

Hartpury University x Gloucester Rugby – Master's in Research (MRes)

Studentship Overview

In partnership with Hartpury University, Gloucester Rugby Club are pleased to advertise a self-funded studentship to undertake a Master's by Research (MRes) with the club during the 2025-2026 season. The successful student will support the athletic performance department at the club (approx. 15-18 hours per week), while concurrently conducting their research. Therefore, this provides an exciting opportunity for the successful candidate to develop both their applied practice and research skills, whilst being fully embedded within an elite professional sport setting. The scope of the project may suit individuals with a background in strength and conditioning, sport science, sports medicine, or data science.

Project Overview

An exciting new technology has been introduced by World Rugby in the pursuit of making Rugby Union safer and more quantifiable. The Instrumented Mouth Guard (iMG) system from Prevent Biometrics records head acceleration events and is the first technology of its kind to be mandated across the professional game. Currently this data is used to assess potential head injury, alerting match day medical staff that a Head Injury Assessment (HIA) is required during match play. Withstanding the outputs for HIA alerts, the data for matches and training is collected but goes largely unused. The aim of this research project is to assist in utilising iMG data more proactively and assist in better informing training drills, load management and return to play pathways. The project will require routine collection, analysis and interpretation of match and training data. The successful candidate will undertake the project as part of the MRes Sport and Exercise course at Hartpury University which will include several taught modules to facilitate the completion of the project, alongside being fully embedded within the men's senior team at Gloucester Rugby.

Club Contact: Rhys Hughes – Head of Medical Services at Gloucester Rugby.

Supervisor: Dr Ben Drury – Senior Lecturer at Hartpury University.

Hartpury University is renowned for its high teaching quality, ranking 6th in the UK (*The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2025*) and 4th in the UK for Sports Science (*Guardian University Guide 2025*). Research submitted as part of the *Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021* process was recognised as 'world-leading' and 'internationally excellent'. The Sports Academies at Hartpury have developed over 200 international athletes during the last 10 years and overseen multiple BUCS-winning squads for rugby and football, as well as being home to the historic three-peat Gloucester-Hartpury women's rugby team.

The successful candidate should be able to evidence the following:

- Minimum of a 2:1 or higher in a relevant undergraduate degree.
- Completed an independent research project as part of their previous studies.
- Experience of delivering data processing/sports science provision.
- Knowledge and understanding of a professional sporting environment.
- Highly organised, independent, and curious learner.
- Exceptional levels of time management and communication skills.

Club Responsibilities

- Ensure all eligible players are wearing their iMG's for training and games.
- Analyse iMG data daily, providing insight into metrics and player impacts.
- Create position specific reports on contact load, linking on some occasions to video feed.
- Produce monthly overviews of players contact load.

To support the success of your studentship, regular meetings with both academic and club staff will occur. Staff will work together to develop your timetable to ensure engagement and completion of applied and academic work is to the highest of standard. To further aid in your development and experience, you will also be able to access:

- ✓ Bursary to support the completion or dissemination of your project at the University.
- ✓ Access to the universities' academic and career development services.
- ✓ Club kit to be provided and worn during on-site training sessions.
- ✓ Club breakfast, snacks, and lunch during on-site training days.
- ✓ Access to free tickets for the men's and women's games at Kingsholm Stadium.
- ✓ Potential to support some 1st team home matches in a working capacity.
- ✓ Full access to the clubs CPD programme & practitioners.

Guide to Application

As part of your application, please provide a CV including two referees (one academic and one applied) and a cover letter of no more than 1 page outlining your suitability for the role.

Email the documentation above to both recruitment@gloucesterterryrugby.co.uk and RKE.Administrator@hartpury.ac.uk. These email addresses can also be used to ask any further questions.

The deadline for applications is midnight on **Monday 16th June 2025**.

Interviews will take place on **Thursday 24th July 2025**.

Expected start date is **September 2025**. However, there is potential for the successful candidate to support pre-season training if desired, starting late July.

If you are applying from outside the UK, it is important that you are aware of the entry and additional fee requirements. Before you apply, please contact colleagues in our Hartpury Postgraduate Department (postgraduate@hartpury.ac.uk) for further information, to discuss the requirements and your application.