

Georgios Takkou

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Dear Dr Lee Taylor,

The combination of the academic subjects offered, together with my involvement in sports from a very young age, having competed on club, national and international level, has intensified my interest in the functioning of the human body, the impact of the environment thereon, exercise in maintaining the body in performing at an optimum level and treatment and prevention of injuries related to sports and exercise.

In my previous role as a Strength and Conditioning (S&C) Coach at Glasgow City FC, I had the privilege of working with athletes of varying ages and skill levels, including U18s, U16s and U14s. My responsibilities encompassed a wide range of duties that align perfectly with the requirements of an academy physical performance coach. This included on and off field S&C sessions, while also the use of cutting-edge technology for GPS monitoring and data analysis, enabling me to track and assess athletes' performance metrics to inform strategic decision making. I am a strong believer for individualized training programs that offer to the unique needs and aspirations of each player, focusing on strength, endurance, flexibility, and injury prevention.

As Celtic FC prepares to expand their athletic programs, they will be seeking individuals with a passion for excellence, background experience in sports and team development skills. I am one of those. I also offer commitment, flexibility, and enthusiasm for learning more. My competitive swimming, training younger swimmers and captaining my football team, have given me a sound foundation for developing my skills in leadership and understanding team dynamics. It has also improved my analytical and time management skills. My involvement with Iterpro, a startup specializing in data analytics and artificial intelligence for athletic teams, highlighted the pivotal role of technology in our daily lives. I am enthusiastic about applying this knowledge to my chosen career path.

I look forward to your feedback.

Your sincerely,

Georgios Takkou

1. A first-class undergraduate degree relevant for the PhD studentship (Essential):

I hold a first-class undergraduate degree in Human Biology and a master's degree in Sports Medicine from the University of Glasgow. My academic background equips me with the necessary foundational knowledge and research skills for this PhD, covering aspects of human performance, injury prevention and treatment.

2. Six months experience working hands-on within professional football (first-team or academy), including the ability to lead warm-up and other conditioning-related drills on the field and football-specific GPS expertise (Essential):

I have acquired more than six months of hands-on experience working in professional football, specifically with the youth academy of Glasgow City FC. During my time there, I actively led warm-up sessions and conducted conditioning-related drills for players, I conducted fitness assessments and evaluations to determine strength, weaknesses and areas of improvement and collaborated with the coaching staff to integrate S&C principles into the team's overall training regimen. This experience has refined my practical skills and understanding of football training. Moreover, my working experience with Glasgow City FC along with my internship with Iterpro have helped me develop football-specific competence in commercially available GPS systems. I am proficient in setting up, downloading, exporting, and analysing data from these systems. This expertise ensures I can effectively use technology to track and assess athlete performance.

3. Data Collection and Analysis (Essential):

I have extensive experience collecting, analysing, reporting, and visualizing data. Undertaking my thesis projects during my undergraduate and masters involved hands-on experience with data collection and analysis. I gained practical experience in designing surveys, experiments, and data collection protocols. These experiments allowed me to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations. This includes my role as a Strength and Conditioning Coach, where I utilized cutting-edge technology to monitor and evaluate athlete performance metrics. I am well-organized and skilled in managing complex data. Moreover, during my internship with Iterpro it involved me addressing complex questions and solving problems of different teams which were related to athlete performance, training and injury management.

4. Excellent Communication and Interpersonal Skills (Essential):

My track record demonstrates excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Through my strength and conditioning coaching at Glasgow City FC, I've had the privilege of working closely with athletes, coaches, and physiotherapists, demanding clear and effective communication to ensure a whole coordination in injury management, training protocols, and player health. Moreover, being a part of a football team has exposed me to a diverse range of personalities and roles within the organization, enhancing my ability to build positive and productive relationships with the coaches. These experiences, coupled with my academic background where I had to work in group projects together with other fellow students, have equipped me with the interpersonal skills necessary to excel in the field of sports medicine and contribute effectively to any team or organization.

5. Right to Work in the UK (Essential):

I have the legal right to work in the UK (settlement status), ensuring I meet this essential criterion for the position.

6. Specific experience collecting, analysing, reporting and visualising data from professional football players within a pitch and/or gym and/or laboratory-based environment (Desirable):

Through the combination of my Sports Medicine master's degree and my undergraduate studies in Human Biology at Glasgow University, I have gained specific experience in collecting, analysing, reporting, and visualizing data from professional football players across diverse environments in laboratory-based environment, specifically delivering Vo2 max and lactate threshold tests to them. This background has allowed me to transition from pitch-side data collection during matches and training sessions to gym-based assessments and even laboratory-based research settings. My role as a Strength and Conditioning Coach at Glasgow City FC further strengthened my expertise, as I utilized cutting-edge technology and data-driven methodologies to monitor and evaluate youth players' performance metrics. The combination of those experiences has quipped me with a holistic understanding of how to optimize athlete performance, reduce injury risks, and enhance training regimens based on realistic insights.

7. A member of a body related to excellent practice through accreditation, fellowship, and/or registration (e.g., UKSCA, BASES, SENr, ISAK, coaching badges, etc.) (Desirable)

I am currently undergoing a Strength and Conditioning coach course which will help me get my UKSCA accreditation.

GEORGIOS TAKKOU

POST GRADUATE STUDENT - SPORTS MEDICINE

PROFILE

Disciplined, hard-working and team-oriented leader, having partaken and excelled academically and in a variety of sports while in parallel continuing to enhance his knowledge and use of the latest technologies available in order to offer the best possible advice, support and treatment to others that share his passion for sports and optimal performance of the human body.

CONTACT

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UK, G11 7SH

EXPERIENCE & PLACEMENTS

Leisure Attendant

Glasgow University Sports

12/2022 – present

- Assist with the daily operation of the gym.
- Assist customers on the use of gym machinery.
- Complete essential and routine cleaning across all the leisure centre facility.
- Lifeguard.

Sports Science and Analytics Internship

Iterpro

11/2022 – 06/2023

- Managing and monitoring the client base.
- Managing customer enquiries and executing first layer screening, bug reporting and executing first layer screening.
- Support to the sales process, with focus on the administration/finance section of the product.
- Use of advanced teamwork management tools (Trello, slack, Hubspot, Google drive) to share the information in real-time.
- Competitors and football innovation technology landscape monitoring.

Strength and Conditioning Internship

Glasgow City F.C (Under-16s and Under-14s)

05/2022-11/2022

- Develop and implement comprehensive S&C programs for Glasgow City FC youth teams.
- Conduct fitness assessments and evaluations to determine individual's player strengths, weaknesses and areas of improvement.
- Educate players on proper training techniques, injury prevention and recovery strategies.
- Maintain accurate up-to-date records of players program effectiveness adjusting training plans as needed to address individual needs and team goals.
- Collaborate with the coaching staff to integrate S&C principles into the team's overall training regimen.

REFERENCES

George Milonas – Head Swimming Coach

Joseph Kassapis- Auditor and Lecturer

Antonis Petrou- Researcher

KEY SKILLS

- Time management
- Leadership
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Highly motivated
- Ability to work under pressure

GEORGIOS TAKKOU

POST GRADUATE STUDENT-SPORTS MEDICINE

Coaching Assistant

Nicosia Swimming Club, Cyprus

06/2019-09/2019, 06/20-09/20 and 06/21-09/21

- Monitored swimmers' progress and maintained detailed records of their performance and attendance.
- Provided constructive feedback to swimmers during practice sessions, emphasizing proper form, breathing, and racing strategies.
- Assisted in the development of individualized training programs to address swimmers' specific needs and goal.
- Conducted dry-land training sessions and provided guidance on S&C exercises to enhance swimmers' overall fitness and performance

Internship

- AP Marine Environmental Consultancy Ltd –Cyprus
- 07/2017 – 09/2017
- Scuba diving to survey endangered organisms and implementing preservation strategies.
- Collecting samples and data-using processes such as coring techniques, geographic information systems (GIS), visual recording and sampling.
- Analysis of these samples to extrapolate the kind of organisms found in them

Cyprus Defense Force

Office and Administration Assistant – Nicosia, Cyprus

07/2015 – 07/2017

- Driver of the military cars and tracks, responsible for transporting soldiers
- Communicate with soldiers, officers and other individuals to answer questions, disseminate or explain information, take orders and address complaints.

Economics Tutor

The G C School of Careers - Strovolos, Nicosia

01/2015 – 07/2015

- Provide private lessons to fellow students and small groups in order to assist them to improve academic performance, improve occupational skills, or prepare for academic or occupational tests.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Best athlete of the year for 3 consecutive years at GC School of Careers.
 - 10th Position in World Biathlon Championship held in Limassol, Cyprus
 - Captain of Parnassos Indoor Football Team
 - Multiple Swimming Awards
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EDUCATION

2021-2022	University of Glasgow MSc Degree Distinction in Sports Medicine
2017-2021	University of Glasgow Undergraduate Degree 1 st class pass in Human Biology Relevant modules: Cell Physiology of Exercise, Performance Enhancement techniques, Physical and Public health, Functional Measurement.
2009-2015	The G C School of Careers, Cyprus A levels – Greek (A), Biology (B), Economics (B), Mathematics (B)

Enhancing U16 Academy Football Player Performance: A Comprehensive Approach to Monitoring and Conditioning

Background

Youth football academies serve as structured environments for young players, allowing them to master their skills and prepare for potential professional careers. The ages of 12-16 represent a critical phase in a young player's development, serving as a fundamental period for building a strong foundation in both technical skills and physical capabilities essential to excel in the sport. Considering this perspective, it becomes clear that the importance of introducing effective strength and conditioning programs is highlighted.

Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study are: (1) To assess the current state of strength and conditioning programs for academy football players aged 12 to 16. (2) To identify age-appropriate strength and conditioning strategies that optimise player health and performance. (3) To design and implement a pilot strength and conditioning program tailored to the needs of academy football players in this age group.

Methodology

Research design: This study will be implemented by the combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods.

Participants: Celtic academy football players aged 12-16 willing to participate in the study.

Data Collection: 1) Data will be collected by surveys and questionnaires to assess current state of strength and conditioning programs. 2) Physical assessments to measure the fitness levels (Vo2 max test, strength testing, vertical jump test) injury history (medical records review and injury questionnaires) and growth patterns of the players (anthropometric measurements). 3) Psychological assessment (Psychological Surveys and Questionnaires, Performance Analysis, RPE).

Data Analysis: Quantitative data will be analysed using statistical methods such as descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode), correlation analysis (Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Spearman Rank Correlation) and Regression Analysis (Linear Regression analysis) and Chi-Square Test.

Expected Outcomes

The outcomes of this study seek to identify strategies and best practices designed to the age group, aligning with their distinctive physiological and psychological attributes and growth phases, with the ultimate goal of enhancing player health and performance. Ultimately, the research aims to result in the creation of a personalised strength and conditioning program that focuses precisely to the unique requirements and ambitions of young players within this age category, with the overarching aim of developing their growth, well-being, and success in the first team.

Significance of the Study

The findings from this research hold considerable significance for football academies, coaches, and sports scientists engaged in the nurturing of young talent. They will play a pivotal role in shaping evidence-based strength and conditioning programs, tailored to strengthen both player health and performance, all while mitigating the potential risks of injuries during these pivotal developmental stages.