

**The Research Unit for Physical Education and Sports Psychology**  
**Institute of Sports Science and Clinical Biomechanics**  
**Strategy 2015-2020**

## **Background**

The Research Unit for Physical Education and Sports Psychology (PESP) builds on one of the Institute's original foundations – the pedagogy of human movement. Within the unit, this has been applied to three principal areas.

Firstly, there has been a focus on innovative approaches to teaching and learning, with particular emphasis on practice aspects, such as activated learning. PESP challenges the assumptions and theories underpinning the status quo and investigates, through translational research, new methods of teaching human movement.

Secondly, with the growing interest in elite sports, there has been a research focus on sports psychology, predominantly in the field of talent development. This work has taken a holistic approach to look at social relations and their influence on athlete development and performance, and particularly on successful talent development environments.

Thirdly, with the University of Southern Denmark's increasing emphasis on entrepreneurship, PESP is encouraging new ways of thinking and learning through its research in entrepreneurship education for practitioners involved in human movement. A major research interest is "Human Movement Computer Interaction" which seeks to obtain an understanding of the human who moves and learns through interaction with computers and at the same time study the design process of developing such concepts.

Our researchers have backgrounds in sports science, pedagogy, psychology and interaction design. They work in collaboration with others both inside and outside the University to address key research questions. A common method we use in the development of innovative approaches to applying knowledge to the areas of movement practice is to collaborate with the relevant end-user groups. The description, understanding and explanation of each of these areas of movement practice are documented through qualitative approaches and research methods. A substantial proportion of the practical elements of our research work are undertaken with practitioners in their professional settings or in the Lab for Play and Innovation at the Department of Sports Science and Clinical Biomechanics.

## **Role**

Our roles are:

- To research the innovative and applied use of the pedagogy of human movement and sports psychology in order to enhance participation, performance, learning and talent development.
- To expose students to the latest theories and practices of teaching human movement.
- To stimulate entrepreneurial thinking in the field of pedagogy of human movement and equip practitioners with the skills to pursue innovative ideas.

## **Vision**

In 2020, our research unit is recognised across Denmark and internationally as *'the place to go'* for the latest innovative thinking and research, not only in talent development but also in the pedagogy and entrepreneurship of human movement.

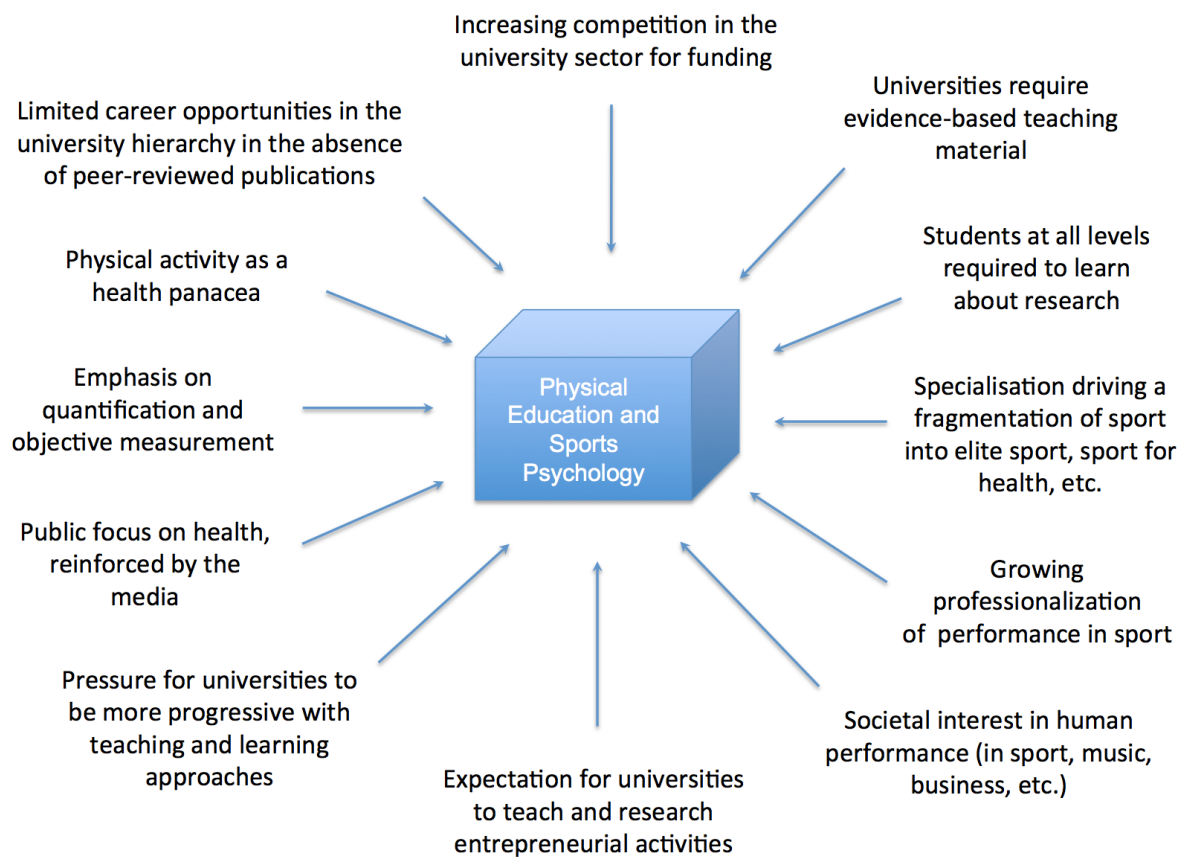
## **Definition of success**

To realise this vision, we will have achieved the following:

- The research unit has built on its identified competencies and strengths in three main research areas, for which we receive external funding:
  - Pedagogy of human movement
  - Talent development and sports psychology
  - Entrepreneurship and innovative technologies for learning and movement.
- We have a national and international reputation for our contribution to these research areas, as evidenced by our publications, our invitations to present at significant professional conferences, and requests for personnel secondments or exchange.
- We have successfully run our first boutique international conference in one of our main research areas, with one of the key outputs being an edited book or special issue of a leading journal in the field.
- The Research Unit comprises at least seven full-time staff, who on average, are publishing two peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters or books a year.
- We collaborate on research projects with European countries, Australia, New Zealand, and leading national organisations such as Team Denmark, sports schools and municipalities.
- The other research units in the Department are aware of our competencies and resources and look for opportunities to collaborate with us.
- Our end-users (such as physical educators, sports coaches and companies associated with human movement) value the seminars we run annually to share recent innovations in research and education.
- As a result of our research and education, there is evidence of uptake of new practices in Danish contexts of the pedagogy of human movement.
- Other countries are adopting some of these practices of the pedagogy of human movement.
- We have developed successful collaborations with private enterprise to develop new technologies for learning and movement.
- We operate as a cohesive group through knowledge sharing and collaborative activities.
- Our image is influenced by our cooperative spirit and for our very visible demonstration of 'practising what we preach'.

## **Key external influences**

We have identified a number of factors in our operating environment that will influence our strategy going forward. The main ones are illustrated in the diagram below:



## Strategic priorities

We will pursue five strategic priorities to position our research unit for a successful future:

1. Articulate the three principal research areas on which the research unit will focus and target its grant applications.
2. Secure new professorial positions to raise the research profile of the research unit.
3. Seek new collaborations with sporting organisations, private enterprise and municipalities to develop technologies to enhance performance, learning and movement.
4. Implement new organisational measures to improve communication and coordination of research unit activities.
5. Design and implement activities that demonstrate that we 'practise what we preach' in terms of talent development.