DLS Department of Life Sciences
www.aber.ac.uk/en/life-sciences/

Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences
Newsletter 2025

List of Courses

BSc
- Sport & Exercise Science
- Health Science (Nutrition and Exercise)

MBiol
- Biology

Interested?
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Your lecturers are dedicated to promoting your career readiness. In this issue, we explore various ways we prepare you for an exciting career. Even if you're unsure about your future path (which is common), read the stories to see how we aim to inspire you to learn, engage, and succeed.

Dive in and discover how we support your journey towards a fulfilling career!

Support the new commercial sport performance and health testing service

Your lecturers are launching a new commercial branch for sport and health testing and assessments. Using top-notch equipment like breath-by-breath gas analysers, 3D motion capture, and DXA scanners, these services are spread across seven rooms.

While this is a professional service led by your expert lecturers, students can also benefit by supporting the assessments. This hands-on experience allows you to see how the equipment used in practicals is applied in real-world scenarios. Jo will lead the body composition assessments using the medical-grade DXA scanner to measure fat mass, muscle mass distribution, and bone health.

The website lists all available services at competitive prices, giving locals in Ceredigion access to tests usually only available in South Wales or England.

Jo explains: “Body mass and BMI have limitations in measuring health. You might start exercising expecting to lose weight, but that might not happen. This can be discouraging. However, if you measure muscle mass and fat mass, you might see fat decreasing and muscle increasing. It might not show as a change in body mass, but it’s a positive health change.”

You can help out with our testing, but you can also book one if you like one!

Make use of local volunteering opportunities

Local sports teams offer excellent chances to students to apply sport and exercise science into the real world, as well as creating connections and further learning. Harry and Matifadza are two students who have recently taken up this opportunity. They are helping the performance analysis and shadowing the physio-therapy team with Clwb Rygbi Aberystwyth RFC. Other opportunities are typically with Aberystwyth Town Football club, and via the Ceredigion Actif team.

Student using the software provided by the rugby club to enable match performance analysis.

Practical skills assessment in consultancy work: a year 3 module

In Years 1 and 2, you'll engage in real-world assessments, including case studies, data processing, presentations, and video creation. In Year 3, the assessment becomes more complex and offers more choices. You can showcase any practical skill you want to develop, from using advanced equipment to mastering software. This assessment is real-world, inclusive, and a great example of active and collaborative learning.

Video screenshot by a student who developed a guide to using the Biodex for physiotherapists.

Marco, who led this module last year, shared his experience: “It was great to see students taking charge of their projects. Some chose to showcase complex equipment like the Biodex, 3D motion capture, blood sampling, or EMG. Others explored new areas, using software I hadn't seen before, aligning with their ambitions as data analysts or researchers. We supported the students but let them drive their projects. It was amazing to see their growth compared to Year 1. I still contributed by providing problem-solving tips and helping them showcase their skills in the 30-minute assessment. The first run went really well. The marks reflected the quality of work, and those who took on ambitious projects showed significant progress.”

Ask your lecturers if they have ongoing research that you can get involved in

Your lecturers are not just teachers—they’re also researchers, who focus on the role diet, nutrition, physical activity, and strength and conditioning across a range of populations.

If you're interested in topics like diabetes (Rhys), stroke (Federico), menopause (Jo), older adults and active travel (Marco), or nutrition (Amanda), you can get involved! Here are some exciting projects:

- Jo: Recently applied for a £1.2 million grant for a research project on exercise and menopause.
- Marco: Applied for a £1.1 million grant to study active travel behaviour.

Both projects, if funded, will start in 2026 and involve collaborators from other Welsh universities.

A research project on exercise in Parkinson’s Disease patients was supported by Rhian George, who is now an NHS physiotherapist.

More current, ongoing projects involve:

- Marco: MPhil project on electromyography,
- Federico: Projects on mobile phone apps, cognition, and gait analysis,
- Future Food Research: Opportunities around nutrition and diet.
- Then, for Year 3 students, ask your lecturers about the 'AberForward' scheme. This program, if the project is approved, would offer 4 weeks of paid work on a pre-defined project after the exam period. It's a great way to gain hands-on experience!