

Sector	Definition	Example
Public		
Private		
Voluntary		
Third sector		
Public / private partnerships		

Sectors in the sports industry

Sport and leisure in the UK can be categorised into three sectors: the public, private and voluntary sectors. Within these sectors, employment in the sport and leisure industry is usually available at either local or national level.

- ▶ **Local level** jobs are those that focus on sport or leisure within a local area, for example a local leisure centre. These jobs exist within all sectors.
- ▶ **National level** employers focus on the whole country. Examples include national governing bodies (NGBs) like the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and Basketball England (BE). Not everyone who works at a national level will be in contact with elite sportspeople - most work to set policy within their sport. NGBs generally:
 - organise and run national teams
 - train and develop coaches and officials
 - offer services such as insurance to their members
 - manage the interpretation of the rules of their sport
 - where possible, invest any surplus profit back into the national game.

The public sector

The public sector is one of the largest providers of sport in this country. Public sector facilities are usually owned by the local council or local authority and include swimming pools, leisure centres, tennis courts and even some golf courses.

They are open to the general public and provide a service to the community, aiming to make sport accessible to all, particularly those who have not traditionally taken part in sport. Sometimes public sector facilities are run by an organisation that the council has selected. If a private company is appointed to run a facility in this way, it is responsible to the council and must meet targets for local participation and prove its value to the community.

The public sector does not only exist at a local level. The government includes the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), which is a public sector employer that provides public funding (money raised through taxes) to promote sport participation and excellence.

The private sector

The private sector has enjoyed large growth over the last few years. Private sector facilities are usually for the use of members only and aim to provide an excellent service to people who pay an initial joining fee followed by monthly membership fees.

Much of the private sector leisure that can be accessed by the general public is fitness focused. Most local private sector employers are fitness centres such as Nuffield Health, David Lloyd and Virgin Active. Members are normally tied to a minimum 1-year contract.

Some private sector centres are specialist, such as tennis, snooker or squash centres, but many provide a wider service. They aim to make a profit for the owners, and most of the management team will have a **performance-related pay** agreement. At a higher level, the company will aim to reward its investors by paying them 'dividends' that share some of the company's profits.

Private sector organisations are usually owned either by individuals or by a wider group of shareholders. Some centres are owned and run on a **franchise** basis; this allows them to benefit from corporate marketing and branding while providing a personal service.

Some professional sports clubs such as Chelsea FC are large multi-national private sector organisations with financial turnovers of millions of pounds a year.

The voluntary sector

The voluntary sector is by far the largest sector in terms of numbers of people involved. It provides most of the sport in this country through volunteers who enjoy sport and want to develop their club or team. Examples include local clubs that meet in the evenings or at weekends, such as football teams, swimming clubs and basketball teams.

Voluntary sector clubs and teams usually cover their costs by collecting subscriptions ('subs') each week or having an annual membership fee. They do not normally own their facilities but rent them from local councils or private organisations.

Volunteers have played a huge role in helping to provide sport in this country for many years, and are often described as the backbone of UK sport. This was especially true at the London 2012 Olympic Games.

The third sector

The third sector is a range of organisations that are neither public nor private. It is essentially another name for the voluntary sector and includes providers such as community organisations, charities, religious associations and other community groups. These organisations are typically 'value driven', choosing to reinvest any profits to improve the performance of the organisation or to address targets such as improving people's health by encouraging sports participation.

Public/private partnerships

Dual use, community use and partnership centres are also growing sectors.

Public/private partnerships are when both public and private organisations are involved in the funding, operation or use of a facility. This can be beneficial, as it may release funding to build a new facility that a public organisation could not afford alone.

For example, a local council might give a private property developer permission to build a large shopping centre but insist that they also make a contribution to the community by building a new facility, such as a leisure centre. This is called a 'planning gain'. It can lead to a partnership between the public and private sectors.