



British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS)

Research Tender – May 2021

Race and Equality Research

Introduction

British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) is the national governing body for higher education (HE) sport in the UK, a membership organisation, and a company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

In response to demand from our 165 member institutions, BUCS delivery covers a broad spectrum of projects, programmes and services. With areas such as physical activity and wellbeing, inter-university competition, and professional and workforce development, to name a few.

If we hope to achieve equality of access to our portfolio of opportunities, then it is important that both BUCS and the HE sector fully understand the potential barriers that can prohibit students from engaging with such services. Thus, this research aims to identify recommendations that will help establish a truly inclusive approach to the development of physical activity programmes for BUCS and its members.

Overview

Sport England's Active Lives Survey (October 2020) reported that pre-pandemic White British adults were the only ethnic group showing a steady increase in recorded activity levels (with activity defined as achieving 150+ minutes of activity a week through a blend of activities). Meaning that a gap in recorded activity levels was widening between White British and other ethnic groups. Furthermore, the report also highlights that although all ethnic groups were impacted, the pandemic has had a disproportionately negative impact on the recorded activity levels of adults from Asian (excluding Chinese) and Black backgrounds.

The priority focus of this research is to understand the impact of the pandemic on the current activity levels of students from all ethnic backgrounds except White British, and compare them to those from White British backgrounds to identify opportunities to reverse this impact across the higher education sector.

Prior to the emergence of Covid-19, the British Active Student Survey (BASS) 2019-20 also reported that levels of physical activity related wellbeing may differ by ethnicity. BUCS would like to further investigate students' perceptions of barriers, enablers, and motivations to changing their behaviour in physical activity participation; where motivation is a proximal determinant of behaviour, and increasing motivation is essential to most health behaviour change interventions (Knittle et al 2018).

The aim of this research is to identify recommendations and best practice in engaging students from different ethnicities within the higher education landscape. It is hoped that the outputs can then be used by BUCS, its network of member institutions (practitioners), and the wider sector to better engage students from all communities and provide insight into developing an inclusive approach to physical activity programmes.

In summary, the suggested research will aim to:

- Explore the current levels of physical activity participation from students from all ethnic backgrounds except White British, to be compared with those from White British backgrounds
- Understand the physical activity experiences of students from diverse ethnic backgrounds, to understand their perceptions of barriers and enablers to participation.
- Identify and understand key motivations of the identified students to participate in physical activity.
- Set out the recommendations for sector wide practice and future research – including recommendations for improving language use in reference to equality, diversity and inclusion within higher education.

Delivery Expectations

We would expect the successful applicant to provide and present the following information to BUCS on completion of the research:

- A final report prior to academic publication of research outcomes (e.g. in peer reviewed journals).
- Findings for each of the research aims to be clearly presented in the final report.
- Creation of a 'tool-kit' that can be shared with practitioners across the sector.
- Recommendations based on research outcomes.
- Presentation to the BUCS Executive and/or the BUCS Board.
- A concise summation of all data and findings that can be presented within infographics.
- Access to all raw data.

Proposal Requirements

If you are interested in undertaking this research, then please submit a proposal (2000 words maximum) outlining answers to all of the queries below:

- Proposed methodology of how you will conduct the research.
- How you will engage with research participants.
- How you will ensure high levels of responses.
- A brief synopsis of your research team including experience and past projects where applicable.
- A breakdown of costs and associated fees to areas of the research.
- A timeline of completion.
- How you will interact with BUCS to ensure successful project.

Proposal Submission

Proposals should be emailed to Mark.Brennan@bucs.org.uk by **23:59 on Monday 28 June**.

Shortlisted proposals will then be invited to meet with the BUCS Executive week commencing Monday 12 July.