



**North West Universities Association
in association with
British Universities and Colleges Sport**

**Higher Level Sport
Volunteering & Coaching Skills
in the North West
Higher Education Sector**

Audit Results

September 2009

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North West Universities Association

Higher Level Sport Volunteering & Coaching Skills in the NW Higher Education Sector – Audit Results

September 2009

Introduction

This report presents results from the North West Universities Association (NWUA) and British Universities and Colleges Sport Volunteering & Coaching Skills Questionnaire. The questionnaire was jointly developed by NWUA and the BUCS North West Workforce Development Advisory Group to establish a baseline picture of current HE volunteering activity and coaching provision within the region, respectively. Although initially two separate exercises, to avoid confusion and duplication of effort, NWUA and BUCS NW merged the volunteering and coaching questionnaires and distributed them as one audit.

The report is split into two elements:

Section A – Sport Volunteering

In July 2008 the NWUA commenced the first phase (1 year) of the *Enhancing Higher Level Sport Volunteering & Coaching Skills* project. This HEFCE funded initiative is aligned to the regional priorities set out in *Be Inspired, the 2012 Regional Legacy Framework for the North West*. The initial phase aims to undertake research to ascertain the viability of developing and delivering demand-led higher level skills provision in this area, and to explore the possibility of developing a HE database with the aim of maximising the co-ordination and utilisation of student sport volunteers.

The volunteering element of the questionnaire was developed as part of this project with the aim of establishing a regional view of sports volunteering activities and initiatives operating across North West universities with an emphasis on understanding the:

- Scale and nature of sports volunteering programmes and how these are funded and supported
- Institutional and student drivers of participation
- Operating arrangements
- Training provision to support volunteering
- Recording and monitoring of volunteering placements and the potential benefits of developing a regional dimension to these

Section B – Coaching

The British Universities and Colleges Sport North West (BUCS NW) Workforce Development Advisory Group developed the coaching section of the questionnaire. The BUCS NW Workforce Development Advisory Group was formed following the University & College Sport (UCS) conference held in January 2008, and has since grown to be a strong network of sport professionals working with the aim of developing and promoting coaching, officiating and sports volunteering within Higher Education and Further Education in the North West.

Following the release of The UK Coaching Framework in 2006 (the 3-7-11 year action plan for coaching), the group felt the most appropriate action would be to develop an audit in partnership with Sports Coach UK to identify the current provision within HEI's in the North West region. This would not only provide the group with a baseline picture of the current coaching provision and delivery system for coaching in HEI's across the North West, but also help identify any common areas of support required where we can work with sports coach UK and other partners to develop this network further.

Both sections will inform the future development of the NWUA Enhancing Higher Level Sport Volunteering & Coaching Skills project.

Results

The questionnaire was distributed to the lead contacts that have been nominated by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for the NWUA Enhancing Higher Level Sport Volunteering & Coaching Skills project. Twelve (of fourteen) HEIs received the questionnaire with a four-week window given for completion. The Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) and The Open University did not receive the questionnaire as it would be inappropriate for these two institutions to respond due to the nature of their provision. A total of ten HEIs completed and returned the questionnaire, meaning the completion rate was over 80%.

Please note that when referring to HEI percentages/numbers during this report, only the ten responding HEIs are taken into account to establish these figures.

Section A: Sport Volunteering

HEI Perspective

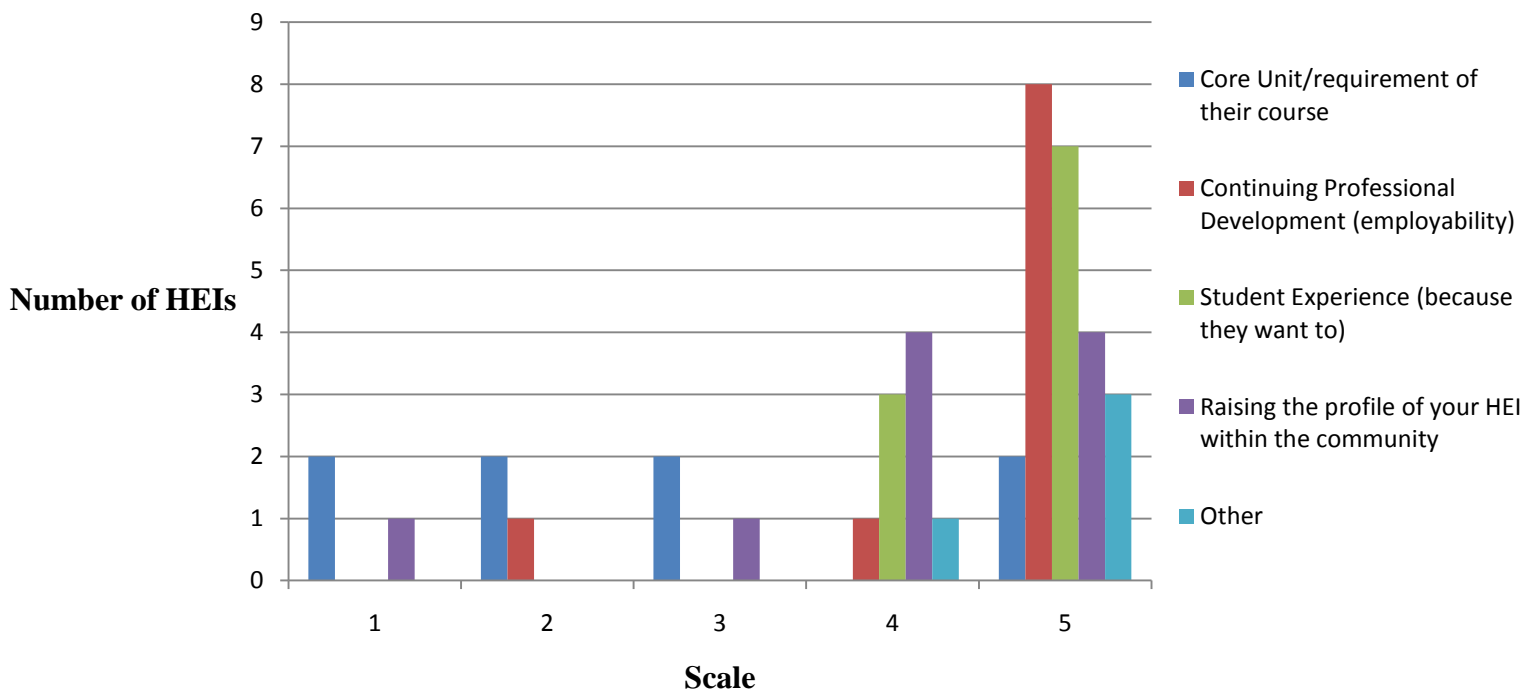
The HEI Perspective provides an insight into what volunteering programmes HEIs run, how these programme are funded and what they consider (and don't consider) to be important motivations / reasons to operate and support students in volunteering activities.

The results indicated that 90% of HEIs have a volunteering programme of some description (not necessarily sport related) and have a designated / paid employee to manage volunteers who participate in these programmes. 80% indicated that a **sports specific** employee to support volunteering would or already does add value to their HEI. 60% have a volunteering programme that is solely dedicated to sport.

HEIs were asked to rate the main motivation / reasons for operating sport volunteering activities on a scale of 1-5 (1 represented little importance and 5 represented extremely high importance). 80% indicated that 'Continuing Professional Development (employability)' is an extremely important factor, whilst 70% stated that 'Student Experience (because they want to)' was extremely important. 30% indicated that 'other' reasons that weren't listed were extremely important, which included "working in true partnership with local agencies and organisations" and "To enable sports clubs to provide organised activities and competition". Figure 1 below details the full response.

Figure 1

What main motivations/reasons for HEIs to operate and/or support students participating in sports volunteering activities (on a scale of 1-5)



HEIs were asked to provide information regarding how their sport volunteer programmes are funded. **80% indicated that their sport volunteer programmes are either part or wholly funded from internal sources**, however, the detail of what ‘internal’ represents varies quite considerable. 40% of HEIs specified that internal funding is provided via what can be categorised as ‘central budget’, although slightly different responses make up this label. These include “central funds for employability”, “funding comes from the Students Union central budget” and “the role in Careers is centrally funded by the University”. HEIs that receive funding from external sources indicated that this is provided by the Sport England Community Investment Fund (CIF), County Sports Partnerships (CSPs), the Higher Education Funding Council for England’s (HEFCE) Active Community Fund, Local Authorities and V funding. One HEI does not receive any funding for sport volunteering programmes; however certain courses (first aid) are provided free of charge by tutors.

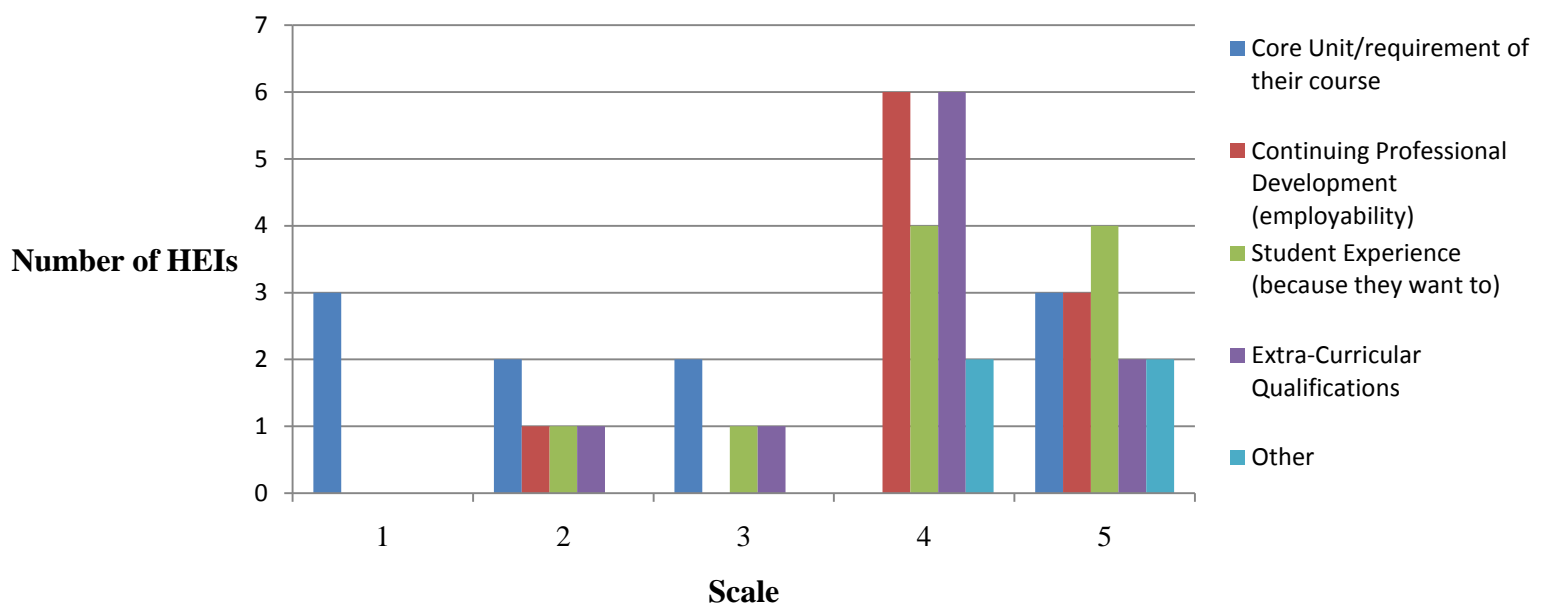
Finally in the HEI perspective sub-section institutions were asked if they monitor volunteering activities that students have been involved with prior to higher education, **80% don’t monitor previous activity**. The two HEIs that do monitor previous activity do it by “completion of a proforma during Fresher’s Week, SiS and club coaching” and “including it in the development of CVs and in preparation for Vocational Practice modules within under graduate programmes”.

Student Motivation

60% of HEIs indicated that they consider ‘**Continual Professional Development (employability)**’ and achieving ‘**Extra-Curricular Qualifications**’ to be important motivations for their students to participate in sport volunteering activities (although not necessarily the same HEIs). ‘**Student Experience (because they want to)**’ can be considered to be the most important motivation because 90% of HEIs either selected 4 or 5 on the scale of importance detailed in Figure 2 below. ‘Other’ on scale 4 represents “to give something back to their local community” and “Develop vocational skills and gain work-based experiences”, whilst on scale 5 it represents “Citizenship” and “to enable activities to take place”.

Figure 2

What HEIs consider to be the main motivations / reasons for students participating in sport volunteering activities (on a scale of 1-5)



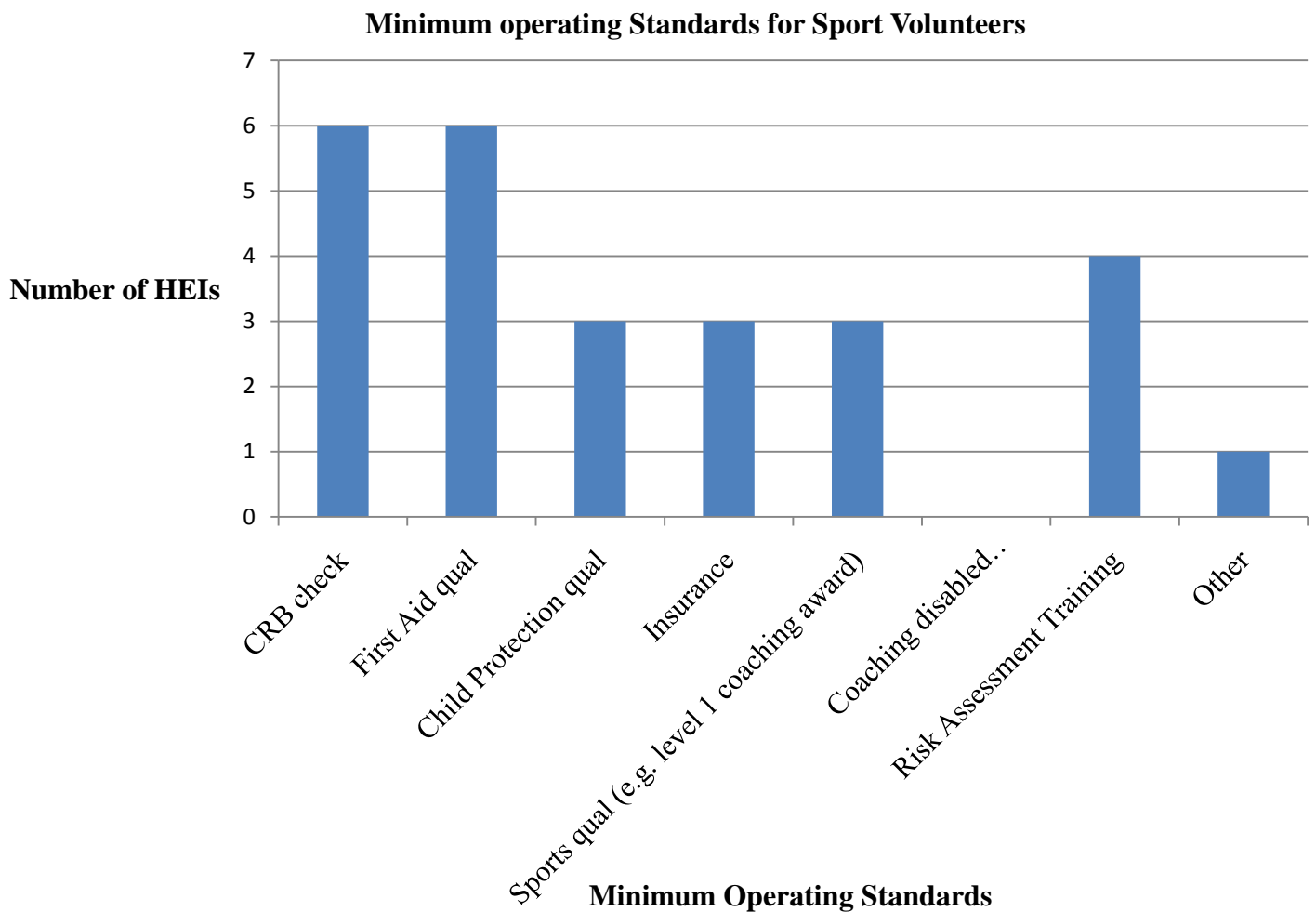
It can be argued that **students can also be encouraged to volunteer in sports activities if they are entitled to claim expenses for travel and refreshments**. 60% of HEIs do offer students expenses when they volunteer in sports related activities. A number of HEIs indicated that the policy for claiming expenses varies considerably depending on which department/project a student is working with in their HEI, therefore a student is not always permitted to claim expenses. This is also the case with external organisations that are sometimes unable to offer expenses, whilst others offer a set amount for transportation. All the institutions (including via external organisations) that do provide a chance for students to claim expenses report that this option is not always taken up by the student. The reasons for this are due to students not being aware they can claim, students forgetting and students feeling that “paying their own way is part of the experience”.

50% of HEIs do not monitor participation rates for sport related volunteering. All HEIs that record participation rates do so as part of their sport volunteering programmes / projects. One HEI indicated that they only record information from external projects, whilst one indicated that they only record information from internal volunteering. Others indicated that they keep records “on an individual basis within the Centre for Volunteering and Community Action” and “volunteers submit their hours on a volunteering log through an ad-hoc basis”. Two HEIs suggested that the information they collect is not meaningful. One of these HEIs, while stating they do record participation rates, indicated that their data lacks depth (i.e. the project hasn’t been running long enough). The other HEI in question stated that they don’t monitor participation rates, explaining that whilst technically they do record data, the fact they don’t monitor individual sports - only sport in general - means that it does not generate meaningful knowledge.

Operating Details

CRB checks and First Aid Qualifications are the most common Minimum Operating Standards for sport volunteers within North West HEIs, whilst Risk Assessment Training is also an important requirement for a number of HEIs. However, only 30% of HEIs request insurance (although one HEI provides insurance if Risk Assessment Training has been completed) before allowing a student to volunteer in sport and 0% require any training or qualifications for disabled participants. Full results for Minimum Operating Standards can be seen in Figure 3. ‘Other’ in this case represents “Not all volunteering is coaching related so the Sports Coach UK-type minimum standards are not always appropriate and need to be tailored to the situation”.

Figure 3



In the North West 40% of HEIs have Minimum Operating Standards for internal volunteering activities / placements, whilst 50% have them for external activities / placements.

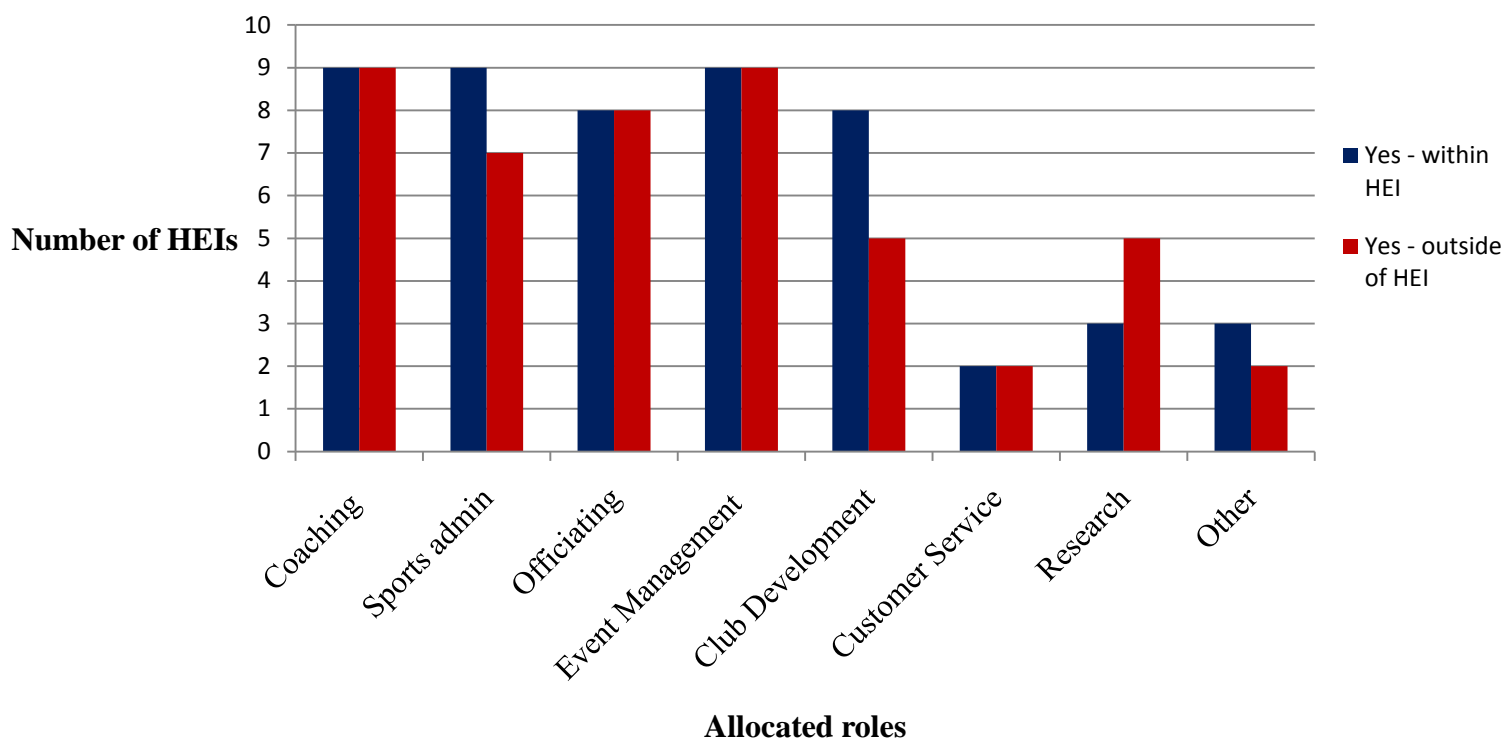
A number of HEIs provided an explanation as to why they don't request certain or all Minimum Operating Standards, and in one case why they felt they couldn't respond to the question. Comments include:

- The above are the responsibility of the organisations the volunteers are working with - volunteers are advised that they must ensure the relevant are in place before they work with an organisation
- Volunteers have club officer training and first aid qualifications are offered to the clubs, however this is not mandatory
- CRB and Child protection are not relevant because everyone is over 18. Sports Volunteers are elected and then upskilled where necessary to meet the required standards. All sports volunteers are required to be members of the Students Union. Where appropriate, first aid qualifications are required, however this is not for all volunteers
- Sport qualification may be required if voluntary post has a coaching element
- It is impossible to answer this meaningfully as we only broker sports volunteering and therefore the minimum requirements vary. Within the students union it varies from society to society

Students are allocated (or they choose) many different types of roles when participating in sports volunteering. 90% of HEIs provide opportunities for volunteers to be involved with Coaching and Event Management, both within their institution and with external organisations. 90% allocate roles within their institution to Sports Administration, whilst it is offered externally by 70%. Customer Service and Research represent areas where engagement is particularly low, especially internally. Figure 4 shows a full graph of roles allocated. 'Other' for activities within the HEI represents "Promotion and recruiting", "Performance Profiling; Fitness Assessment & Prescription"; whilst for activities outside the HEI 'other' represents "Students are placed based on their interest and the needs of the host HEI" and "marketing".

Figure 4

Roles allocated to sports volunteers (includes students finding their own activities)



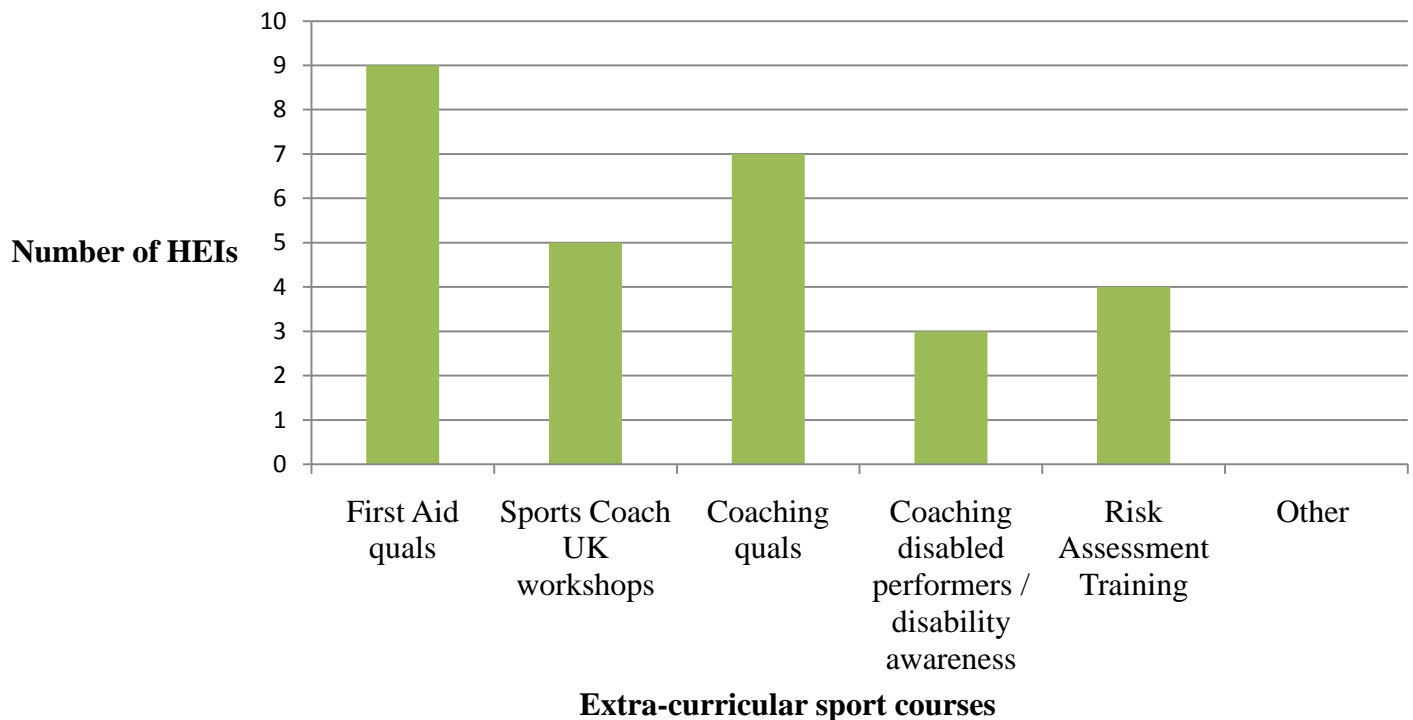
All responding HEIs indicated interest and willingness towards implementing a **regional accreditation** for HEI volunteer programmes.

Training Provision

HEIs provide a number of extra-curricular sport courses that supply students with skills and experience that are likely to enhance their employability. 90% of HEIs provide First Aid qualifications, whilst 70% provide opportunities for students to complete a coaching qualification. See figure 5 below for more detail.

Figure 5

Extra-curricular sport courses offered by HEIs



90% of HEIs also provide courses / training specifically to support and equip students to undertake sport volunteering placements. Most HEIs indicated that they fund such placements using the “Central Student Union budget” or “central funds”. Others go into more detail identifying funding from sport volunteering projects, which include funding from Sport England and the university in question.

Only a small number (30%) of HEIs provide courses that allow students to gain qualifications and experience that will be beneficial when working or volunteering in deprived areas, such as Chartstage or Community Sport Leaders. Two institutions that offer these courses provide subsidies for volunteers, whilst the other requires students to pay for the whole course because they don’t receive funding. One HEI stated that these courses “are not offered as part of the Minimum Operating Standards but will be subsidised if a volunteer on the sport volunteering scheme wishes to attend one”, whilst the other stated that “the University Sport & Recreation Services provides a range of NGB, SCUk, and MOS courses throughout the academic year - these are often subsidised but not incorporated into academic programmes for funding reasons”.

Systems and Tracking

Only 40% of HEIs use a system / database to log, manage and promote sport volunteering opportunities either within the HEI or the wider community. Each HEI that does have a system / database has a different method. Their methods include using:

- An Internal database

- An online database (via Careers Service) - allowing students to register and view opportunities on line through a department website
- Email – a registered group can be sent information on opportunities
- Logbooks – information is collected by sport volunteering project leads
- Spreadsheets – appropriate data is recorded

Additionally one HEI indicated that for promotion only, they use the Students Union, their intranet and degree courses.

As detailed earlier in the report, the majority of HEIs don't monitor volunteering activities that students have been involved with prior to higher education. This is also the case with 'tracking' volunteers after they leave an institution - only 10% of HEIs have a sport specific information system / process to track volunteers in the community. The only HEI that does have such a system / process uses their Centre for Volunteerism and Community Action to verify and log hours, with information being recorded via an Excel spreadsheet.

Specifically referring to students that have participated in sport volunteering programmes, only 20% track the '1st occupation / destination' of graduates. The two HEIs that do this use "graduate exit-questionnaires" and the "Destination of Leavers in Higher Education Survey (DLHE)". The latter in theory should be a source of information to all HEIs because it is mandatory for every university in the UK to conduct this survey, which asks recent graduates 'what they are doing' on a yearly basis.

The relevant HEIs that do track the '1st occupation / destination' of sport volunteer graduates found that they largely go into the fields of professional / semi professional sport, sport and active leisure (e.g. sport development officer), uniformed services, teaching, and the fitness industry. Additionally many students go on to undertake further study, such as a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) or Masters.

HEIs were asked to provide a list of critical components that should be included in a regional dimension to recording, monitoring and facilitating student sport volunteering placements if one were to be created. The most common responses recommended any system / tool should:

- Record/track number of hours volunteered
- Identify previous training/experience in sport volunteering
- Cross reference volunteers against qualifications
- Track students after they leave HE to establish what they are now doing (employment) and if they are still volunteering in sport
- Identify and track quality placements
- Provide easy access for students to log their qualifications/experience via an online CV
- Align with current external systems

It must be noted that it could prove difficult to implement a regional system to record, monitor and facilitate student sport placements. 50% of HEIs believe that they would have problems using such a system. The major areas for concern shown by HEIs are:

- **Keeping information up to date** – data input would need to be managed and verified (i.e. check what students are inputting is correct)
- **Staff / resource (cost/time)** – there would be a lack of resources to co-ordinate volunteer opportunities in local communities and subsidies would be required to train volunteers
- **Duplication of existing systems** (e.g. CSP activity around CoachWeb and internal systems)

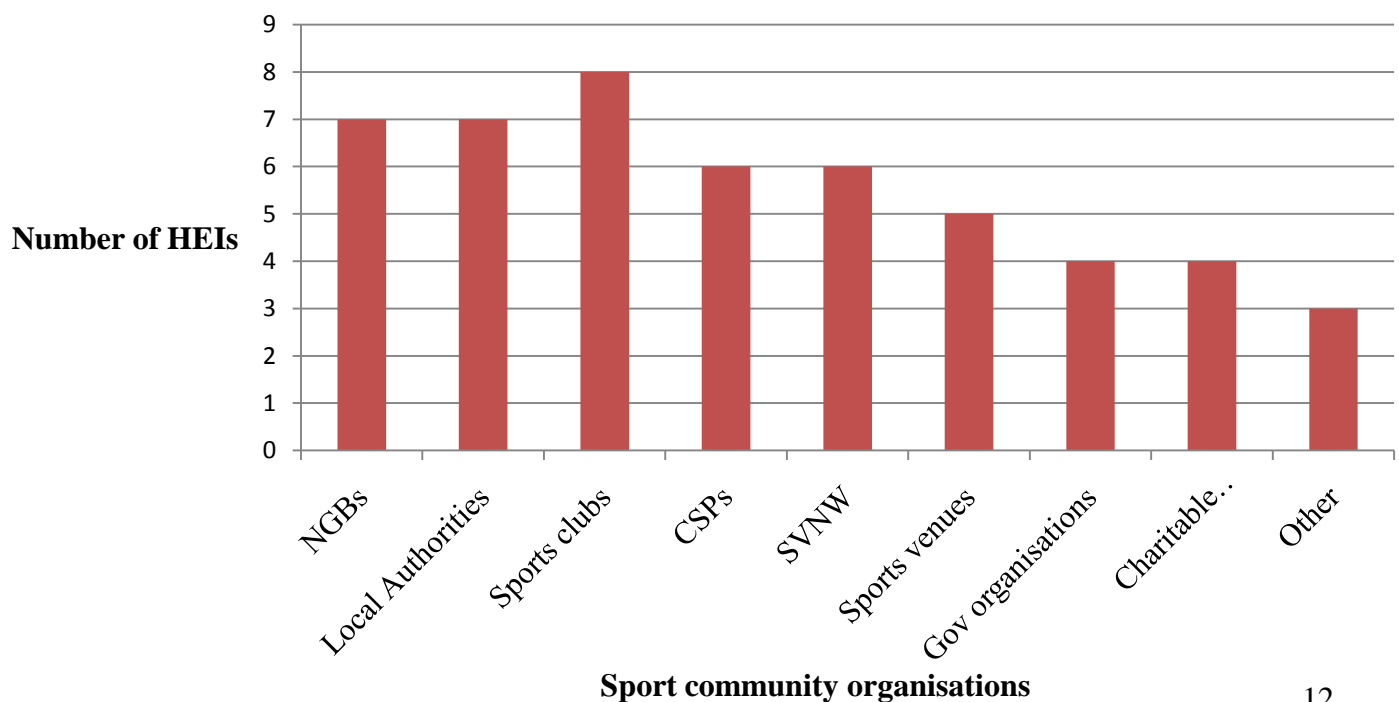
Sport Community Engagement

North West HEIs engage with a variety of sport community organisations to provide sport volunteering opportunities for students and staff. 80% work with sports clubs, whilst 70% work with National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and Local Authorities to provide sport volunteering. Only 60% of HEIs engage with County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) regarding sport volunteering. This is perhaps surprising based on the fact that four out of the five CSPs in the North West now have access to the CoachWeb software. CoachWeb, developed by Byng Systems, is an open and adaptable platform developed for organisations engaging in the management, deployment and reporting of sports coaches. Essentially the system allows sport coaches to find quality training / coaching opportunities and assists organisations to find suitable qualified coaches. The system would certainly be beneficial for all HEIs and students, to which it is free of charge.

See Figure 6 for more information on sport community organisations that HEIs engage with. ‘Other’ on the graph refers to “Schools”, “School Sports Partnerships and third sector organisations (i.e. Positive Futures)”, whilst one HEI stated that while they may not currently work with organisations that are not featured on the graph, they would be willing to.

Figure 6

Sport community organisations that HEIs engage with to promote sport volunteering opportunities for their students or staff

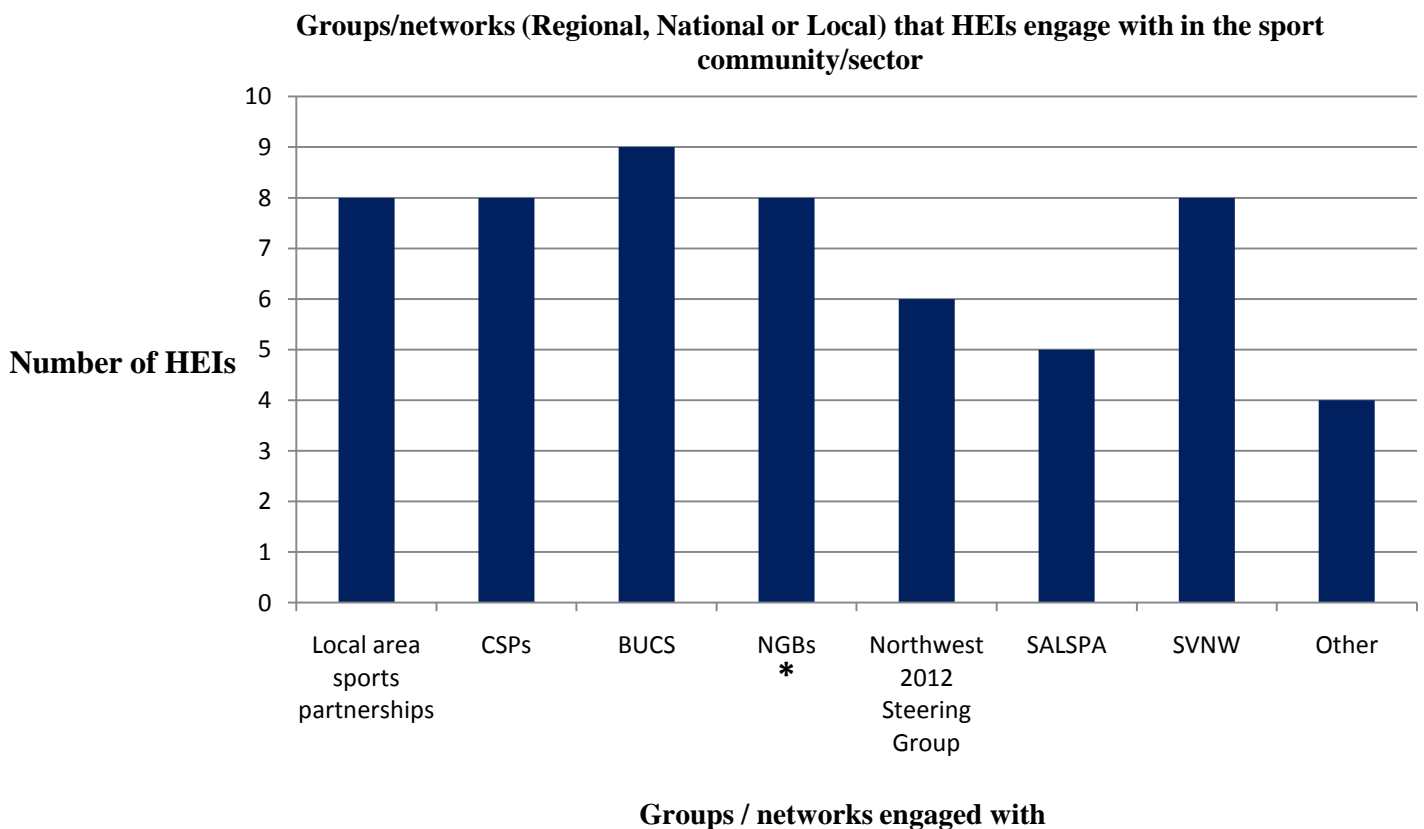


There are a number of groups / networks that exist within the sport community / sector that HEIs engage with. **90% of HEIs engage with British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) groups / networks, whilst 80% engage with NGBs, SVNW, local area sport partnerships and CSPs.** This means that 20% more HEIs engage with CSP groups / networks than engage with CSPs to specifically provide sport volunteering opportunities, although 90% of HEIs engage with CSP in some capacity – see Figure 12.

Figure 7 provides more information on groups / networks that HEIs engage with. ‘Other’ represents a large number of groups / organisations which include NWUA Steering Groups, sub-regional 2012 groups, local authorities, local Sport and Physical Activity Alliances, locals Sport Forums, NW Coaching Steering Partnership, Developing Clubs through Developing People steering group, and the Regional Sport Workforce Development Group.

70% of HEIs have arrangements in place to disseminate information gained at these groups / networks across their institution. The most common methods for disseminating information to relevant colleagues are internal meetings / committees / groups, email and HEI websites.

Figure 7



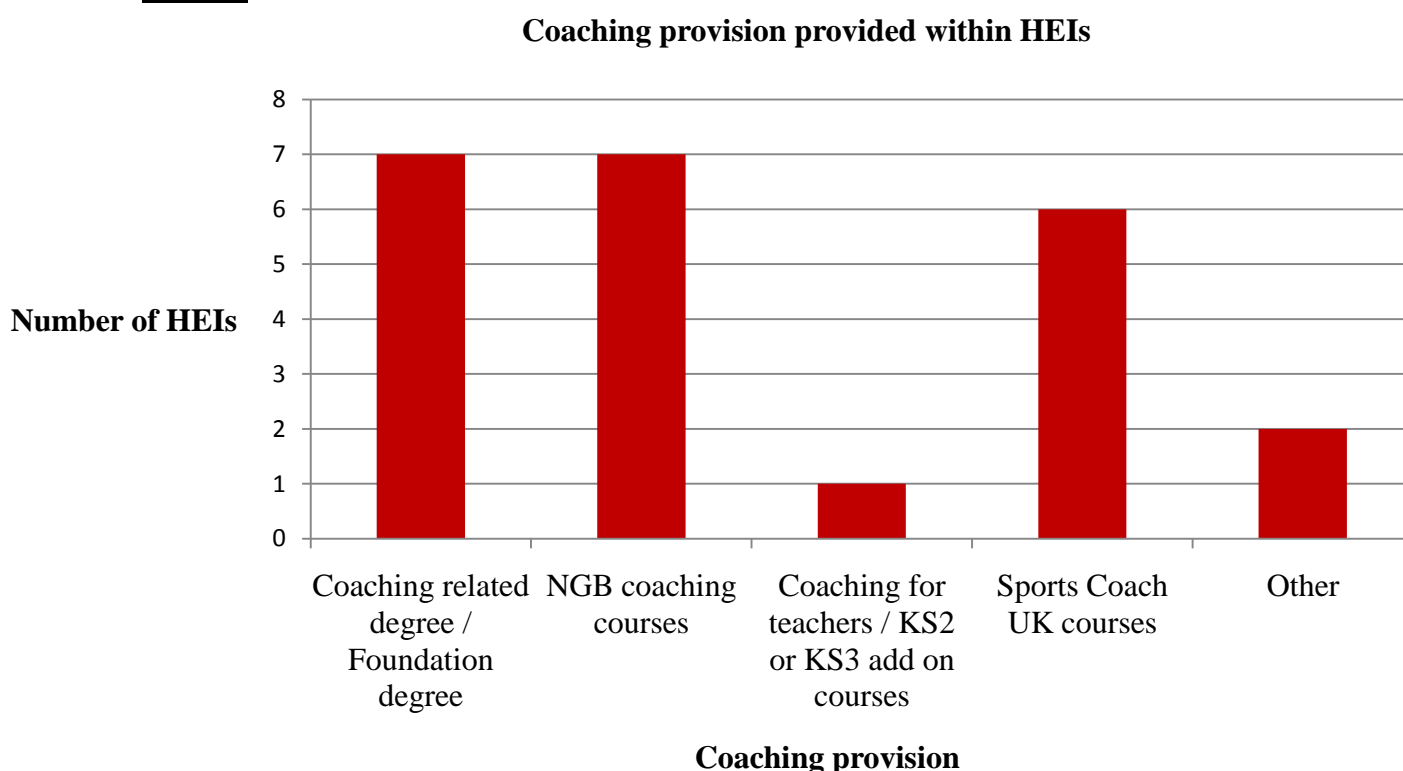
**Please note that this figure represents the number of HEIs that engage with NGB groups / networks, although it is not known how many.*

Section B: Coaching

Degree / Training Provision

North West HEIs provide a variety of provision for students who want to receive training in sports coaching. 70% of HEIs provide coaching related degrees / Foundation degrees and NGB coaching courses, whilst 60% offer Sports Coach UK courses. Only one HEI provides coaching provision for teachers. 'Other' on Figure 8 below represents BTEC and NCFE courses.

Figure 8



North West HEIs provide NGB Coach Education courses / Sports Coach UK courses in over 20 sports / activities. Almost 1500 places were taken by students attending NGB Coach Education courses in the last year, although two HEIs delivered over 700 between them. 80% of HEIs organise* or host** NGB Coach Education Courses (see figure 9 for a full list), which means that these are available to non-students. Figure 8 shows that 70% of HEIs deliver NGB coaching courses, however, these are only available to students.

* Organise is defined as the HEI administrating the course whilst also providing the resources and tutor.

** Host is defined as the HEI providing the facility in partnership with another organisation who deal with the bookings, administration and providing resources and tutor for the course.

Figure 9

National Governing Body Coach Education courses hosted / organised by North West HEIs

Organise / Host	Sport	Level of Course	Number of Courses	Months Course delivered	Number of Institutions	Total number of candidates
Jointly O	Athletics	Level 1	2	Oct / Feb	1	17
O	Basketball	Level 1	6	Jan / Feb / Mar / May / Nov	3	100
		Level 2	1	June	1	12
H	Badminton	Level 1	2	Various	1	24
H	Rugby League	Leaders	1	October	1	20
O	Rugby Union	Foundation	1	November	1	40
O / H	Rugby Union	Level 1	8	Oct / Dec / Jan / April	3	80
		Level 2	2	March	2	23
H	Hockey	Level 1	3	April / Nov / Dec	3	56
O / H	Football	Level 1	9	Sept – Oct / Dec / Mar/ April	5	134
O	Football	Level 1	3	Oct / Feb / March	1	48
H	Football	Level 2	2	Oct / April	1	32
		Level 2	2	Dec / May	2	27
O	Rounder's	Level 1	3	November	2	20
		Level 2	3	Mar / Nov / Jan	2	46
O	Netball	First Step / High Five	4	Oct / Nov / Sept / March	1	80
		Level 1	2	Nov / May	1	40
O	Tennis	KS 2	2	May	1	16
		KS 3 / 4	2	Dec / May / Jun	2	56
O	Gymnastics	SGCA Primary / Sec	7	Oct / Nov / Feb / March	1	130
O / H		Intermediate	2	March / June	1	24
O / H	Swimming	Level 1	5	Various	1	60
		Level 2	2	Various	1	14
O / H	Volleyball	Level 1	1	May	1	16
O	Dance	KS ½	3	Nov / Dec	1	41
		KS ¾	1	March	1	18
O	Gym Instructor	NVQ 2	1	Sept - July	1	30
		Level 2 module	1	April	1	12
O	Circuit Training	NVQ 2	1	Sept - July	1	30
O / H	BAWLA	Level 1 / 2	1	February	1	10
O / H	RLSS		6	Various	1	60
O	Handball	Level 1	1	February	1	20

O	Cheerleading	Level 2	1	Oct / Feb	1	40
O	Trampoline	Level 1	1	March	1	16
H	Trampoline	Level 2	1	March	1	16
O	Disabled Pupils in PE	Attendance	1	November	1	24
TOTAL						1432

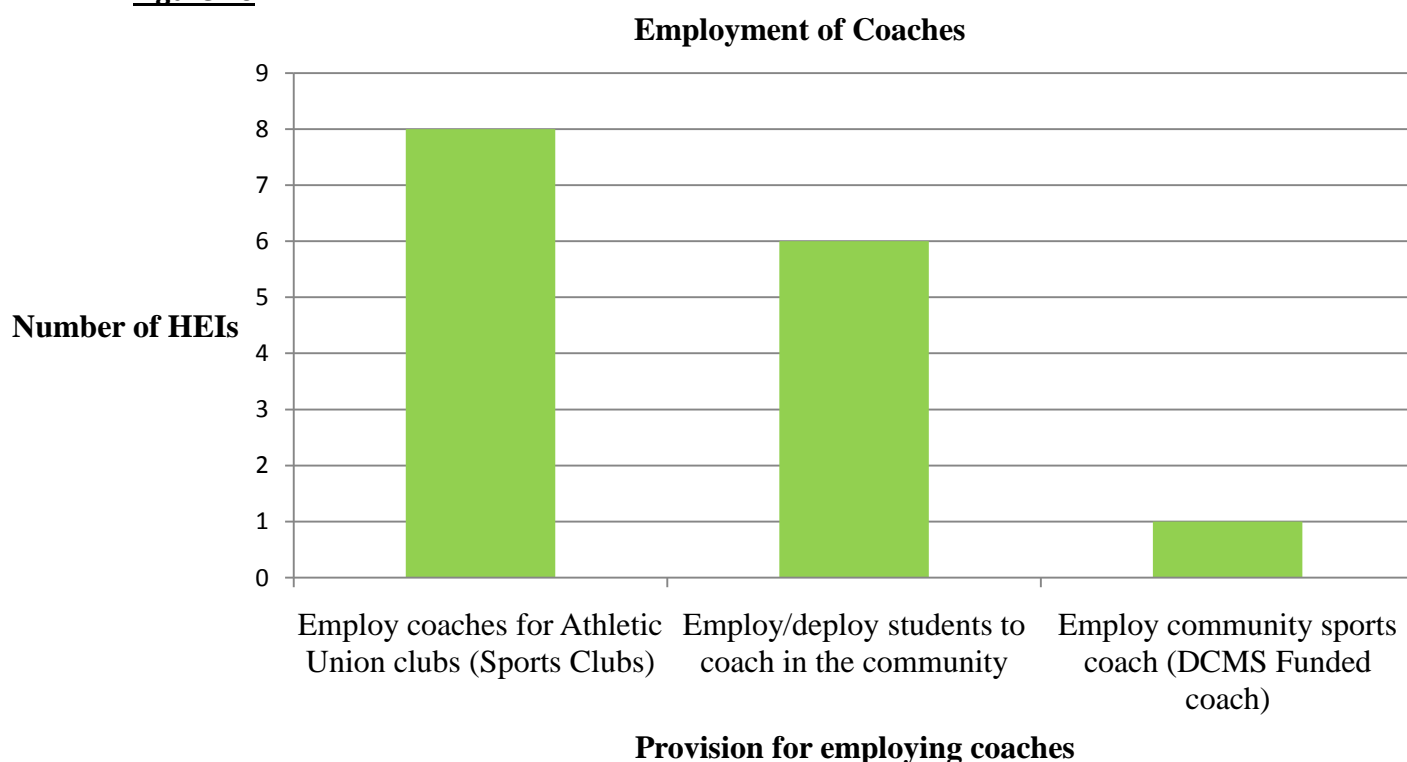
Employment of Coaches

In the North West 80% of HEIs employ approximately 160 coaches for Athletic Union clubs (sports clubs), although only six HEIs provided the exact number they employ. Those HEIs that did provide an exact number gave figures varying from 69 to 4-6. Levels of pay vary depending on the sport and the coach’s qualifications (level 1, 2 or 3 coaching awards) and experience. The terms of employment vary for each HEI. Most use Service Level Agreements to employ coaches, whilst others use “freelance/sessional workers”, “self-employed” coaches or even voluntary coaches.

60% of North West HEIs employ / deploy students to coach in the community. This is largely done as part of a placement that is incorporated into a degree programme and mainly includes distributing students to coach within schools, clubs and local authorities. 50% of HEIs that do employ / deploy students in the community report that students coaching in the community do not get paid.

Only one HEI in the North West indicated that they employ a community sports coach that is part or wholly funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The HEI in question, however, did describe this post as jointly funded by the university and “England Netball”.

Figure 10



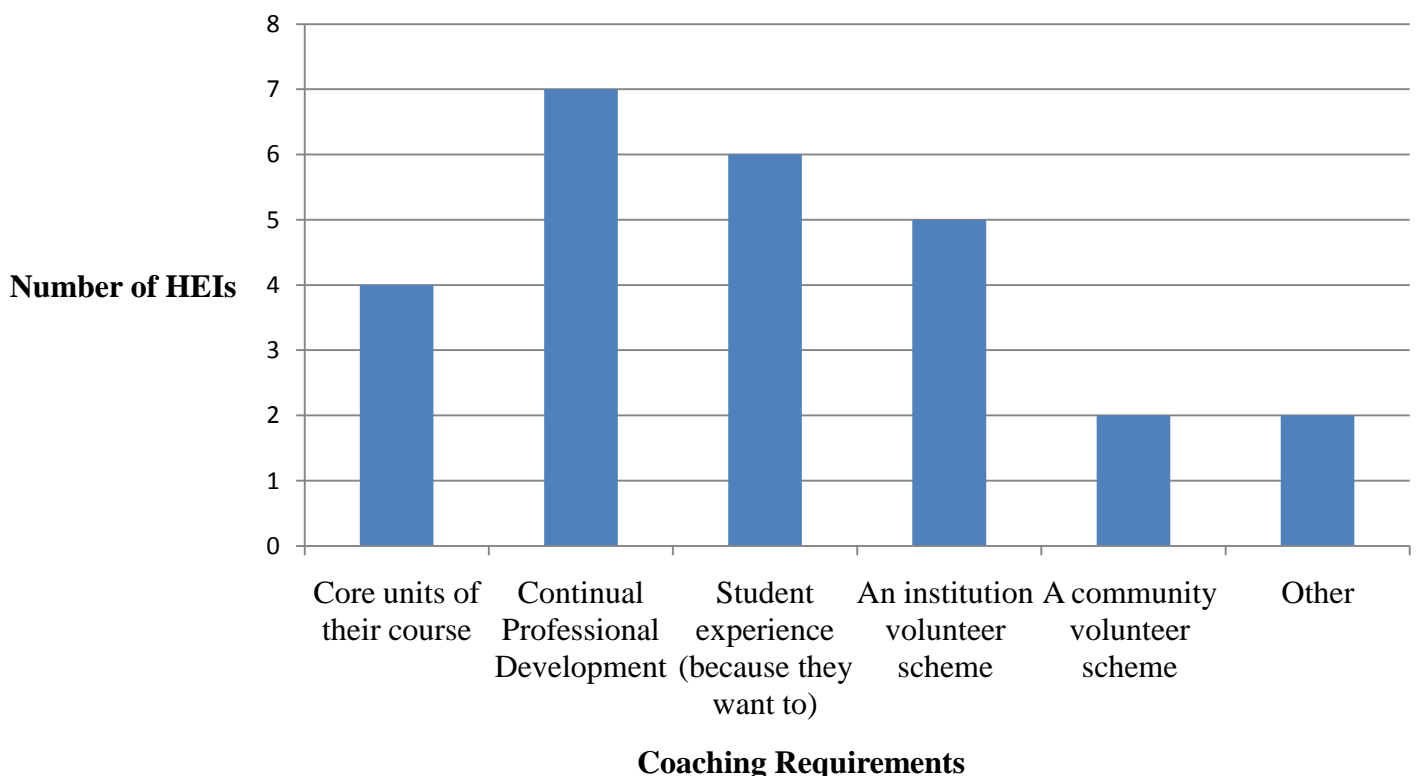
80% of North West HEIs have Minimum Operating Standards for employed sport coaches within their institution, whilst 70% impose them on volunteer coaches. These standards for employed coaches are CRB check (x6 HEIs), insurance (x3), level 1 coaching qualification (x3), level 3 coaching qualification (x2), NGB qualification (x2), self disclosure, first aid indemnity insurance and “suitable experience if no coaching qualification”. HEIs indicated that Minimum Operating Standards for volunteer coaches are CRB check (x5), insurance (x2), NGB qualification (x2), Level 1 coaching qualification (x2), Level 2 coaching qualification, emergency aid, first aid, self disclosure, indemnity insurance, “Safeguarding and Protecting Children and working towards a Level 1 coaching qualification” and “suitable experience if no coaching qualification”.

Community Engagement

Students coach in the community to benefit their Continual Professional Development (CPD), according to 70% of HEIs in the North West. 60% indicated that students coach to increase their experience, whilst only 40% are said to coach in the community to fulfil core units of their course. Further details of coaching requirements can be seen in figure 11 below. ‘Other’ represents “employability and citizenship” and “as part of Vocational Practice modules within a Undergraduate programme”.

Figure 11

Coaching in the Community - requirements



HEIs also have objectives they want to achieve by placing students in situations where they can volunteer in sport. 90% of North West HEIs report the aim of enhancing the employability of students; while 80% aim to provide community engagement and CPD. 80%

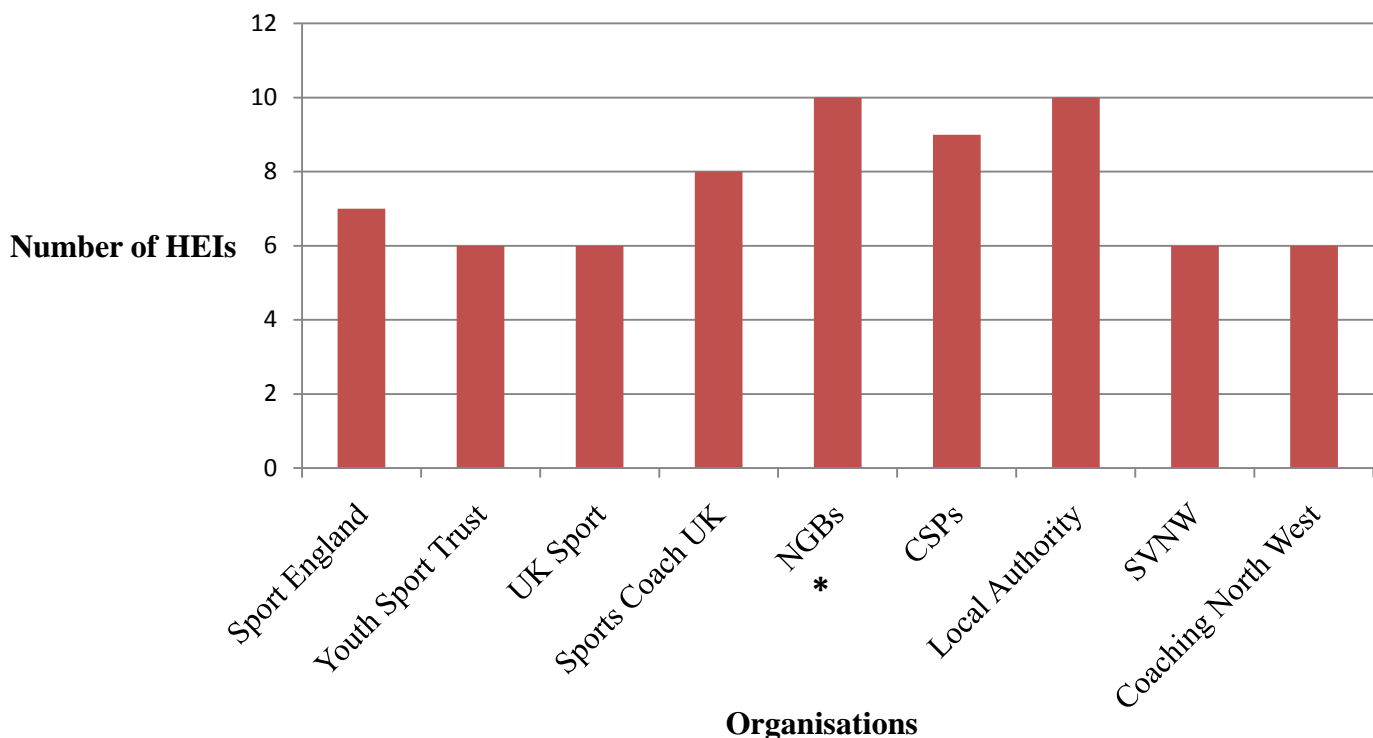
also encourage sport volunteering to meet the needs of strategic aims. Additionally one HEI indicated that “internationalisation of the student experience and the curriculum” was a key objective, whilst another stated that it was considered important “to improve the ability of our university teams”.

In the delivery system for sport HEIs engage with a number of organisations. This report has already illustrated the organisations that HEIs engage with around specific subjects, such as ‘sport volunteering’ and ‘networks’. However, this may not display the true amount of interaction between HEIs and wider sector organisations. For example, only 60% of HEIs engage with CSPs to specifically provide sport volunteering opportunities. As described earlier in this report, this then increases to 80% who engage with CSP networks. To complete the trend, 90% of HEIs engage with CSPs in some capacity. Therefore it is clear that work can be done to improve ‘volunteering-specific’ work between HEIs and CSPs.

100% of HEIs engage with local authorities and NGBs in some capacity, whilst 80% work with Sports Coach UK. Only 60% of North West HEIs engage with the Youth Sport Trust (YST) and UK Sport – two organisations that represent extremes in sport. The latter represents sporting excellence, whilst the former focuses on working with young people in schools and the community. See Figure 12 for more organisations that HEIs engage with to deliver any part of sport.

Figure 12

Organisations that HEIs have links with in the delivery system for sport



**Please note that this figure represents the number of HEIs that engage with NGBs, although it is not known how many.*

Key Findings

The results of this audit have culminated in a number of key findings that can provide the foundation of future development in the HE sport volunteering and sport coaching sectors. The key findings are:

- **90%** of HEIs have a volunteering programme (although not necessarily sport specific)
- **80%** of HEIs don't monitor volunteering activities of students prior to HE
- **90%** of HEIs don't have a sport specific information system/process to track volunteers in the community after they leave their institution
- **80%** of HEIs host and/or organise National Governing Body Coach Education Courses in at least one sport. Almost 1500 courses have been completed in the last year.

The majority of HEIs:

- Would find value in a system that tracks sport volunteers (before, during and after HE) and allows students to log their progress
- Engage with a number of sport community organisations

Additionally **all** responding HEIs indicated that they would work towards implementing regional accreditation for HEI volunteer programmes (should one be developed).

Next Steps / Future Recommendations

As stated in the introduction, the objective of the questionnaire was to establish a baseline picture of current HE volunteering activity and coaching provision, respectively. Based on the findings NWUA has identified potential developments, which include:

- **Detail the requirements of a regional HE volunteering and coaching database** - The development of an HE (element) volunteering and coaching database would allow HEIs to 'track' student's activities before, during and after HE. It would also match volunteers to opportunities (placements) and provide students with an online CV.
- **Work with relevant stakeholders to explore / develop a system and work to support integration by HE member institutions** – Initially the development of a volunteer/coaching database was scheduled to take place in Phase 1, however, due to external uncertainties this was not possible. This element will now be deferred to Phase 2 of the Project, subject to HEFCE approval.
- **The development of a 'Graduate Placements' programme** - There are a number of potential developments that could be put in place to support 'Graduate Placements'. Several organisations, including HEIs, have indicated a desire to take this forward as part of the project. There is the possibility of developing placement provision relating to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- **Deployment of Sport Volunteer Co-ordinators** – Extra-curricular activity is now recognised as a crucial element of a student's CV. This may include participation in

sports teams/clubs, volunteering in university sports clubs or completing work placements in sport. HE Volunteer Co-ordinators could therefore help facilitate such opportunities for students.

- **Work towards developing a regional accreditation system for HE volunteer programmes** - The accreditation would involve all HEIs in the region agreeing a universal set of operating standards for HE Sports Volunteering Programmes. The accreditation would also have the potential to develop an agreed certification process for HE volunteering that will be recognised throughout the region by HEIs, community organisations and 'employers'.
- **Work towards implementing a 'Pathfinder' element to HE sport volunteering provision** – The 'Pathfinder' model aims to increase demand from employers for higher level skills and increase employer engagement with skills provision in HLS providers. The model could potentially be adapted to include sport volunteering and has the potential to underpin all other activity.

The BUCS Workforce Development Advisory Group has also identified a number of activities for further research/analysis that are specific to coaching in HE. The advisory group, in partnership with NWUA, are currently in the process of formulating a two-year action plan based on these activities. The action plan will be aligned to the *NWUA Enhancing Higher Level Sport Volunteering & Coaching Skills* project and the *UK Coaching Framework*. Key objectives include:

- **Coaching Provision** - A Geographical exercise for Coach Education Courses delivered in HE e.g. where are students coaching and how far are they travelling to coach.
- **Employment of Coaches** - A Minimum Operating Standards (MOS) advisory document - working with Sports Coach UK to provide guidelines for MOS for coaches.
- **Coach Management Systems** - Establish an HE link with relevant coach management systems, specifically *CoachWeb*.
- **Coaching Pathway** - A Comparison / case study document showing the ideal 'pathway' into coaching – adopt as a model of good practice.
- **Relationships with External Partners** - Link with Sports Coach UK, CSPs, NGBs, Sport England and SkillsActive / National Skills Academy (NSA) to prevent duplication whilst ensuring CPD opportunities are provided for students / coaches.