

# SPOTLIGHT ON DR SACHA FULTON

ACCREDITED SPORTS SCIENTIST,  
PERTH



In her extensive studies as an accredited sports scientist and experience working as a physiologist with Olympic and Paralympic athletes, Dr Sacha Fulton is the embodiment of her motto that success is what happens when preparation meets knowledge.

“We try to bring out the very best in people, physically and mentally, and it's a wonderful feeling. How far can we go? What are we really capable of? When you combine passionate staff and hard-working athletes the mix can be electric.”

## Give us your bbq pitch. What do you do?

I help individuals in the sporting, education and corporate worlds unlock potential and cultivate greatness to enable high performance, develop team culture and realise full capacity. So, in my work today, I'm not just working with elite athletes and sporting clubs. I'm working with teachers and school students, as well as leaders and teams within corporate, community and non-profit organisations.

## Did you always plan to work in this industry?

I loved animals as a child and wanted to be a vet, but after a frank discussion with the headmistress of my school, she made me realise I needed to play to my strengths and studying all the heavy science subjects wasn't going to be the best path for me. She encouraged me to take some lighter subjects, so I opted for PE studies, textiles and design. Completely off kilter, but it was brilliant for me. I worked incredibly hard and it has paid off.

## So, how did you get into sports science?

I took a gap year and that helped me realise sport science was an area I wanted to explore more. So I enrolled at the University of Technology, Sydney, and on completing my degree in Human Movement & Sports Science I was awarded a scholarship with my university to complete a one-year honours degree in Sports Science.

Through my amazing lecturer and tutor, I got some work at the Sydney Academy of Sport testing athletes, including players at the Sydney Swans, Australian rugby team and NSW Waratahs. From there, I took the role of Health and Fitness Specialist at Royal North Shore Hospital, heading up their staff recreation centre. But I was still only a sports scientist in training and was keen to level-up my career. So, I called the head of physiology at the Australian Institute of Sport and said, 'I just wanted to let you know that I exist and I'm going to come work for you one day.' A few months later, he rang and invited me to apply for a Ph.D. scholarship. I jumped at that, got it and immersed myself in researching Paralympic swimming.

## How would you describe yourself?

Very passionate about life, very committed to my studies and very driven to embark on challenges.

## What do you love most about the industry?

I love that the industry is all about unlocking potential and cultivating greatness. We try to bring out the very best in people, physically and mentally, and it's a wonderful feeling. How far can we go? What are we really capable of? When you combine passionate staff and hard-working athletes the mix can be electric.

## What's the best part of your job?

As Lead Physiologist at WA Institute of Sport, I loved the discussions with coaches on planning Olympic cycles and collaboration with colleagues. I loved the hands-on work with athletes, putting training and testing protocols in place. It was always thrilling to see them improve, make Australian teams, compete overseas and reach their maximum performance potential. Now, in my role at Peak Preparation, I'm really enjoying playing the long game in nurturing and developing PE studies school students and athletes in regional WA, to develop their values, resilience and grow as people. I find that wholly satisfying.

## What's your best advice for anyone starting out?

Sports science is a broad area, encompassing biomechanics, physiology, nutrition, psychology, strength and conditioning. If these disciplines hold real interest for you, and you're not put off by the idea of working long hours with a fair amount of blood and sweat too, the next question to ask yourself is whether it's working with elite athletes in Olympic sport or professional sport that floats your boat. Once you've got that clear in your mind, thoroughly research the universities and be prepared to put in the extra hard yards to get your Ph.D. and ESSA Sports Science accreditation. Put yourself out there, network and take every single opportunity that comes to you, paid or unpaid.

## And what's next for you?

I've recently been asked to design a corporate leadership course and I'm really enjoying applying my knowledge of sports science to help people with leadership goals and dreams see what they're really capable of. But the big dream I'd love to realise is to attend an Olympic games as part of the professional support team. That would be incredible.

## Connect with Dr Fulton on LinkedIn

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-sacha-fulton/>

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