

Kristine Dun

International Sports Psychologist – Sportscotland Institute of Sport

HSC Year: 1995 ATAR: 92



Training

- Bachelor of Psychology, University of Sydney
- Doctorate of Psychology (Sport & Exercise), University of Southern Queensland
- British Association of Sport Sciences High Performance Sport Accreditation

Special Educational Achievements

- 1st Class Honours
- Honours thesis was 3rd in the year

Jobs

- Bartender and research assistant while at university
- Tutor in Psychology while a postgraduate student
- Psychologist in a general hospital (adult mental health unit), psychiatric hospital, and private practice while undergoing my training
- Psychologist at Centrelink
- Sport Psychologist at the ACT Academy of Sport (ACTAS)

What are you doing now?

Sport Psychologist at the Sportscotland Institute of Sport. It is the Scottish version of the AIS. I help Scottish athletes prepare to compete on the world stage. This means that I work with mostly Commonwealth and Olympic athletes and coaches to help improve their performances. The sports that I am currently the lead sport psychologist are: curling (women), shooting (rifle and shotgun), golf, hockey, gymnastics (men's and women's artistic) and triathlon.

Relevant Experiences since leaving school

- Sport Psychologist at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi for Team Scotland.
 - I went to support the archery team and while there also provided support to the women's hockey team and some shooters.

Interesting Experiences

- Starting a PhD at Sydney University before realising that I wanted to do work as a psychologist rather than a researcher. I completed 2 years of my PhD before stopping to study to be a sport psychologist. I gave up a scholarship and went back to

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bartending to fund my studies. It also meant that I spent a long time (9 years) at university. It was worth it, I love my job.

- The work that I did on placement was unpaid, but it led to paid work. For example, the work that I did at the hospital led to paid work in private practice.
- My first sport psychology placement was with the university rugby union team in Toowoomba. As part of that I went on a road trip to Roma (4 hours away). As the only female on the bus it was an interesting experience.
- Doing my postgraduate studies in rural Queensland meant that I was employed in positions that would not be available in the city. It was a great way to gain experience.
- I went to Darwin for my final placement for my sport psychology training. I worked voluntarily at the Northern Territory Institute of Sport and was employed at Centrelink. Darwin is unlike anywhere else in Australia that I have been. I learnt a lot and had a lot of fun. Similar to Queensland there were opportunities that were not available in the larger cities. There were many young professionals who moved to Darwin to gain experience before returning south. As part of my work with Centrelink I was sent to Alice Springs for 3 months to work as the Acting Senior Psychologist. It was a fantastic opportunity to do some work, have a look around the centre of Australia, and work with Indigenous Australians in remote communities.

Other comments /Memories from Chatham High Days

I really enjoyed school, although it was not without its difficulties (friends can be tough sometimes). I don't think that I appreciated the teachers and what they had done until I was at university and doing some teaching myself. Teaching is harder than it looks and although I thought that I was REALLY subtle when I talked in my classes; when I taught at university I realised just how obvious talking students are when you are the teacher. My teachers must have been very patient. Still, I cannot expect you to learn that until later in life. I certainly didn't.

I am still in touch with a number of my friends and am glad that I spent time doing "extracurricular" activities such as sport, big band, and rock eisteddfod.

Tips for our students

- **Whilst completing HSC**

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Study the subjects that you are interested in. Realise that there are times that you won't want to work, but you'll have to anyway. Surround yourself with people that will help you. You really cannot do it all yourself. And have some fun. Find stuff within or outside of school that you enjoy doing but is not about marks or a career. I realise that this advice is not rocket science, but then neither is completing high school (even though it feels like it).

- **Going to University**

Spend time hanging out with people at university and living the lifestyle. I went to free comedy and drama shows every week at uni. I also knew where to find free food on many a day. Skip some lectures, don't buy all the textbooks, and discuss ideas with your mates. University is about thinking and philosophising and believing that you can change the world (or start a band, or diagnose your mates, be weird, be eccentric, find yourself, etc.). It is likely that you'll meet a whole range of people and that is an amazing way to open your mind to possibilities and adventures. The academics and postgrad students will help you if you are interested and willing to think and learn. Read some things that are not on the reading list and are not directly related to your course. Attend a lecture that you are not involved in. Explore and be curious and spend some time at the bar (as long as you are over 18) or a café. The in between lectures bits are the best bits.

- **Getting a job**

Realise that everyone gets turned down and don't take it personally. I think it took me 5 interviews before I got my first job as a sport psychologist. It took my best mate 9 months to get a job after completing university (and she did well at uni). Seek feedback when you don't get a job so that you can learn for next time. In many areas volunteer work can lead to paid work. Look for an organisation that suits you. It is often not about the skills that you have but whether you 'fit' the work environment that you'll be going to.

- **Other Tips**

Although it often seems fatal when you do not get the marks that you want or the job that you want, it rarely is. There are many paths to a profession and sometimes you have to take the longer one. There are also many things that you can do and do well. If in your disappointment you can see that there are times we all fail and remember to look for another path you will do well. A saying that I use in my work is: "when you lose, don't lose the lesson". Work out what *you* need to do be better next time and then work hard to achieve that. It is all anyone can do. Good luck!