

PhD Studentship: Data-Driven Talent Identification and Performance Prediction in Professional Cricket

Funding: The studentship is for three years (full-time) and provides a tax-free UKRI standard stipend (£23,805 per annum in 2026/2027), plus full tuition fees at the UK rate. Funding is available for home (UK) applicants only.

Start Date: October 2026

Location: Northwood, London, UK

About the Partners

The University of Essex, in partnership with Middlesex Cricket, is offering a fully funded PhD studentship focused on data-driven talent identification, performance modelling and player development in professional cricket.

This is an exciting opportunity for a motivated researcher-practitioner to undertake a PhD embedded within a professional cricket environment. Academic supervision will be led by Dr Jamie Tallent from the University of Essex, with professional support led by Alex Faser, Lead Performance Analyst at Middlesex Cricket.

About the Project

Professional cricket clubs are increasingly using data to inform decisions around talent identification, player development, selection and performance analysis. However, there remains uncertainty around which performance indicators are most meaningful when assessing player potential, particularly during the transition from academy cricket into second team and first team environments. This PhD will use performance analysis, statistical modelling and data science approaches to examine which cricketing metrics best predict player progression and performance in professional cricket.

The PhD is likely to address the following aims:

1. To identify the key performance indicators associated with progression from academy cricket into second team and professional cricket.
2. To develop data-driven approaches for profiling players across the Middlesex Cricket pathway.
3. To explore the use of statistical modelling and machine learning to predict player progression, performance potential and role-specific success.
4. To support the development of evidence-informed performance analysis processes that can inform talent identification, player development and selection within professional cricket.

Additional Responsibilities

Alongside their research project, the successful candidate will contribute to the broader performance analysis programme at Middlesex County Cricket Club, including:

- Supporting the collection, coding and analysis of match and training footage across the Middlesex Cricket pathway.
- Assisting with the development of pre- and post-match analysis outputs for coaches, players and performance staff.
- Supporting the management and use of video analysis systems, data platforms and relevant ECB systems.

- Helping translate research findings and performance data into practical insights for coaches, analysts and support staff.
- Working as part of the wider Sports Science and Sports Medicine Team to promote an evidence-based approach to player development and performance support.

Eligibility

Applicants should:

- Hold at least a 2:1 Honours degree in sport science, performance analysis, sports analytics, data science, strength and conditioning, or a related discipline. A relevant masters degree is desirable.
- Have experience or strong interest in performance analysis, sports analytics, talent identification or cricket performance.
- Demonstrate strong data handling and analytical skills, including experience with Excel and ideally R, Python or similar statistical software (though not essential).
- Be comfortable working in a professional sport environment and balancing academic research with applied performance responsibilities.

Desirable criteria include:

- Experience coding matches and producing performance analysis reports.
- Experience using video analysis systems, iHawk, ECB systems or similar performance analysis platforms.

How to Apply

Application closing date: Friday 10th July 2026 at 17:00.

You can apply for this postgraduate research opportunity [here](#). Once you have submitted your application, **please also email** jamie.tallent@essex.ac.uk confirming you have submitted your application. If you have any problems with the process, please do contact Dr Jamie Tallent.

Applications MUST include the following documents to be uploaded:

- A completed School of Sport, Rehabilitation and Exercise Sciences Statement of Research Interest pro forma. Applicants should use the project title: **Data-Driven Talent Identification and Performance Prediction in Professional Cricket** and complete the form in relation to this advertised studentship. The statement should be a maximum of 500 words, excluding the reference list.
- CV
- Covering letter
- Transcripts of any undergraduate or masters qualifications.

For an informal discussion, please contact Dr Jamie Tallent: jamie.tallent@essex.ac.uk

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview late July 2026

Studentship is offered subject to final funding confirmation

