could both evidence doing them and

also evidence the impact my work had made. Essentially what I had made was the bones of the supporting evidence for the competency profile. The next step I took was grouping elements of my timeline such as bringing all my work on course design together, so the outline was no longer a timeline of my career but an overview of my experience and achievements. Once I had this document, I took the BASES accreditation competency profile and worked through each section of the table referencing where in the evidence portfolio I had created each area of competence could be evidence. I was in the fortunate position that my experience covered all of the areas of competence required. However, if this had not been the case this method would have identified for me the areas I was lacking in and so enabled me to target my professional development in these areas. Moving forward, I have continued to update my career timeline in real time, this way when it comes to reaccreditation, I will already have gathered all the information and evidence required for it.

Top tip: Take time to think about everything you have done and achieved before then seeing how it aligns to the criteria. You often produce more evidence this way, rather than trying to think of examples that fit specific criteria.

## **Conclusion**

As can be seen from the case studies in the article, there is no single route to pedagogy accreditation and it tends to vary considerably. For some, it is their first direct application for accreditation after a number of years as a higher education teacher. For others, it is a shift of category, often from support, to pedagogy as their career develops and they take on different roles in learning and teaching leadership or management. If you are interested in applying or want to know more information, go to the BASES Accreditation webpage. [Insert Link]

Benefits of accreditation in the pedagogy route can include:

- Utilisation of existing or complementary evidence based on taking on a new role
- Possibility of a dual application for other recognition such as senior fellow of AdvanceHE or internal/national teaching fellowship schemes
- Allow an institution to apply for or maintain BASES undergraduate endorsement for their programme
- Acknowledge expertise in supporting the next generation of sport and exercise scientists to learn the subject
- Increase the likelihood of taking up roles and joining groups within BASES such as the HE Endorsement Advisory group or the Education & Teaching SIG

Pedagogy accreditation is not a common application route, which is not in line with the proportion of the membership who work in a sport and exercise science education context. Pedagogy accreditation applications have only accounted for 9-12% of the total applications over the last three years. Also, over the last three years, the success rate of pedagogy applications has been falling and last year was 40%. We hope that this article will increase the number of applications but also help more that do submit to be successful.

## **Head Shot and Bios**

Katherine Burgess

Katherine is a lecturer in Sports and Exercise Science at Robert Gordon University, a BASES accredited Sports and Exercise Scientist (Interdisciplinary Pedagogy) and Senior Fellow of Advance HE.

Katie Dray

Katie is the Course Director for BSc Sports Coaching at Canterbury Christ Church University, a BASES accredited Sport and Exercise Scientist, and a Senior Fellow of Advance HE.

Sarah Powell

Sarah is the director of part 1 studies and curriculum transformation lead for Sports and Exercise Science at Lancaster Medical School, Lancaster University. Sarah is a BASES accredited Sports and Exercise Scientist and Senior Fellow of Advance HE.

Ian Sadler

Ian is a Reader and Subject Head in Sport and Exercise Education at Liverpool John Moores University. He is a BASES Accredited Sport and Exercise Scientist, BASES Fellow, and a Senior Fellow of Advance HE. He Co-Chairs the HE Endorsement Advisory Group.

Dr Mat Timmis FBASES

Mat is the Director of Student Outcomes in the Faculty of Science and Engineering at Anglia Ruskin University. Mat is a BASES Accredited Sport and Exercise Scientist, a BASES Fellow, and a Principal Fellow of Advance HE. He Co-Chairs the HE Endorsement Advisory Group.