

# Degree in Tennis Offered at Victoria University Melbourne, Australia

DR ALAN J PEARCE<sup>1,2,3</sup>, PROF. JOHN CARLSON<sup>2</sup>, AND MS JANE MCLENNAN<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Human Movement, Recreation and Performance, <sup>2</sup>Centre for Aging, Recreation and Exercise Science, Victoria University, <sup>3</sup>Department of Sport, Recreation and Performance

## Rationale

Australia is recognised as a major nation in the sport of tennis, having produced many great players. Now Victoria University has continued the tradition of leadership in tennis with the introduction of a Degree in Sport Science focusing on tennis. With the increased professionalism and technology advancements in tennis, the knowledge and scientific background needed to achieve excellence in tennis performance and coaching is becoming paramount. Victoria University has recognised the need for specialised and advanced education and training which specifically meets the industry driven demands for expertise and training for the tennis industry.

Prior to the development of the Victoria University Degree, Bachelor of Applied Science in Sport Science [Tennis], there did not exist a tertiary level of study which focuses on the *scientific foundations* underpinning and *practical skills* in learning and performance of the sport of tennis.

## Why the Degree in Tennis Science?

The introduction of this course follows a critical appraisal of professional preparation of tennis players from around the world. To date, no opportunities exist for education and preparation of elite tennis players, teachers/coaches, and sports scientists with a focus on the sciences in tennis. Currently, there are limited tertiary studies in tennis at Universities across the world. Further, these programs focus primarily in the areas of Management and Administration with little of no attention placed on the *science* of the performance of the game itself. Educational content traditionally has thus focused on giving students with an interest in tennis, the business qualifications to work in an administrative position. These qualifications provide students with competencies such as management for clubs, recreational resorts and other tennis-related businesses, but the scientific preparation of the tennis athlete and the coach is generally ignored or only covered superficially.

Many promising tennis players aspire to play on the professional tour, but the competition is extremely tough, creating limited opportunities. Many of these players who do not remain on the tour will turn to coaching or teaching tennis. Under the current conditions in which these elite tennis players are trained and prepared, very few would be qualified to coach as they have not been trained or educated to be coaches in the specific field of tennis.

The Victoria University degree is aimed specifically at this void in the preparation of players and coaches. It will assist the players to aspire to achieve his/her maximum playing ability armed with the scientific knowledge and skills to understand the many aspects of tennis which need be optimised to achieve their personal best. For the development of the coach this will be the first tertiary degree

program which aims to produce coaches who have solid tertiary backgrounds in the sciences for tennis.

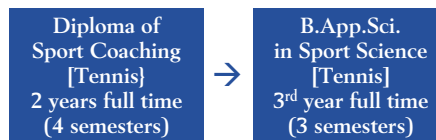
## Where is the Degree offered?

Victoria University is located in Melbourne, Australia. Melbourne is the home of the Australian Open, one of the four Grand Slam events.

Victoria University is also in a unique position to offer this course as it has both access to specialised staff knowledge and strong industry partnerships with high calibre and quality tennis facilities and expertise around Melbourne.

## Structure of the Tennis Degree

The Bachelor of Applied Science in Sport Science [Tennis] is a 3-year (7 Semester) full time (or part-time equivalent) course of study.



Academic classes will typically be taken in the morning with the afternoons dedicated to practice, coaching and competitive play. Coursework in the Degree includes subjects such as: Physiological Bases of Tennis Performance, Applied Psychology of Tennis, Tennis Biomechanics, Technology and Tennis, Teaching and Coaching techniques, Exercise Prescription and Training for Tennis & Motor Learning and Skill Development. Full subject details are available upon request.

## Who are the potential students?

The Bachelor of Applied Science in Sport Science [Tennis] course is designed for students who aspire to study and develop both a skills and a strong scientific knowledge base for tennis performance, sports science and coaching expertise. The course will appeal to elite developing tennis players but also those who aspire to enter the tennis industry in other roles.

## What is required to enter the Course

Successful completion of final year of study at High School and successful English language requirement of IELTS 5.5. There is no playing competition standard required at this time, but some experience at playing tennis would be considered as mandatory.

Advanced standing from other overseas study will be considered, such as two year sport or human movement programs at Junior or Community Colleges.

## Outcomes from the Degree:

The Bachelor of Applied Science in Sport Science [Tennis] will allow graduates to extend scientifically strategic competencies and build upon existing skill levels. Demands for a higher level of knowledge increasingly reflect growth in opportunities of recreation-

al, semi professional and professional players and greater demands for qualified coaches both nationally and internationally.

The new course will provide specialist education and practical skills in the area of Tennis Education and Professional Preparation. In addition to expanding the specialist knowledge base of Tennis performers and coaches, the course will promote awareness of the broader issues that surround tennis performance and professional career development in a sporting climate in which the demands placed on participants, and the gains or costs of participation, can be exceedingly high. The current proposal will focus on the attainment of professional skills and knowledge related to performance in the profession of tennis both from a playing and teaching perspective. Graduates will be able to pursue positions in the tennis industry in the knowledge that they possess the latest scientific developments and expertise

## Cost of the Course

The cost of the course for non-Australian students is A\$10,000<sup>1</sup> per semester.

This fees covers:

- Academic tuition and materials;
- Tennis coaching of three days at three hours per day with fully qualified coaches to student ratio of 1:4 and one day in which coach supervises students with practice match-play. These are conducted at Kooyong International Tennis Stadium;
- Competition each week in a registered Tennis Victoria pennant competition;
- Access to use of practice facilities at Kooyong Tennis Clubs;
- Membership at Tennis Victoria registered tennis clubs around Melbourne (subject to confirmation with clubs);
- Access to University facilities such as weight training, gyms and swimming pool.

For further details regarding this unique course of study visit the website [www.vutennis.com](http://www.vutennis.com) or alternatively, contact:

Professor John Carlson  
[john.carlson@vu.edu.au](mailto:john.carlson@vu.edu.au)  
or  
Dr Alan Pearce  
[alan.pearce@vu.edu.au](mailto:alan.pearce@vu.edu.au)

<sup>1</sup> Subject to change at anytime without notification. Course costs differ between Australian and International Students. For the latest information please visit our website [www.vutennis.com](http://www.vutennis.com)