

SECTION

1

CAREER PATHWAYS
IN PHYSICAL
EDUCATION AND
HEALTH



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH

Career Pathways in Physical Activity and Sports

INTRODUCTION

Have you considered what you want to do as a profession in future? Is it related to physical education and health?

This section focuses on the identification and discussion of the career pathways in physical education and health. It also describes the professional attributes and mindset required for practice in the Physical Education and Health (PEH) industry.

Knowledge about the various careers in a particular subject area will help you select the right education and skills needed to obtain and support the chosen career. Careful and well-informed decisions regarding a career can increase the chances of your success. The section will provide you with the fundamental knowledge and functional understanding of the subject by employing different interactive teaching strategies, resources, differentiation and assessment methods to support your learning.

At the end of this section, you should be able to:

- Identify and discuss career pathways in Physical Education and Health and the professional attributes and mindset required for practice.

Key Ideas

- A career is a long-term occupational pursuit for an individual.
- Career pathways in physical education and health include sports psychology, sports journalist, PE teacher, sports coach, etc.
- Choosing a career that aligns with one's interest, skills and passion creates job satisfaction, increases productivity, creativity and innovation, etc.
- A successful career in physical education and health requires certain skills and mindsets.
- Sport is any physical activity that is bound by rules and regulations
- Sports can be performed as a career
- Required mindsets and skills of a professional athlete include physical fitness, competitiveness, ability to perform under pressure etc.
- Professional athletes are role models and contribute to society and sports development. Examples include Azumah Nelson and Asamoah Gyan.

CAREER PATHWAYS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Meaning of Career, Profession and Career Pathways

Career: A career refers to a long-term pattern of work or professional pursuit that an individual undertakes throughout their life. It often involves a series of jobs, occupations or positions within a specific field or industry, like PEH.

Career pathway: A career pathway is a strategic approach to planning professional development. It involves connected employment opportunities that can lead to achieving specific career goals overtime.

Career pathway in PEH: A career pathway in PEH is the occupation or profession you choose in PEH. For example, physical education teacher, coach for any of the athletics disciplines or games, sports journalist, sports lawyer, sports psychologist, health educators, health promoters, physiotherapists, massage therapist, sports medicine, etc.

Importance of Choosing a Career that Aligns with Interests, Skills and Passions

What will inform your choice of career? What are some things you need to consider in choosing a career? Did some of the points being discussed below cross your mind?

1. **Job satisfaction:** When individuals pursue careers that are aligned with their interests, skills and passions, they are more likely to love and enjoy their work. This leads to higher job satisfaction, career growth, overall happiness and career success in their professional life.



Fig 1.1 Colleagues satisfied with the job done

2. **Motivation and drive:** Choosing a career that aligns with your interests, skills and passions gives you the motivation and zeal to excel in the field. You are likely to become more enthusiastic about learning and improving your abilities to be successful in that career.

3. **Increased productivity:** When individuals engage in work they genuinely enjoy, they are more likely to be productive. Peoples’ passion and eagerness always help them go the extra mile to achieve better results in their careers.



Fig 1.2 Illustration of positive effect of increased productivity

4. **Better performance:** When individuals work in fields that match their interests, skills and passions, they are more likely to perform at their very best. Their natural abilities are put to good use, which enables them to excel and achieve success in their careers.



Fig 1.3 Satisfaction and passion leads to better and 100% performance

5. **Long-term commitment:** A career that aligns with your interests, skills and passion is more likely to keep you engaged and committed over a long period of time. You are very likely to be motivated to invest time and effort into developing your career to a high level.



Fig 1.4 Long term commitment is derived from fulfilment from work

6. **Creativity and innovation:** Pursuing a career that aligns with your interests, passions and aspirations encourages creativity and innovation. The desire serves as a driving tool for you to think outside the box to bring new and additional ideas and solutions to your career or work.
7. **Resilience and perseverance:** Pursuing a career that you are passionate about helps to develop resilience and perseverance. When faced with challenges or setbacks, your passion for the work will drive you to overcome the obstacles and continue moving forward.

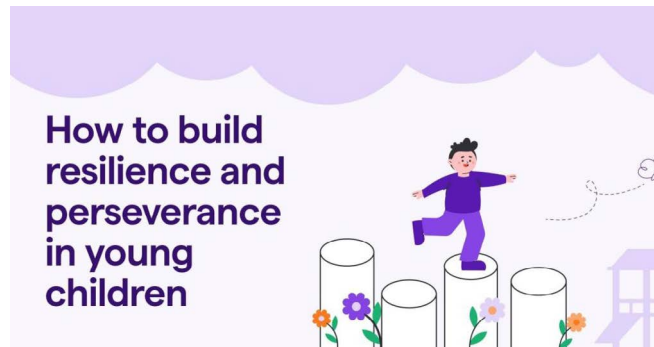


Fig 1.5 Building resilience and perseverance is beneficial in pursuing a career

8. **Greater job opportunities:** Choosing a career that aligns with your interests, skills and passions opens a world of job opportunities. You are more likely to excel in your field and be exceptional or stand out among your colleagues. This is likely to increase your chances of finding rewarding, enjoyable employment.



Fig 1.6 Having an interest in a chosen career opens a world of job opportunities

9. **Positive impact:** Working in a field that aligns with your interests and passions allows you to make a positive impact on your organisation and society. You are more likely to excel in your field and stand out among others, increasing your chances of finding rewarding employment.

NB: An important point to consider is the **sense of security** a great job you are interested in provides. Changing jobs can be emotionally, professionally and financially stressful. Employees who follow their interests to select their career feel more secure when working for organisations that keep them interested and challenge them to grow professionally.

Physical Education and Health-Based Career, and Professional Pathways

The following are some of the physical education and health-based career and profession pathways. The skills and mindsets required for each are discussed:

1. **Sports psychologist:** A sports psychologist is a professional who sees to the psychological aspects of sports and athletic performance. They work with athletes to enhance their mental skills, develop strategies for performance improvement, manage stress and anxiety and promote overall well-being of athletes in the sports industry.

The Skills and Mindset of a Sport Psychologist

To become a **sports psychologist**, you will need a combination of essential skills and qualifications. Sports psychologists require:

- a. Critical thinking skills
- b. Interpersonal and communication skills
- c. Advanced knowledge of sports medicine and exercise science
- d. Understanding of sports related injuries and common treatments
- e. Advanced knowledge of stress management and mental conditioning techniques
- f. Ability to assess athletic performance and use psychological tools to improve it
- g. Ability to identify and treat psychological issues (for example, performance anxiety)
- h. Research skills
- i. Empathy



Fig 1.7 Clear mindset influences better performance

- 2. Sports law/lawyer:** Sports law refers to the legal regulations and principles that govern the sports industries. It covers professional and amateur athletes, team ownership, contract negotiations, leagues, broadcasting and sponsor issues. It ensures fairness and stability in the sports industry, protects athletes' rights and promotes the growth and success of the sports world. A sports lawyer, also known as a sports law attorney, is a licensed legal professional representing athlete, industry boards, teams, leagues and other sports organisations in their legal issues.

The Skills and Mindset of a Sports Lawyer

To embark on a successful career as a **sports lawyer**, learners will need a combination of legal expertise and a passion for the sports industry. This includes:

- a. An interest in, and knowledge of, sport
- b. A legal qualification
- c. Relevant work experience
- d. Attention to detail
- e. Ability to craft clear and effective legal documents
- f. Ability to analyse and solve complex problems related to sports law
- g. Negotiating and networking skills
- h. Ability to build relationships and advocate for clients



Fig 1.8 Correct procedures and behaviours in sports

- 3. Video analyst:** Video analysts use video to analyse the performance of players. They monitor and record sport performances for teams and organisations. They liaise with coaches and athletes in training and competitive environments to ensure improvements in their performance. They watch back footage to compile detailed reports that break down player movements, player statistics, decision making and overall performance which help coaches to identify mistakes made by players during a game, come up with solutions, change formations or tell players areas where they could improve as well as share greatest moments when it happens and when it matters.

The Skills and Mindset of a Video Analyst

To be a video analyst requires:

- a. A degree in a related field such as computer science, mathematics, or engineering
- b. Expertise in video editing software
- c. Ability to interpret and analyse video footage
- d. Knowledge of graphic design software
- e. Strong visual and analytical skills
- f. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- g. Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- h. Capability to remain organised and manage multiple projects at once
- i. Familiarity with the fundamentals of video production
- j. Ability to generate creative ideas and solutions



Fig 1.9 Video analyst equipment

In addition to the above pictures, click the link below to see an example of a software sports video analysts use and how this helps in the work of the sports video analyst.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kh-tueshT-o>

- 4. Physical education teacher:** A physical education teacher instructs learners in physical fitness, sports and healthy living. They develop lesson plans, lead activities and educate learners on the importance of exercise and overall well-being.

The skills and mindset of a physical education teacher

To be a physical education teacher requires:

- a. A teaching degree or qualification
- b. A passion for physical education and health

- c. Knowledge of the subject matter
- d. Teaching experience
- e. Excellent communication, organisational, planning and time management skills
- f. Patience
- g. Creativity



Fig 1.10 Teaching and nurturing through movement

- 5. Recreation director:** A recreation director plans and coordinates recreational activities and programmes for individuals or groups. They work in settings such as community centres, resorts and other organisations. They organise events like sports tournaments, arts and crafts workshops and other leisure activities for people and organisations.

The skills and mindset of a recreation director

To be a recreational director requires:

- a. A degree in a related field such as science in parks and recreation hospitality or business
- b. Experience in event coordination and planning
- c. IT skills
- d. Excellent written and oral communication skills
- e. Physical fitness
- f. Team and management skills
- g. Effective decision-making and negotiation skills



Fig 1.11 Sport activities reduce stress

6. Sports journalist: A sports journalist reports on sporting events, athletes and related news. They gather information, conduct interviews and write articles or produce broadcasts for various media outlets, such as newspapers, magazines, and radio or television stations.

The skills and mindset of a sports journalist

To be a sports journalist requires:

- a. Excellent communication and language skills to report on events and create stories
- b. Technical skills (camera operation, graphic design and video editing)
- c. Knowledge of different sports and sports personalities
- d. Relationship building skills
- e. Excellent research skills
- f. Social media skills
- g. Creativity
- h. Excellent observational skills
- i. An eye for detail



Fig 1.12 Informing the world about changing issues, events and presenting the facts about sports.

7. Sports coach: A sports coach provides instruction and guidance to athletes or sports teams to improve their skills, strategy and performance. They design training programmes, organise practice sessions and motivate athletes to achieve their full potential.

The skills and mindset of a sports coach

To be a sports coach requires:

- a. Excellent knowledge of the sport or skill being coached
- b. Skills include; leadership, motivational, planning, organisational and communication skills
- c. Perseverance and patience
- d. Ability to inspire confidence and motivate performance
- e. Ability to analyse and evaluate performance
- f. Ability to create a safe environment in which the well-being of the performer is paramount
- g. Being open-minded



Fig 1.13 Coaches working with their team and coaching future sports persons

8. Sports nutritionist/dietician: A sports nutritionist/dietician is a health professional who specialises in food and nutrition. They help athletes develop strategies to eat well, support their training, performance and recovery after injury. They guide athletes to make informed and healthy choices about the food they eat, when to eat and how much to eat. They give impartial advice and guidance about sports supplements an athlete may want or need.

The skills and mindset of a sports nutritionist

- a. To be a sport nutritionist/dietician requires:
- b. A degree in nutrition, dietetics, or a related field
- c. A professional accreditation
- d. Experience working with athletes of all levels
- e. Familiarity with exercise physiology and the impact of physical activity on nutritional needs
- f. Knowledge of food science
- g. Strong interpersonal, communication and networking skills
- h. Expertise in food and customised meal plans



Fig 1.14 Good nutrition influences super performance

9. Sports administrator/manager: A sports administrator/managers role involves overseeing various aspects of sports team, athletes or organisation. The primary focus is on the business and management side of sports, ensuring the team or athlete operates efficiently to achieve their maximum potential. The manager

ensures the coaches and athletes have the resources they need to succeed. They promote sports or recreational activities, seek cooperate sponsorship and establish rules and policies of the organisation.

The skills and mindset of a sports administrator

To be a sports administrator requires:

- a. A strategic mindset, capable of setting long-term goals, developing plans, and making decisions
- b. Skills include; adaptability, innovation, collaboration, ethical leadership and resilience
- c. A commitment to the development and well-being of athletes, coaches, staff, and the broader sports community, striving to create opportunities for growth, excellence, and success
- d. A passion for sports
- e. A customer focus
- f. A continuous/lifelong learning mindset to stay informed about industry trends, best practices, and emerging opportunities for innovation and improvement



Fig 1.15 A sports administrator.

10. Sports Officiator: A sports officiator, commonly known as a referee, umpire or official, is a person responsible for enforcing the rules and ensuring fair play during a sporting event. They make decisions on various matters such as fouls, violations, scoring, and eligibility of players.

The specific role and title of the official may vary depending on the sport. For example, in football (soccer), the official is called a referee, while in basketball, they are known as a referee or an umpire. Other sports, such as tennis, golf, baseball, cricket and hockey, also have their own unique names for officials.

The skills and mindset of a sports official

To be a sports official requires:

- a) A strong dedication to the sport
- b) A passion for fair play
- c) The ability to remain calm and composed under pressure
- d) A thorough understanding of the rules and regulations of the specific sport they are officiating
- e) Skills include; game management, decision making and communication
- f) The ability to make split-second judgments, quick thinking and situational awareness

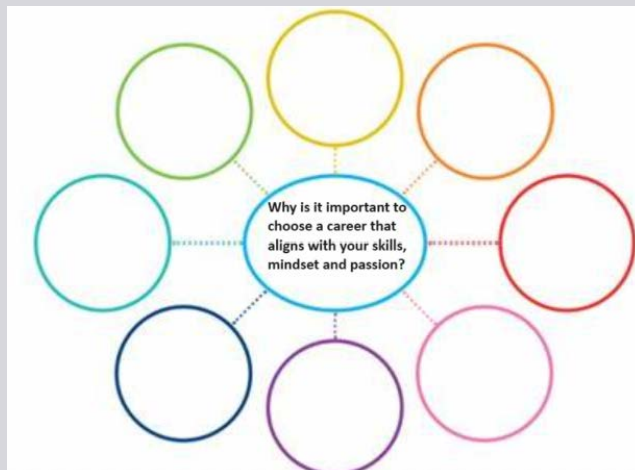


Fig 1.16 Officials of different sports

Now! Try your hands on the following activities

Activity 1.1

In a small group, think about and discuss why it is important to choose a career that aligns with your interests, skills and passions. Choose a group leader who will present your ideas to the class.



Activity 1.2

With a partner, list as many career pathways in physical education and health as you can. Think about the various people in sports groups and organisation.

Career pathways

Compare your list with that of another pair, are there any you can add to your list? Add these to your list above.

Activity 1.3

With a partner, discuss two career pathways you would like to have in physical education and health. Tell your partner why you think you would be good at this job.

Career pathway	Why I'd be good at this job
1.	
2.	

Join with another pair, and play a game of charades by role-playing your chosen career pathways for the new pair to guess.

Exploring Sports Careers in Physical Education and Health

Before we look at the various sport careers one can get into, let us define sports.

Sports are physical activities performed within a set of rules and undertaken as part of leisure or competition. Sporting activities are carried out by teams or individuals and may be supported by an organising body such as the Schools and Colleges Sports Federation, Ghana Universities Sports Association (GUSA), Colleges of Education Sports Association (COESA), Ghana Athletics Association (GAA), Ghana Football Association (GFA), Confederation of African Football (CAF), Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA), etc.

Types of Sports that can be Performed as a Career

The following are examples of sports that can be performed professionally as a career:

Athletics

Track and field athletes compete in track and field events for their clubs and some go on to represent their country at the international level.

Athletics test the athlete’s endurance, strength, and speed. It involves competitive running, walking, jumping, and throwing.



Running

Jumping

Throwing

Fig 1.17 Athletes doing what they do best

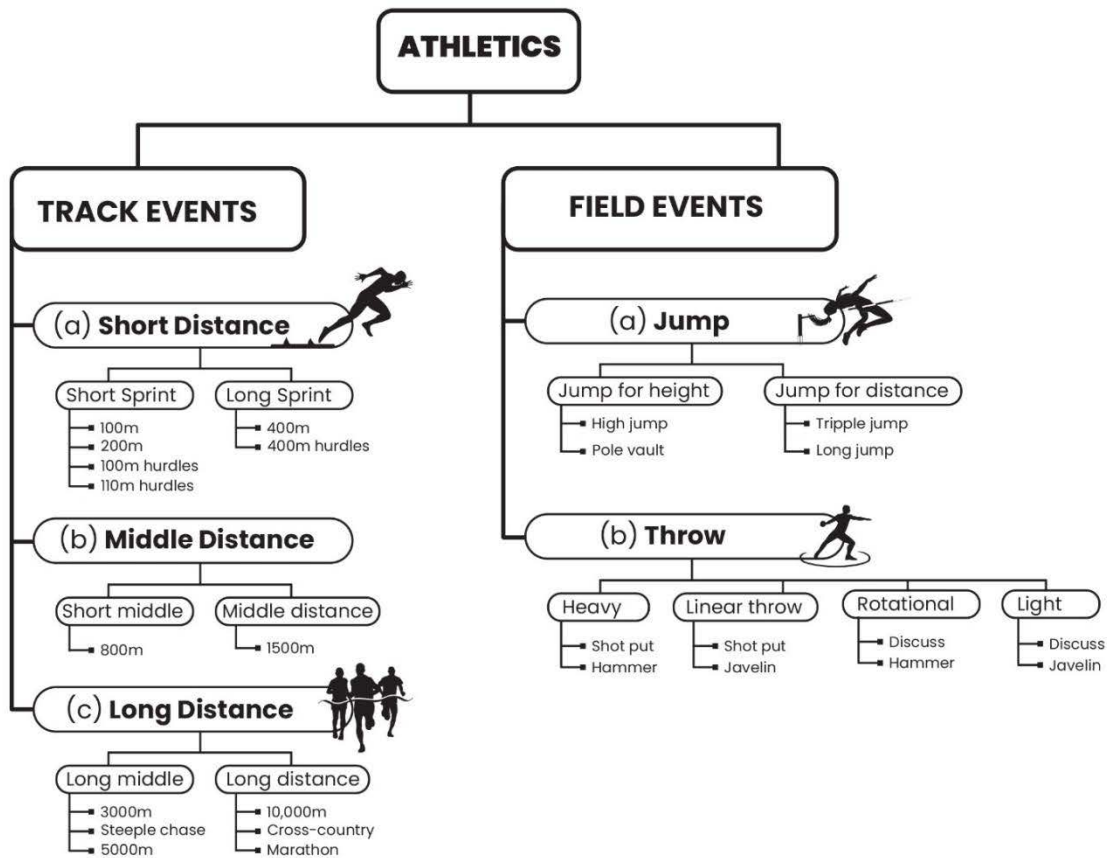


Fig 1.18 Components of Athletics

Ball Sports

Starter task: Click on the link below:

<https://youtu.be/lsFz05GqSes>

How many ball sports did you recognise in the video?

Ball sports are games that use a ball in play. These include football, basketball, handball, netball, volleyball, hockey, cricket, table tennis, baseball, polo, etc.



Volleyball



Hockey



Football

Fig 1.19 Some ball games in Ghana

Board Sports

Watch this videos below on skateboarding:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Dy-DFwH_50

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwDZnEmbIWk>

These types of sports are played with a specific board used as primary equipment. Examples of this type are surfing and skateboarding.



Board skating



Skating

Fig 1.20 Moving on wheels



Fig 1.21 Surfing the waves

Combat Sports

Watch this videos below on wrestling:

https://youtu.be/luSat_G-U64

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3U7vQLDLC9s>

Combat sports are also called fighting sports. It is a competitive contact sport that involves one-on-one combat. It covers all martial arts and ancient fighting events, whether they use brute force or specific weapons. Examples include kick boxing, mixed martial arts, judo, taekwondo, wrestling and boxing.



Arm-wrestling



Taekwondo



Boxing



Wrestling

Fig 1.22 Some combat sports in Ghana

Cycle Sports

Cycling, or cycle sports, includes all competitive physical activities that use bicycles. They can be carried out as a race or a performance that shows tricks using bikes.

Examples include mountain biking, track cycling and cyclocross.



Fig 1.23 Cycle Sports

Gymnastics

Starter task: Watch the video below:

<https://youtu.be/4CFmnVAw5bc?si=hkbTOHUDYZLpUQA->

What did you observe in the video? Keep them in mind as we discuss gymnastics.

Gymnastics is the performance of systematic exercises that require and show balance, flexibility, coordination, strength, and overall physical conditioning. These are often done by using different apparatuses such as rings, beams, and bars.



Floor activities



Apparatus activities



Fig 1.24 Gymnastics activities

Indoor Sports/Games

These are games that do not require an open field to be played. They can be played at home or in a specially structured indoor setting. Most table-top games are indoor games. Some outdoor sports were developed to be played indoors, too. Examples of these are indoor cricket, indoor soccer, basketball, table tennis and badminton.



Oware



Ludo



Draught

Fig 1.25 Examples of indoor sports

Multi-Sport Events

This refers to events that consist of different sports. It mixes a group of disciplines that are performed consecutively. Examples include biathlon, triathlon, pentathlon, and so on.



Fig 1.26 Participants of triathlon, tetrathlon, pentathlon and decathlon events

Motor Sports

This is a general term that refers to the various competitive sporting events that utilise motorised vehicles for racing or non-racing competitions. Examples include drag racing, rally cross, formula one and motorcycle speed way.



Fig 1.27 Examples of motorsports

Racket Sports

Watch the video below on tennis:

<https://youtu.be/dsWAqcet4LU>

Racket sports encompass all games that involve hitting a ball or another object using rackets. These types of sports showcase and improve the agility and speed of the players. Examples include table tennis, tennis, badminton and squash.



Tennis



Badminton

Fig 1.28 Examples of racket sports

Strength Sports

The focus of this type of sport is an athlete's muscular strength and capability. A strong athlete trains and competes by showing his muscle build or power. Examples include weightlifting, powerlifting, wrestling, arm wrestling and bodybuilding.





Fig 1.29 Body building sports

Target Sports

This refers to competitive games that involve throwing or shooting a piece of equipment to hit a target. It enhances focus and concentration and promotes patience. Examples include darts, croquet, shooting, archery and ten pin bowling.



Fig 1.30 Examples of target sports

Water Sports

Water sports cover all sporting events played or performed in water. Examples include swimming, diving, synchronised swimming, windsurfing, water polo and sailing.



Fig 1.31 Examples of water sports

Professional Athletes

Watch the video below on professional athletes

<https://youtu.be/LPNa3fdr4m4?si=42TmYh3AX2c3KSdW>

https://youtu.be/usEiloC8cPs?si=OB0r1OCL_zn2M6kf

A professional athlete is someone who has mastered their sport to such an extent that they earn a living through their athletic prowess. They train rigorously, compete at the highest levels and often inspire with their dedication and skills. Examples of professional athletes in Ghana include Asamoah Gyan, Azumah Nelson, Abedi Pele, Stephen Appiah and Professor Francis Doodoo, Janet Amponsah, Alice Annum



Fig 1.32 Great athletes of our country

The Skills and Mindset of a Professional Athlete

To become a professional athlete, you will need a combination of essential skills and the right mindset. This includes being:

- a) Physically fit, irrespective of any disability
- b) Coordinated
- c) Competitively minded and motivated
- d) Observant and alert
- e) Disciplined and willing to work hard
- f) Able to remain calm and perform well under pressure
- g) Good at communicating with others
- h) Able to accept feedback and criticism
- i) Able to work well in a team

Activity 1.4

With a partner, answer the following question. What is sport? Surf the internet or think about sports organisations and personalities and explain sports in your understanding.

What is sport?

Activity 1.5

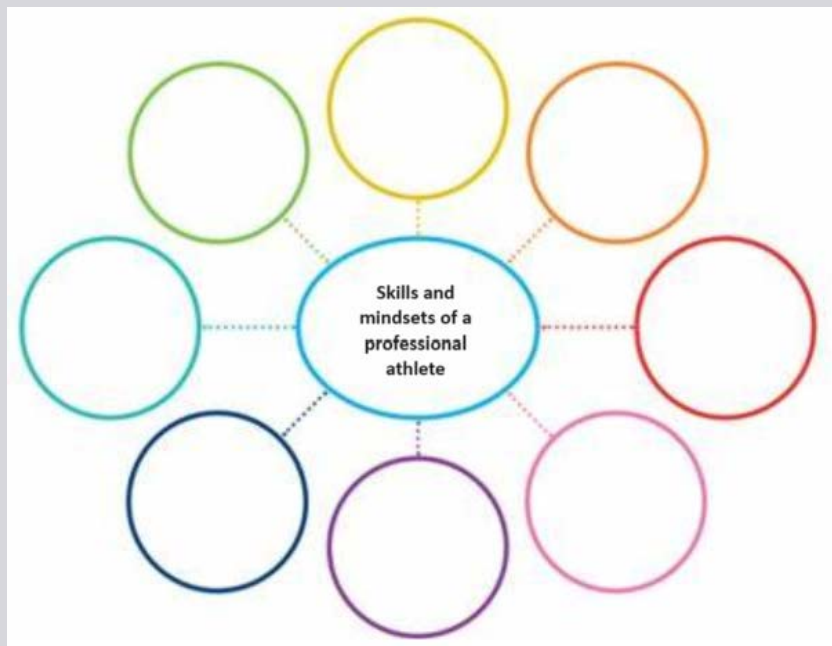
In the space below, note down as many sports as you can that can be performed as a career.

Search from different sources such as the internet, newspapers or books and note down as many sports disciplines as you can that can be performed as a career.

Sports that can be performed as a career include:

Activity 1.6

Complete the mind map by adding in the skills and mindset of a professional athlete.



Activity 1.7

With a partner or in a small group, research the career pathway of two professional athletes in Ghana. Choose a spokesperson from the group to give feedback on their findings to the class.

Use your findings to complete the table below:

Athlete 1

Name	
Early life	
Background	
Career progression	Where did they start? Where are they now? How did they get there?
Successes	
Challenges faced/overcome	
Career statistics and records	
Impact on their sport	
Impact on the nation	

Athlete 2

Name	
Early life	
Background	
Career progression	Where did they start? Where are they now? How did they get there?
Successes	
Challenges faced/overcome	
Career statistics and records	
Impact on their sport	
Impact on the nation	

Review Questions 1

REVIEW QUESTIONS 1.1

1. Identify five career pathways in physical education and health.
2. Describe five reasons why it is important to choose a career that aligns with your interests, skills and passions.
3. Discuss two career pathways in physical education and health identifying the skills and mindset required for each career pathway.

REVIEW QUESTIONS 1.2

1. Identify five sports that can be performed professionally in your locality.
2. Indicate five skills and attributes that help to make a good professional athlete.
3. Identify a Ghanaian professional athlete and describe the impact the athlete has had on their chosen sports and on the nation.

Extended Reading

- Twene, I. (2016), Physical Education Made Simple For SHS- Abiola Series, Design print Gh Ltd.
- Master key to reading music, Aseda series by Alfred Adzidah.

Additional Reading on Former Ghanaian Professional Athletes:

Azumah Nelson was born on 19th July, 1958 and is a retired Ghanaian professional boxer. Widely regarded as the greatest African boxer of all time, he is currently the 31st greatest pound for pound boxer in the Boxer's ranking. Nelson held the WBC featherweight title once and the WBC super featherweight title twice.

He had an impressive amateur career, winning gold medals in the featherweight class at the 1978 All-Africa Games and the 1978 Commonwealth Games, finishing with a record of 50–2. Nelson turned professional in 1979. In his third fight on 3rd March 1980, he knocked out Henry Sadler in the ninth round to win Ghana's regional 126-pound title. On 13 December 1980, he knocked out Joe Skipper in the tenth round to add the African continent's belt to his Ghanaian regional championship.

In 1981, Nelson achieved his first international victory by defeating Bozzou Aziza in Togo and then beating Miguel Ruiz in his first U.S.A. fight. He secured the Commonwealth Featherweight title with a fifth-round knockout of Brian Roberts. Despite these early successes and an undefeated record in his first 13 fights, Nelson was relatively unknown outside Ghana. This changed when he challenged WBC featherweight champion Salvador Sánchez on 21st July, 1982, at Madison Square Garden in New York, where he fought as the underdog.

He retired on 24th June, 2008. He is now a boxing promoter, boxing trainer and a philanthropist.

Asamoah Gyan was born on 22nd November 1985, and is a retired Ghanaian professional footballer who played as a striker for Northeast United and the Ghanaian national team. Gyan began his career in 2003 with Ghanaian premier league club, Liberty Professionals, scoring ten goals in sixteen matches. He spent three seasons with Serie A club Udinese, including two seasons on loan at Modena, where he scored 15 goals in 53 league matches. At Udinese, he scored 11 times in 39 league matches.

Gyan also represented Ghana at the 2004 Summer Olympics and in seven Africa Cup of Nations tournaments (2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2017), helping the team finish in third in 2008 and as runners-up in 2010 and 2015. He retired from football on 20th June, 2023.

Gyan has built soccer Astro turf pitches for Accra academy and Mampong-Akuapim. He is currently a philanthropist and is involved in soccer scouting through annual nationwide under-16 soccer tournaments. Since retiring, he has diversified his interests beyond soccer and has ventured into boxing promotion.

Francis Dadoo was born on 13th April, 1960, is a retired Ghanaian athlete who competed in the long jump and triple jump. He won a gold medal at the 1987 All

African Games and a silver medal at the 1992 African Championships. His best Olympic performance was 17th place in the 1988 Games. Doodoo is now a distinguished sociologist at Pennsylvania State University.

In June 2001, he was nominated by the Ghanaian government to serve as the next Chairman of the Football Association. However, he chose to give up the opportunity to a more experienced former coach of Ghana, stating that it was a chance for him to learn from his superiors.

Abedi Pele is a former Ghanaian professional footballer who played as an attacking midfielder and captained the Ghana national team. He is considered one of the greatest African footballers of all time. Pele played for several European clubs and gained fame in France's Ligue 1 with Lille and Marseille, winning the UEFA Champions League with Marseille in 1993, among other titles. He was also the first to win the CAF award in 1992.

Currently, he owns a first division club called Nania, with hopes of nurturing young talent to strengthen the country's league. He is also involved in various charity works across Africa.

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