

Places for Students and Community to Play Sport

This fact sheet examines the responses of 65 HEI's surveyed in the 2012 audit in relation to their sports facilities, summarising key findings and future considerations. It looks at what facilities are in place, utilisation of those facilities, future planned developments, university priorities and partnerships with community sports groups.

Introduction

The audit demonstrates that facilities on HEI sites vary considerably in number, range and availability. Of the 65 HEI's respondents 40% of HEI's do not have sports facilities on all their sites. This impacts on how sporting opportunities are offered to students and the uptake of those activities.

The audit found that HEI facilities are generally only at capacity during term time, with sports halls and grass pitches being the most used during term time. With this in mind, providing additional opportunities to students could be a significant issue and may impact on the availability of these facilities to other community sport during term time. Many universities have formed links with local community sports partners in terms of facility usage, undoubtedly to support delivery.

Although HEI's demonstrated owning high numbers of fitness suites and dance studios, there is a percentage of time these facilities are NOT at capacity. (28% fitness suites and 38% dance studio's). Similarly was the case for outdoor facilities, both netball courts and tennis courts HEI's reported as NOT being at capacity (55%).

As expected, priority for facility usage is given to student/ club/ teams, followed closely by academic use.

Utilisation of university facilities

The table below demonstrates the significant number of respondents that own sports facilities and identifies which facilities tend to have capacity issues, especially in term time.

Facility Type	No of HEI's with this facility	% of HEI's where this facility is at capacity all the time	% of HEI's where this facility is at capacity term time only	% of HEI's where this facility is NOT at capacity
Fitness Suite	62	11%	55%	28%
Dedicated free weights area	35	6%	29%	17%
Swimming Pool	26	5%	18%	15%
Sports Hall	58	17%	60%	14%
Martial Arts Area	25	5%	22%	12%
Dance Studio	56	2%	46%	38%
Indoor Tennis Courts	16	2%	9%	12%
Squash Courts	41	3%	20%	37%
Grass Pitches	53	25%	38%	18%
Athletics Track	34	2%	2%	18%
Outdoor Tennis Courts	42	2%	8%	55%
Netball courts	42	2%	9%	55%
Artificial Pitches	27	2%	8%	34%

There were other facilities identified within the audit for example Indoor climbing walls (17) and outdoor cricket pitches (6) that have not been included within this summary.

University Priorities

HEIs have their own policies on how to prioritise their own sport facility usage. This could have an impact on a HEIs ability to add in more sport activities, if they are not deemed a priority.

The table below would suggest HEI's primarily prioritise usage within both indoor (55%) and outdoor facilities (58%) to student teams and for academic use, both scoring highest in their areas. 'Other' university sport (pay and play) was ranked in third place for both indoor (42%) and (37%) outdoor use. Community usage was ranked a priority of 5 (lowest) for indoor use (43%) and 3 (mid-range) in terms of outdoor use (32%).

Indoor facilities

Priorities	Number of HEI's/ % of HEI's who scored this area a 1 (Highest Priority)		Number of HEI's/ % of HEI's who scored this area a 2		Number of HEI's/ % of HEI's who scored this area a 3		Number of HEI's/ % of HEI's who scored this area a 4		Number of HEI's/ % of HEI's who scored this area a 5 (Lowest Priority)	
Academic use	22 HEI's	34%	9 HEI's	14%	12 HEI's	18%	11 HEI's	17%	3 HEI's	5%
Student Club Team Use	36 HEI's	55%	23 HEI's	35%	1 HEI	2%	Zero	NA	1 HEI	2%
Other university sport – e.g. pay and play students	7 HEI's	11%	27 HEI's	42%	20 HEI's	31%	6 HEI's	9%	1 HEI's	2%
Commercial use including community use	5 HEI's	8%	3 HEI's	5%	7 HEI's	11%	22 HEI's	34%	28 HEI's	43%

(1= highest priority and 5= lowest priority)

Outdoor facilities

(1= highest priority and 5= lowest priority)

Priorities	Number of HEI's/ % of HEI's who scored this area a 1 (Highest Priority)		Number of HEI's/ % of HEI's who scored this area a 2		Number of HEI's/ % of HEI's who scored this area a 3		Number of HEI's/ % of HEI's who scored this area a 4		Number of HEI's/ % of HEI's who scored this area a 5 (Lowest Priority)	
Academic use	16 HEI's	25%	8 HEI's	12%	9 HEI's	14%	15 HEI's	23 %	2 HEI's	3%
Student Club Team Use	38 HEI's	58%	15 HEI's	23%	1 HEI	2 %	Zero	NA	1 HEI	2%
Other university sport – e.g. pay and play students	4 HEI's	6%	24 HEI's	37%	23 HEI's	35%	4 HEI's	6%	Zero	Na
Commercial use inc. community use	2 HEI's	3%	11HEI's	17%	21 HEI's	32%	19HEI's	29%	1HEI's	2%

Facilities NOT owned but used by the University

HEI's were asked what relationships they had with community sports partners in terms of facilities usage. (Either HEI's use their facilities or community sports groups use HEI's facilities) 66% of respondents have a relationship with another local sport provider under this definition.

As the main HEI's priorities identified above fall within students team use and academic use, it would suggest a heavily reliance upon community venues for either additional delivery purposes or to utilise facilities HEI's don't own.

45 universities utilised external (not owned by the institution) Indoor facilities ranging across 38 different facility types. The top facilities five facilities included:

1. Tennis Courts (29 HEI's)
2. Swimming Pools (25 HEI's)
3. Sports Halls (21 HEI's)
4. Climbing Walls (14 HEI's)
5. Squash Courts (11 HEI's)

Many others were for specialised sports such as gymnastics.

External Outdoor Facilities used by 54 HEIs spanned across 26 different facilities, with the top 5 resulting in:

1. Water Sports including (*sailing, rowing and canoeing*) (24 HEI's)
2. Grass Pitches (23 HEI's)
3. Rugby Pitches (20 HEI's)
4. Golf Courses (17 HEI's)
5. Athletic Track, Equestrian Centres and Cricket Pitches (15 HEI's)

Future Planned Developments

A large proportion of the HEI's (75%) who responded to the audit have plans to develop their indoor facilities over the next five years. Over half (54%) plan to develop their outdoor facilities. However only 15% and 18% respectively have both the space and financial resource to fund such development.

Key considerations:

- Not dissimilar to the 2009 audit, where there is limited capacity, the student's sports offer could be reconsidered so that other non-sport areas are being utilised for informal sport activities. The Active Universities projects are starting to work in this way.
- An investigation into facilities that are not at capacity all of the time could identify some times for sport that could lead to additional activities being offered. This coupled with understanding student need; whether the time available was suitable to deliver additional activities could lead to increased participation.
- A joint approach to local and national facility planning as well as for shared facility usage could be explored between local and national partners, including NGBs to maximise programming opportunities for both student and community sport. Sport England HE team will share the facilities information from the audit with internal colleagues within its Facilities and Planning Directorate.