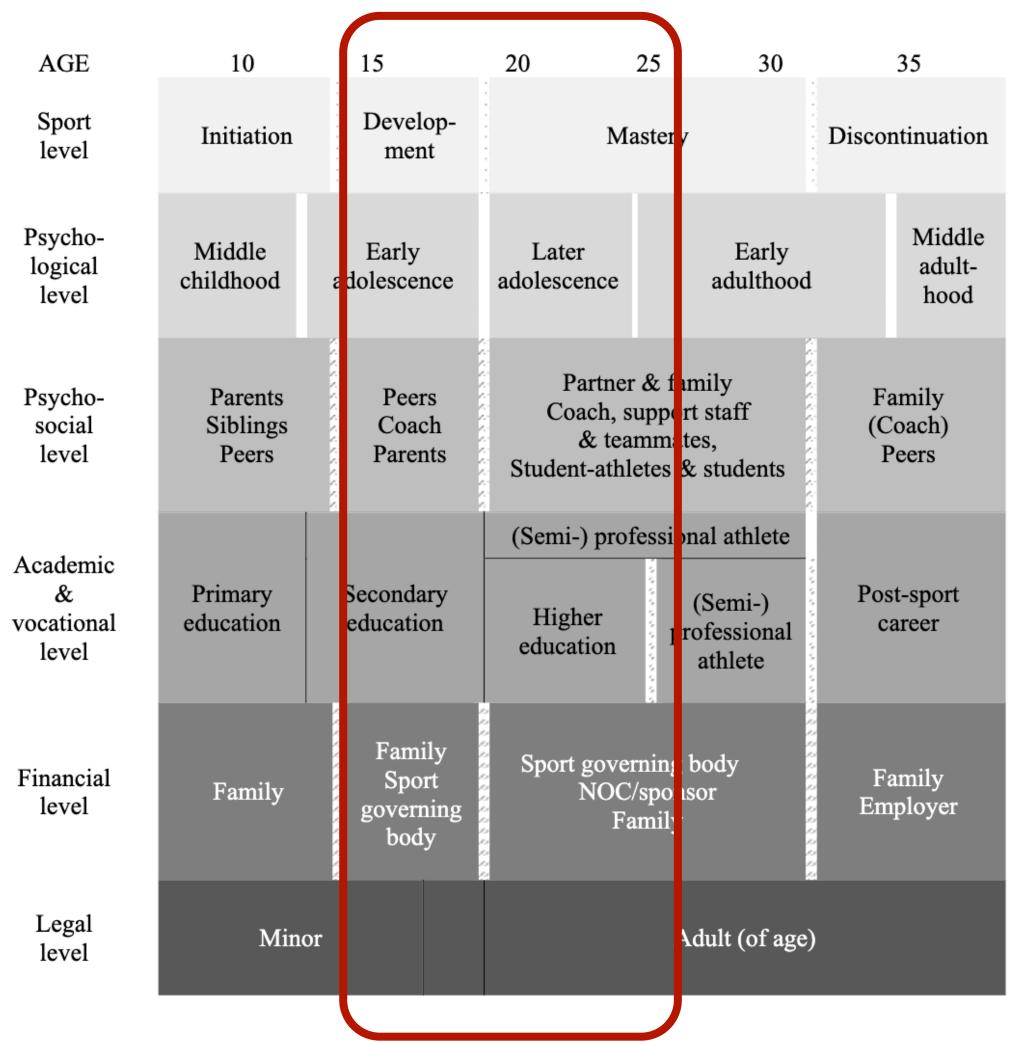
Supporting Athletes Facing the Junior to Senior Transition

Alice Stratford









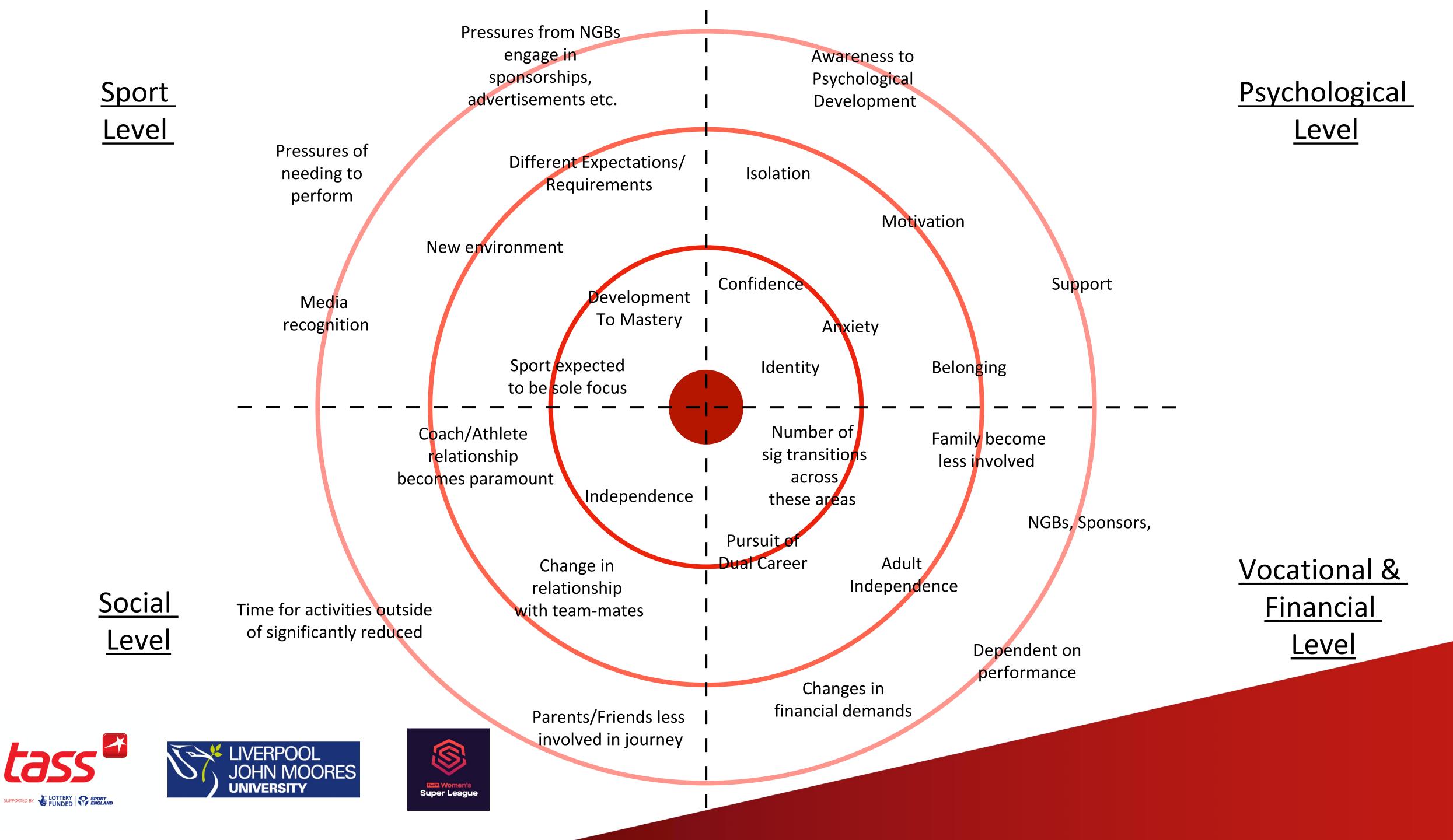
Note. A wavered line indicates that the age at which the transition occurs is an approximation.

Fig. 1. The holistic athletic career model representing transitions and stages faced by athletes at athletic, psychological, psychosocial, academic/vocational, financial and legal levels of development. *Note.* A wavered line indicates that the age at which the transition occurs is an approximation.









Differences in the Transition Across Sports

Team Vs. Individual Seasonal
Competitions
Vs.
Long Competition
Cycles

Expected Vs.
Un-Expected

Transitioning
Alone
Vs.
Group
Transitioning

Prepared For Vs.
Unprepared For





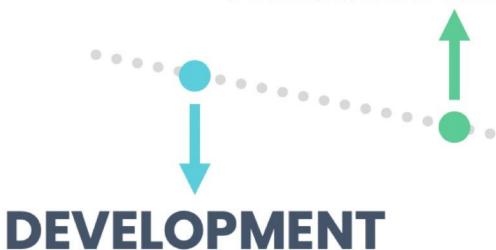


TRANSITION TIMELINE

A TYPICAL JOURNEY FOR A MALE FOOTBALLER

INTERNATIONAL DUTY (U15+)

From this age players are eligible to be chosen to represent their country; this means they could be called up for camps and tournaments in their home country and abroad.



More comfortable,

development environment –

Every 2 years players must

fight to be offered a place in

the next age group up to

continue their playing journey.

POST-ACADEMY (U21-U23)

be chosen to represent their pe called up for camps and country and abroad.

Mastery/Results environment – this is when players start to get their first professional training contracts. The environment becomes tougher and players continually fight for their place in the squad and their right to play. If players are not thought to be talented enough to go on loan (or in exceptional cases straight to the first team)< they are released and must find themselves a new club.

FIRST TEAM

Results environment – if able to prove themselves as worthy of the first team, players will be offered a full-time contract. It often takes many years.

And multiple different loan contracts/new clubs before a player gets to this point.



Performance environment – It is here that players will be offered full-time contracts and will focus solely on their football careers (finishing apprenticeships and education at 18 in order to do this).



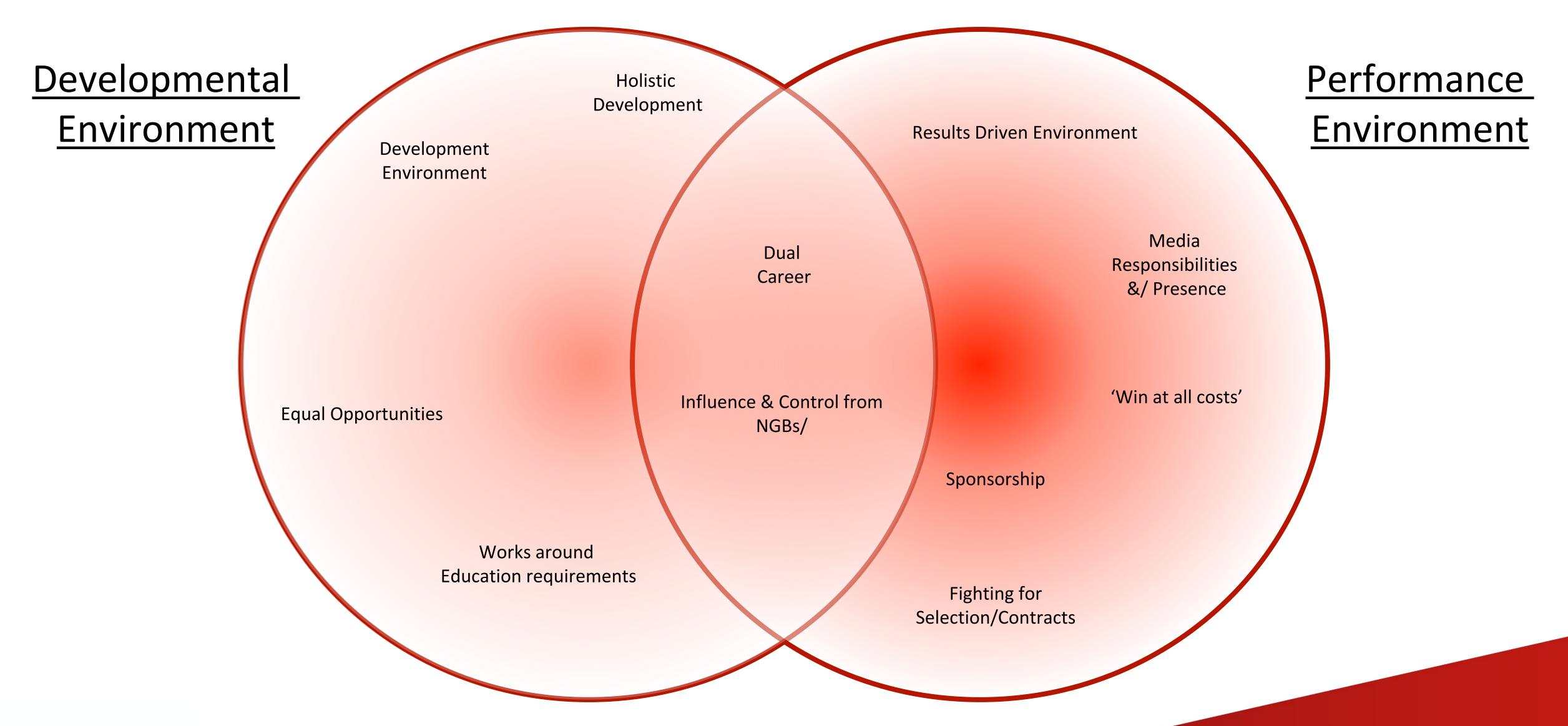
LOAN CONTRACT

Players often are sent out on loan to lower league first teams to experience senior football. This allows them to develop to a standard which would allow them to survive at first team level later in their career.





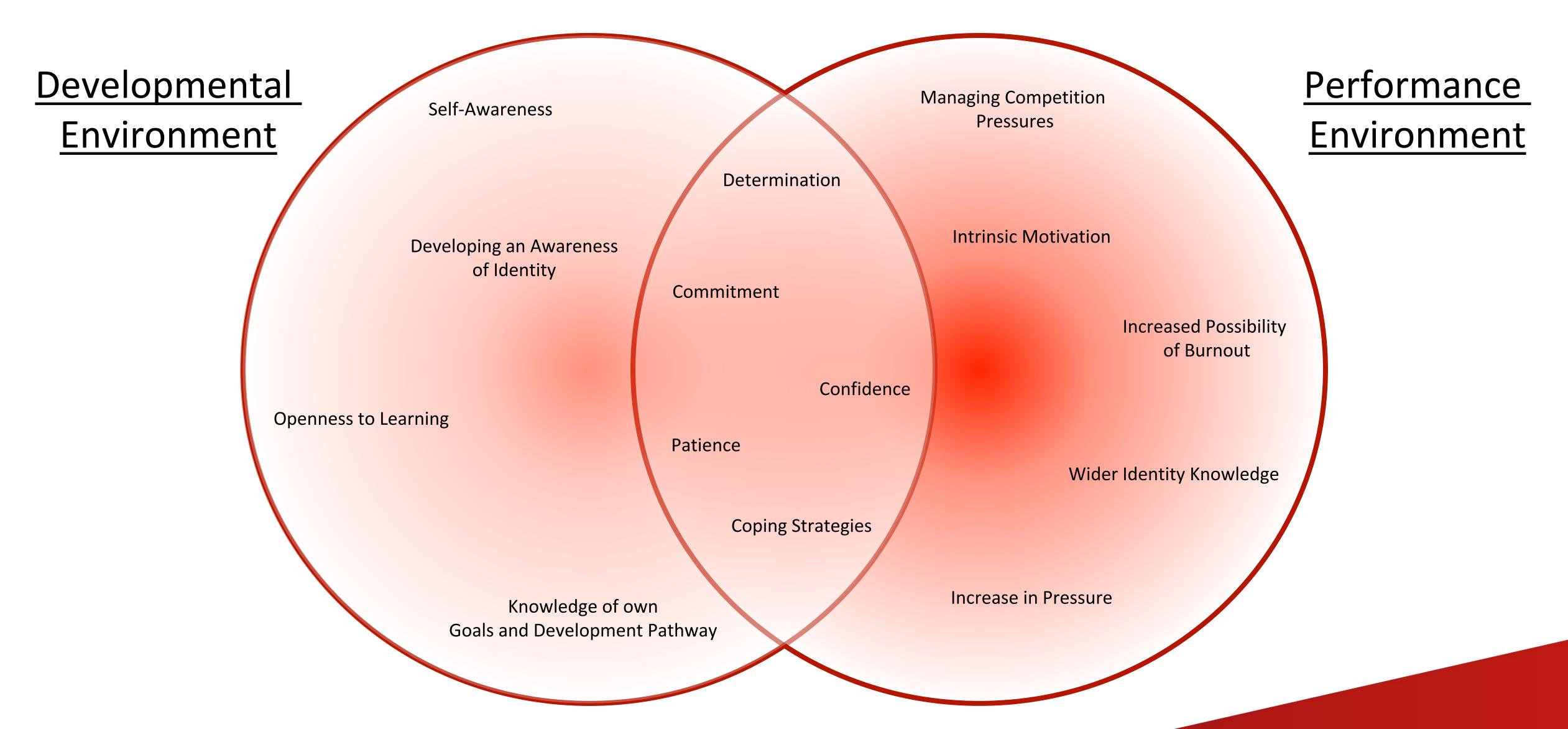


















Dr. Karla Drew @KarlaLDrew



A Cross-Sectional Analysis of Athletes' Experiences of the Junior-to-Senior Transition (Successful vs Unsuccessful)

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the study was to understand British track-and-field athletes experiences of the junior-to-senior transition. The study looked to explore the perceptions of athletes who experienced a successful junior-to-senior transition as well as those who experienced an unsuccessful transition.

Through interviews, the study looked to understand factors that athletes perceived to aid or hinder their transition outcome (e.g., What made the transition difficult? What helped you to make the transition? What support/resources would you have liked during the transition?).

RESULTS:

A total of 22 themes were constructed for those who experienced a successful junior-to-senior transition, compared to 25 for those who experienced an unsuccessful transition.

These themes were grouped into the following four categories:

INDIVIDUAL **FACTORS**

EXTERNAL FACTORS

CULTURAL & ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

PARTICIPANTS:

In total, 10 athletes were interviewed to explore their perceptions and experiences of the junior-to-senior transition.

5 athletes who successfully transitioned

- 3=female, 2=male
- Aged 26-32
- All athletes competed in an Olympic Games, a World Athletics Championships and a European Athletics Championships.
- Winning medals at the Olympic Games (n=3), World Athletics Championships (n=4), and European Athletics Championships

5 athletes who unsuccessfully transitioned

- 1=female, 4=male
- Aged 26-37 All athletes competed for Great Britain at either a World Junior Athletics
- Championships or a European U23 Athletics Championships.
- World Junior Champion (n=1), World Junior/European u23 finalists (n=4).

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Purpose of the intervention

The purpose of the intervention was to:

- provide athletes with appropriate education in order for them to manage sport and non-sport demands whilst negotiating the transition
- educate athletes on the importance of social support whilst providing athletes with opportunity to develop their support network (e.g., mentoring)
- support the holistic development of athletes in both their sporting and non-sporting lives

Topic

Talk: A Successful Transition by Dame Jessica Ennis-Hill Talk: A Challenging Transition by Matthew Lambley

Personality: Understanding your Personality (Spotlight profile)

Performance Lifestyle: Financial Advice/Planning

Performance Lifestyle: Effective Time Management

Sport Psychology: Coach-Athlete Relationship

Sport Psychology: Building Confidence for the transition

Physiotherapy: Looking after your Body during the Transition

Mentoring: Learn from Experienced Senior Athletes

Social Support: Supporting your Athlete through the Transition – Strategies for Coaches

Nutrition: Fuelling your Body during the Junior-to-Senior Transition

Social Support: Supporting your Athlete through the Transition – Strategies for Parents

Talk: My Transition into Elite Swimming by Jay Lelliott

Sport Psychology: Goal Setting for the Transition Period

Coping Strategies to Manage the Transition

Sport Psychology: one-on-one support

Considerations when Supporting an Athlete



When will the athlete know if they've been successful in the transition? How does this line up with coach/NGB expectations?



When will the transition be seen to be complete?



What can the athlete do to prepare for the transition? How does your role support the athlete's preparation



What is the time-frame of the transition?



What is the athlete's experiences of transitions in the past? How did the athlete handle these transitions?



What is the athlete's support system like?



Are any other team-mates/athletes going through the same transition?



What are the athletes expectations of the transition?







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