

# Hibs team up with Napier University to develop young players' knowledge of elite sport

Hibs have teamed up with Edinburgh Napier University to deliver a new course specifically tailored towards players whose training commitments make traditional study options difficult.

Napier's innovative part-time programme combines campus-based workshops and online learning, which will develop the players' knowledge of elite sport in a business context.



This approach is being used to allow the players to understand their new environment, find their place within it and connect more productively with the world of professional sport and employment.

Hibs kids Connor Young, Josh O'Connor and Murray Johnson will begin their studies this month at a level which offers six modules over two years to Certificate of Higher Education standard – with topics including 'psychology', 'the athlete in sport' and 'football in the digital age'.

They can continue studying part-time for a further two to four years to complete a BA in Business and Enterprise in Sport degree.

Sporting Director Graeme Mathie said: "It's a fantastic position for us as a club to be able to deliver not only a

high-quality football education but now – through this partnership with Napier University – a high-quality educational programme for our players.

“It is very much aligned to our strategic aim of being a ‘learner’s club’ and I have no doubt our players will benefit from the programme.

“I would like to place on record my thanks to my colleagues Sean McPartlin and Steve Curnyn, who have been in discussions with Napier for some time in order to deliver this partnership and also to confirm a list of learners of various ages and stages from within the club.”

Dr Tom Campbell, Programme Lead, BA Business & Enterprise in Sport, said: “One of the real strengths of the programme lies in the widespread application of theory to a familiar context, allowing students to draw upon their existing sporting experience while generating new knowledge and understanding.

“This new development will see the same principles applied to the football academy environment, and having the academies’ input into the design of the course has been invaluable in creating a state-of-the-art programme.

“I have no doubt that the students will hit the ground running and find the course to be engaging and rewarding.”

News of the course follows the announcement in June of a collaboration between Edinburgh Napier and the Scottish FA to launch the BSc (Hons) Football Coaching, Performance & Development, a four-year undergraduate programme to develop coaching professionals for the modern game.

Dr Susan Brown, Edinburgh Napier lead for partnerships and enterprise in sport, said: “This programme, developed in collaboration with the clubs, is an important part of Edinburgh Napier’s commitment to supporting the dual career of

athletes, not only those who have reached elite level performance, but also those who are committed to pursuing a career in performance sport but are still in the development stage. This approach will take advantage of the environment the players are in.

“There is mounting evidence that a dual career approach is beneficial to performance and not only a useful activity for the future. We believe we can help the clubs support their young players to succeed both on and off the pitch.

“It is in developing these productive partnerships that we as a University can support clubs, organisations and governing bodies in sport and ensure that our academic programmes are fit for purpose for the students we work with. This programme follows the new collaboration with the Scottish FA, and existing partnerships with Scottish Rugby, Scottish Gymnastics and Cricket Scotland in particular, where the University is a key partner in the development and delivery of education provision at multiple levels.”