

THE ATHLETE PLACE

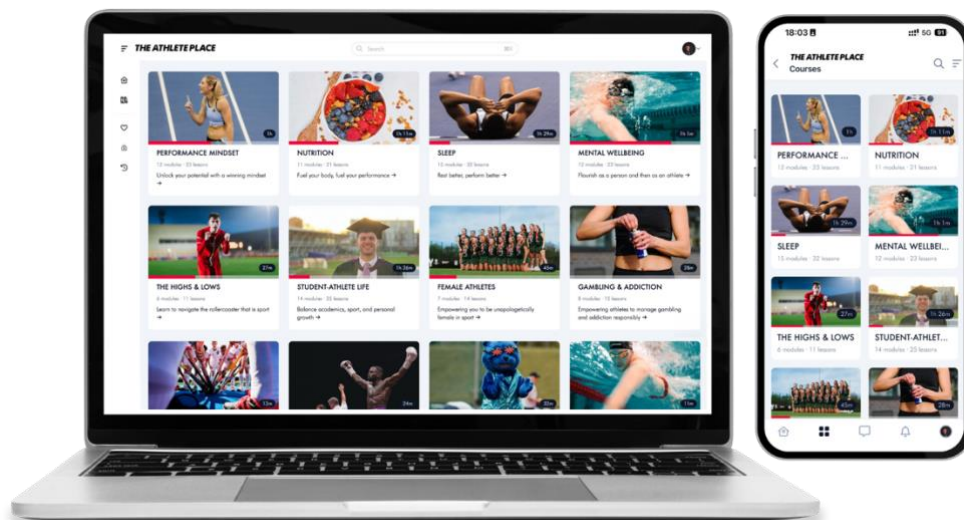
A Structured Athlete Development Programme

Year 8 to Year 13 · 60 lessons · One complete journey

Prepared for

Directors of Sport, Programme Leads & School Partnerships

2026-27 Academic Year



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The challenge facing schools today

Young athletes are being trained harder and earlier than ever. Yet for most of them, the education around how to perform, how to recover, how to stay healthy, and how to handle the emotional demands of sport is left entirely to chance.

The result?

- ↓ Talented athletes burning out before they reach their potential.
- ↓ Students struggling with the pressure of balancing sport and school.
- ↓ Athletes leaving programmes without the knowledge or resilience to thrive at the next level.

Directors of Sport and programme leads care deeply about their athletes' development — but designing a structured, progressive education programme on top of everything else isn't realistic. Content gets delivered inconsistently, if at all.

"The research is clear: athletes who receive structured education on mindset, nutrition, sleep, and wellbeing perform better, stay in sport longer, and transition more successfully into adult life."

What we've built

The Athlete Place has developed a complete, curriculum-style athlete education programme — six structured pathways, one for each year group from Year 8 to Year 13, each containing 10 carefully sequenced lessons drawn from our expert-created content library.

This isn't a collection of videos. Each lesson includes a quiz to test and reinforce learning, and most lessons include a ready-made journal with guided prompts so athletes can reflect on what they've learned in their own words and at their own pace. It's a coherent, progressive journey — designed to be picked up by any school or organisation and delivered with confidence, without any additional planning burden.

6

year-group pathways

60

expert-created lessons

10

topics per year

Designed for the way schools actually work

Every aspect of this programme has been built around the realities of a school calendar. Lessons are spaced across three terms — roughly three per term — so delivery is manageable within existing athlete development time. Exam periods are protected for Year 10, 11, and 13, with content deliberately lightened in May and June.

The programme requires no curriculum design from your team. Each pathway is ready to use from day one, with lesson sequencing already optimised for age-appropriateness, topic variety, and developmental progression.

What this gives you	What that means in practice
A ready-made programme	No planning, no gaps — just deliver
Term-by-term lesson schedule	Fits your school year without disruption
Exam-aware scheduling	Y10, Y11, Y13 kept light in May–June
Year-on-year progression	Athletes build on what they've already learned
Topic breadth every year	Mindset, nutrition, sleep, safeguarding, clean sport, wellbeing
Full content library access	Athletes can explore beyond the pathway independently

What athletes gain

Each pathway is built around a developmental theme — from Foundations in Year 8 through to Transition & Identity in Year 13. This means athletes aren't just receiving information: they're building a framework for understanding themselves as performers, and the knowledge they need to make better decisions at every stage of their sporting life.

Year group	What athletes develop
Year 8 — Foundations	Core habits of mind, body, and sport environment
Year 9 — Self-awareness	A healthy relationship with themselves and their sport
Year 10 — Performance habits	The routines that underpin consistent performance
Year 11 — Pressure & performance	Resilience under the demands of exams and elite training
Year 12 — Resilience & independence	Mental strength, self-management, and life skills
Year 13 — Transition & identity	Readiness for senior sport, university, and life beyond

Programme at a glance

The table below summarises all six pathways. Full lesson schedules, month-by-month breakdowns, and scheduling notes for exam years follow on the pages ahead.

Year	Theme	Lessons	Delivery window
Year 8	Foundations	10	Sept – July (no exam constraints)
Year 9	Self-awareness	10	Sept – July (no exam constraints)
Year 10	Performance habits	10	Sept – July (light in May–June)
Year 11	Pressure & performance	10	Sept – July (light in May–June)
Year 12	Resilience & independence	10	Sept – July (no exam constraints)
Year 13	Transition & identity	10	Sept – July (light in May–June)

All content on The Athlete Place platform remains open and searchable. These pathways are a structured delivery framework — athletes are actively encouraged to explore the full library independently beyond their pathway.

Year 8 Foundations

Introducing the habits of mind, body, and sport that set athletes up for the long term.

Year 8 athletes are at the start of their sporting journey. The priority is building positive foundations — a growth mindset, basic nutrition awareness, an understanding of safeguarding, and the social dynamics of being part of a team. Lessons are deliberately accessible and energising, designed to create enthusiasm for learning rather than pressure.

Autumn term

Month	#	Lesson
September	1	Growth mindset
October	2	Goal-setting
November	3	What is safeguarding <i>Introduced early — important foundation for all that follows.</i>

Spring term

Month	#	Lesson
January	4	Confidence
February	5	The importance of good nutrition
March	6	Hydration

Summer term

Month	#	Lesson
April	7	Playing multiple sports
May	8	Team vibes
June	9	Dealing with disappointment
July	10	Dealing with success <i>A positive end-of-year closer.</i>

Year 9 Self-awareness

Building self-knowledge and a healthy relationship with sport and identity.

Year 9 is when athletes start making more deliberate choices about their sport — which club, which coach, how seriously to commit. The pathway helps them develop an honest inner voice, understand how their body and mind work, and build the self-esteem to navigate comparison and social pressure with confidence.

Autumn term

Month	#	Lesson
September	1	Motivation
October	2	Your inner critic
November	3	What's not OK in sport <i>Builds on the safeguarding foundation from Year 8.</i>

Spring term

Month	#	Lesson
January	4	Self-esteem
February	5	Body confidence
March	6	Nutrition: the basics

Summer term

Month	#	Lesson
April	7	How much sleep do I need?
May	8	Different progression rates <i>Timely as Year 9 athletes increasingly compare themselves to peers.</i>
June	9	Finding the right club & coach
July	10	Love the process <i>Motivating end-of-year message before summer training.</i>

Year 10 Performance habits

Establishing the daily routines that underpin consistent athletic performance.

Year 10 marks a step change in sporting and academic demands. This pathway focuses on building the practical habits — sleep, fuelling, coping under pressure, sport-life balance — that allow athletes to perform consistently. The summer term is kept light to protect the GCSE exam window, with lessons front-loaded into April and returned in July.

Autumn term

Month	#	Lesson
September	1	Coping skills
October	2	Sleep as an athlete
November	3	Screens before bed

Spring term

Month	#	Lesson
January	4	Nerves & pressure
February	5	Self-discipline
March	6	The sport-life balance

Summer term

Month	#	Lesson
April	7	Fuelling for sport
April	8	The dangers of under-fuelling
May	9	Impacts of poor sleep <i>Delivered early May — before GCSE exam season intensifies.</i>
July	10	Clean sport: the basics <i>Held until July to avoid the exam period.</i>

Year 11

Pressure & performance

Navigating the dual demands of GCSE exams and increasingly serious athletic training.

Year 11 is one of the hardest years in an athlete's school life. This pathway directly addresses that — with lessons on mental health, perfectionism, academic pressure, and injury — while also progressing into advanced nutrition timing now that athletes are training at a higher intensity. July is reserved for a low-pressure, positive topic after exams end.

Autumn term

Month	#	Lesson
September	1	Athlete mental health
October	2	Supplements: the risks
November	3	Perfectionism

Spring term

Month	#	Lesson
January	4	Managing academic pressure
February	5	Time management
March	6	Pre-training nutrition

Summer term

Month	#	Lesson
April	7	Post-training nutrition
April	8	Game day nutrition
May	9	Dealing with injury <i>Early May — relevant as sport season peaks before exams.</i>
July	10	Napping & sleeping in <i>A light, practical close after GCSE exams.</i>

Year 12

Resilience & independence

Developing the mental strength and life readiness needed for the challenges ahead.

Sixth form brings new freedoms — and new risks. Year 12 athletes face burnout, increased training loads, greater social pressures, and the beginning of serious university decisions. This pathway builds genuine resilience, equips athletes to recognise and respond to mental health challenges in themselves and others, and begins the transition conversation around higher education.

Autumn term

Month	#	Lesson
September	1	Athlete burnout
October	2	Managing stress
November	3	What is addiction? <i>Introduced in the context of sport culture and performance.</i>

Spring term

Month	#	Lesson
January	4	When you're struggling
February	5	When others are struggling
March	6	Caffeine & sleep

Summer term

Month	#	Lesson
April	7	Is college or university for me? <i>Starts the university conversation ahead of Year 13.</i>
May	8	Gaining independence
June	9	Why do some athletes dope?
July	10	Switching off <i>An important close before a demanding summer of sport.</i>

Year 13 Transition & identity

Preparing athletes for the leap into senior sport, university, and life beyond school.

Year 13 is a year of endings and beginnings. Athletes are navigating UCAS applications, A-Level exams, the transition from junior to senior sport, and the prospect of leaving behind the structures that have defined their lives. This pathway supports every stage of that journey — and closes, deliberately, with Life After Sport as a reflective, forward-looking final lesson.

Autumn term

Month	#	Lesson
September	1	Junior to senior transition
October	2	Choosing a college/university <i>Timed to support UCAS decisions — application deadline is January.</i>
November	3	Student accommodation <i>Helps athletes factor living arrangements into their university choice.</i>

Spring term

Month	#	Lesson
January	4	The university environment <i>Delivered after the UCAS submission deadline.</i>
February	5	Managing anxiety
March	6	Boundaries Safeguarding

Summer term

Month	#	Lesson
April	7	How drug testing works
April	8	Alcohol as student-athletes <i>Timely ahead of end-of-year events and university transition.</i>
May	9	Mental toughness <i>A motivating lesson delivered before A-Level exams begin.</i>
July	10	Life after sport <i>The final lesson in the programme — a reflective, forward-looking close.</i>

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