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## Scholarship 2022 Health and Physical Education

# SCHOLARSHIP EXEMPLAR

“Sport is an amazing outlet for so many people, it’s a struggle, it’s a fight but it’s so joyous. The feeling when you win is unlike any other, but the feeling when you lose, when you don’t get selected even when you qualify, when you’re injured, when you don’t meet society’s expectations such as owning a house, marriage, kids all because [you’re] trying to give everything to your sport is also unlike any other.”

- Olivia Podmore (*Canterbury Olympic Cyclist Olivia Podmore Dies Aged 24*, 2021)

## **Introduction**

Growing up, I always looked up to my favourite badminton player, Ratchanok Intanon. A core memory I recall is being on the couch with my family and watching her play on TV, cheering her on, and admiring the way she always looked so composed and focused while on the court. I’ve always assumed that after she had successfully established herself as a top badminton player at a very young age, her life must’ve been going well, with endless sponsorships, wins, and a bright future ahead. That was my perception of “successful” professional athletes until the tragic news of cyclist Olivia Podmore’s death. I have since realised there is much more to being a successful athlete. I’ve never considered the mental and psychological pain, the abuse, and the discrimination many athletes go through which is masked by their success and fame. Podmore’s story has led me to consider the underlying effects of high performance in sports and question what measures Sport NZ has taken to ensure the well-being of its athletes in Aotearoa.

## **What is Sports Integrity and What Does NZ's Framework Do?**

When I think of the word “integrity”, I think of doing the right thing even when no one is watching. In sports, integrity is understood as a combination of ethics and values which encourage community confidence. It involves “positive conduct by athletes, administrators, officials, supporters, and other stakeholders, on and off the sporting arena” (Gaga & Cooper, 2022). The NZ's Sports integrity framework is a document that serves the purpose of “safeguarding and regulating the play, active recreation, and sport system” and “promoting confidence and trust in the system at all levels” (*Integrity Framework*, n.d.). It is a framework that was created to ensure fairness in sports and protect those involved, in which I argue that though it serves a good cause, it has been quite ineffective in protecting the elite athletes.

This report will critically investigate and question Sport NZ's current Integrity Framework with the focus question being: Is the Integrity Framework able to uphold a safe environment for athletes? It will be broken down into three themes that present research on different aspects of the framework including. It will explore the toxic culture of elite sports along with the pressure of succeeding at all costs, how women are disadvantaged/discriminated against, and the issues and motives behind using performance-enhancing drugs.

### **History of the Integrity Framework:**

Before we can look into the Integrity Framework and what it does to protect high-performance athletes, we must look at the history and components that have led to the development of the current Integrity Framework. In 2016, Sport NZ introduced its first Integrity Framework. This aims to “support the sector in taking a consistent approach to a wide range of issues that can compromise the integrity of sport” (*Sport NZ*, n.d.). Prior to the first framework, many steps were taken to resolve/prevent issues in NZ sports. The 2016 Integrity Framework was created to tie the following into a single document; Drug Free Sport NZ (1994) (which was further replaced by the Sports Anti-Doping Act 2006), The Sports Tribunal of New Zealand (2003) and The Crimes (Match-fixing) Amendment Act (*Sport NZ*, n.d.).

In 2018, after the establishment of the first framework, Sport NZ did an extensive integrity review to reflect its “current challenges” and it involved consultation with stakeholders in NZ sport and the general public. Results from the Sport NZ Integrity Review (2018) were then utilised to craft the current Sport New Zealand Integrity Framework (2020) which added the themes of organisational culture and anti-discrimination to “aim to prevent issues arising” and “enable issues and disputes to be quickly and successfully resolved”. (*Integrity Framework*, n.d.) Although a review has taken place to establish the new and improved Framework, there are still many areas of improvement that could be taken into account, specifically to uphold a safe environment for elite athletes.

## **What is a safe environment for athletes?**

A safe environment can be described as a community where learners feel physically, emotionally, and socially comfortable (*Teamsnap*, n.d.). It is holistic, and links to the concept of Hauora where health and well-being are valued in many dimensions- with Taha tinana (the physical dimension), Taha hinengaro (the mental dimension), Taha whānau (the family dimension), and Taha wairua (the spiritual dimension) all working together harmoniously to support an athlete (*Health and Physical Education in the Curriculum*, n.d.). Hauora is somewhat addressed in the Integrity Framework, especially Taha whānau (the family dimension) outlining social well-being and how everyone participating in play has the right to be treated with respect within an inclusive and welcoming environment. However, other aspects are not as emphasized, which is understandable as the Integrity Framework is a collective framework that focuses on “fairness and equity for play” not the well-being of its athletes which it should as well.

A major flaw I see in the framework is that it is too vague. It does not identify what a safe environment is or actions taken to ensure the safety of athletes. The framework relies on its providers to “ensure that their participants enjoy a safe and fair environment” (*Integrity Framework*, n.d.) and does not specify the key indicators of what a safe and fair environment looks like. In other words, it assumes that sporting organisations are already safe and fair which is not the case. “At least 11 sports bodies, including Cycling New Zealand, Gymnastics New Zealand, Canoe Racing New Zealand, NZ Football and Hockey New Zealand, have come under scrutiny for toxic cultures” (*The Black Ferns Review Shows-Again-Why Real Change in Women's High Performance Sport Is Urgently Overdue*, n.d.).

## **Theme 1: Toxic Cultures and Pressures in Sport**

There is immense evidence that indicates that high-performance sporting culture in NZ is toxic. An aspect of this toxic culture may stem from hegemonic relationships (McBain & Gillespie, n.d.) and a power imbalance between the coach and the athletes. In 2020, Canoe Racing New Zealand faced an athlete welfare crisis as six of the nine members of the 2017/18 women's high-performance squad quit the team due to "bullying, intimidation and psychological abuse." (Johannsen & George, 2020) Although CRNZ rejects that there was a culture of bullying and abuse and these allegations were backed by the athletes and former staff involved in the CRNZ programme. What's surprising is that these allegations were made against their coach Gordon Walker, who ironically said "I believe there is no place in elite level coaching for bullying or intimidation," This isn't the first time that allegations were made against sports coaches either. In late 2018 the Heron Review was conducted, which exposed Cycling NZ coach Anthony Peden. Results from the review gave shocking examples of mistreatment of the athletes including pressure on athletes to give false accounts, fat-shaming, exclusion of anyone who disagreed with Peden's methods, and an intimate relationship with a female cyclist (Lewis, 2018).

Research suggests that "coach-athlete relationship begins with the coach in a position of power and in an authoritative, functional role (Bergmann Drewe, 2002, p. 176)." Athletes are conditioned to respect and obey their coaches and in the study, they discussed their admiration and idolisation of their coaches from their past achievements and coaching successes. (Stirling & Kerr, 2009) . When the athletes do succeed, they will often credit their success to how their coach has motivated and pushed them.

Furthermore, the more success a coach brings to an athlete, the less likely the coach's training practices and methods are questioned, which allows the coach's abusive and inappropriate behavior to be accepted and justified by athletes and parents, with an athlete saying " 'it was kind of drilled into you ... if you wanted to keep going, then this is what you have to put up with, and everyone put up with it' (Stafford et al., 2015).

Part of the Member Safeguarding focus area is that everyone involved " has the right to be safe and protected from abuse" (*Integrity Framework*, n.d.), and the Organisational Culture focus area states the "providers have the duty to ensure that their participants enjoy a safe and fair environment" (*Integrity Framework*, n.d.) yet the providers- the coaches themselves have not been able to uphold this principle, with the evidence above contradicting with the athlete's protection from abuse and statistics such as "45% of young athletes have experiences of verbal abuse by their coaches (Shields et al. 2005)." Interestingly, approximately 65% of the coaches in the same study admitted that they had used verbal abuse on young athletes and 67.7% of the coaches had experienced verbal abuse by their former coaches. This suggests the concept of social learning theory that athletes learn from observing and copying respected role models, so when the athletes become coaches themselves, the abusive behavior they grew up with could be also projected onto other younger athletes they coach. It is very concerning that the coaches are aware of the abuse they project onto the athletes, yet still continue to do it due to the strive to win at all costs.

This win-at-all-costs mentality, though it may result in short-term success in sports, could be the stem of all the abuse and unhealthy hegemonic relationships. It is not discussed in the Integrity Framework, as it correlates more closely with High

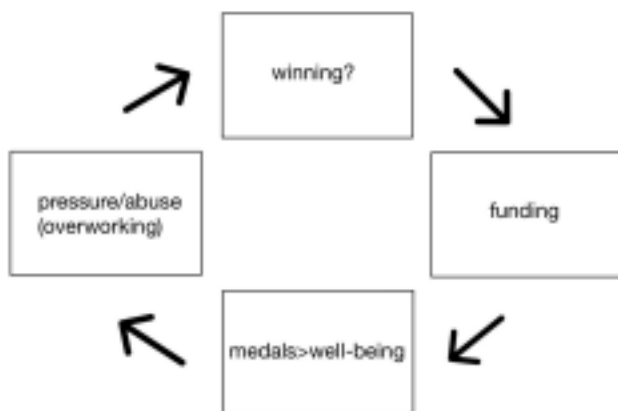
Performance Sports NZ and Balance is Better, yet it is a key motive that leads to the failure of ensuring “positive conduct, safeguarding, and protection” addressed in the framework. It neglects all the other aspects of Hauora and extremely focuses on Taha tinana (the physical dimension) treating an athlete’s body like a machine that can be “tested and then trained to maximise efficiency and therefore performance.” This is the technocentric approach and is very dangerous as it means an athlete would over-train themselves to push beyond their limits, ignoring all the obstacles, and injuries, with the goal of winning a medal and “proving themselves” to the public rather than achieving more realistic self-oriented goals. This mindset could flow onto major injuries, as shown by statistics containing a sample of 573 collegiate athletes that reported 1,317 injuries (Covassin, 2012) during a three-year period, and of those injuries, 386 (29.3 percent) were overuse injuries. Overuse injuries are those that gradually occur and are caused by repeated small injuries such as stress, inflammation, and tendonitis. Overuse injuries also have the potential to gradually increase in symptoms and chronic health consequences may emerge, with a prevalent one being osteoarthritis. The physical consequences of this mindset are substantial, but the mental consequences seem to be as great or even outweigh these physical costs.

Recent research by High Performance Sport New Zealand state that “More than twenty percent of athletes experience mental health challenges during their time as elite performers” which is fascinating as for other Kiwis who exercise recreationally, having “at least 2.5 hours of moderate to vigorous-intensity physical activity a week are 51% more likely to have healthy mental wellbeing.” (*New Research Confirms Physical Activity Is Tied to Healthy Mental Wellbeing*, 2018) This suggests that it’s the



technocentric approach and overworking of self, that results in these mental challenges turning a good outcome into a detrimental one. Olivia Podmore's case displays the mental consequences and technocentric external pressures elite athletes face in order to survive. The Integrity Framework has failed to protect her from these pressures as it does not effectively cause change and a positive organisational culture. "If you want to perform and win on the international stage you have to accept that you will be held to particular standards." New Zealand track cyclist Rushlee Buchanan states, and Eddie Dawkins, another NZ cyclist mentions, "If you have a bad performance, you lose your funding, you lose the ability to pay your rent, or your mortgage or buy quality foods to sustain yourself, so you're just getting shot in the foot." (George & George, 2021)

These anecdotes could display how high-performance sporting culture in New Zealand values medals over mental well-being in order to get more funding in order to gain more medals- a never-ending vicious cycle that will ultimately lead to the downfall of an



athletes well-being and the collapse of the four walls of a whare in Dr Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā model.

This is a very simplified diagram that shows the vicious cycle that elite athletes in NZ go through due to an unhealthy organisational culture.

I created this diagram to show that funding in a sport is gained through successful performance and winning. Because of this, medals are being valued over the athlete's well-being as funding is needed to further develop the sport, hire coaches, buy equipment, and cover any other costs associated with the sport. It causes tremendous pressure to be placed on the athletes and coaches to win as well as justifies the coaches when they pressure and potentially abuse the athletes "for the athlete's success". These elite athletes are pushed past their limits, overworked, and used like machines, which severs their mental and physical health. Because of this immense pressure and time spent in practice, some athletes may be rewarded for their hard work and end up performing well, and winning competitions, and the cycle will repeat itself. However, my model has many limitations as it is too reductionist and doesn't factor in the failure of an athlete and what outcomes it may have on the whole system and the individual athlete. It also assumes that the athlete will "succeed" and win because if they do not, then they would not be able to obtain funding and the cycle cannot continue. It also assumes that some form of abuse will occur and that abuse/pressure results in victory and success, which is not applicable to all cases.

Conclusively, regarding the Integrity Framework, the lack of guidance in the safeguarding focus area of Organisational Culture and Member safeguarding has resulted in an unsafe environment for athletes, with hegemonic relationships between the coaches and athletes as well as an underlying technocentric mindset in the elite sport culture. Each focus area seems to be quite unreliable and redundant- the Member safeguarding focus area relies on sports providers to "ensure everyone involved in their activities is aware of their legal and ethical rights and responsibilities" meaning integrity

must be built from the organisational culture itself. From this information, I look back at the Organisational Focus area and realise that the Organisational Culture in NZ sport is nowhere near perfect. On the contrary, it is fostering an unhealthy rationale of winning at all costs. A healthy organisational culture, in the Integrity Framework, is described as “one which promotes the themes of the Integrity Framework”. I find this piece of information to be very unhelpful and too vague in analysing the framework because it does not specifically address the themes of the Integrity Framework in the focus area of organisational culture. It also does not state examples or any specific examples of what a healthy organisational culture looks like and how it functions. It requires me to look back to the themes of the Integrity Framework itself, which are the headings of each focus area (e.g. the themes are organisational culture, member safeguarding, child safeguarding, etc.) This means that under the safeguarding focus area of organisational culture, a healthy organisational culture is defined as one that promotes the theme of organisational culture. It is an example of circular reasoning, a logical fallacy that uses the argument to assume what it is trying to prove. (*Psychology*, n.d.) This framework is unable to decisively define what a healthy organisational culture is, so how can we rely on these “healthy organisational cultures” or sports providers to promote and uphold a safe environment for elite athletes?

## **Theme 2: Women and How They’re Perceived**

While researching and analysing the integrity framework, I realised that female athletes are more susceptible to toxic cultures and issues regarding organisational culture and

member safeguarding compared to their male counterparts. Women in sports is a prevalent theme that has been around for many years, with many issues I can identify from the top of my head such as the sexualisation of female athletes, sports being for males, etc. The member safeguarding aspect of the framework states that every person “has the right to be treated with respect and fairness” yet women in sports are not. In my life, I have always enjoyed watching the NBA, as it is intense, fast-paced, and dramatic, and I get to cheer on my favorite athletes- LeBron James, Stephen Curry, and other NBA stars. Yet there is a culture for basketball fans to hate on the WNBA- calling it “boring”, the players being “mediocre and talentless” and all in all “an inferior product” to the NBA. It has become an online trend where content creators do a “social experiment” to the public asking “Would you rather receive a WNBA ticket or \$1?” and the videos would show the people choosing the dollar bill over the tickets even if they were courtside tickets. This is heartbreaking to me because I am a woman who truly enjoys the sport of basketball and has once dreamed of becoming a professional basketball player. Seeing the highest level of women’s basketball being disrespected and belittled discourages me and other young women from pursuing and participating in this sport as it enforces the negative stereotype that women’s sport is an “inferior product” to men’s.

The Integrity Framework specifically addresses women in sports in the safeguarding focus area of anti-discrimination. It states that “every person has the right to participate... within a welcoming and inclusive environment, and to be treated with respect, empathy and positive regard”. Again, the Integrity Framework is redundant as “treated with respect” is repeated in the member safeguarding focus area as well. The masculinisation and hegemonic gender stereotypes in sports have negative

impacts on society's perception of elite female athletes and prevent sports in New Zealand from becoming a "welcoming and inclusive environment" for all women.

"Masculine sports" are those depicted as competitive sports that require power, speed, and strength. These include boxing (Halbert, 1997), ice hockey (Krane, 2001), weight lifting, and motorsports (Koivula, 2001), and are seen as inappropriate for women. On the other hand, "Feminine sports" include figure skating, gymnastics, and tennis (Ross & Shinen, 2008). Female athletes are expected to excel in their sport while maintaining hegemonic femininity, and aesthetically looking "vulnerable" and less "dominating and strong" than males. Physically, this means that they're expected to appear slim, small, beautiful, and vulnerable. When they defy these physical ideals or participate in "masculine sport" they are bound to face a variety of repercussions including:

"mistreatment from coaches and administrators, verbal harassment by fans, fewer endorsements, decreased media attention, and/or unfair decisions by judges or officials during competitions (Krane, 2001)." Examples of female athletes defying the "feminine" stereotype is Serena Williams, who has often been called an "ape" and "gorilla" due to "her deep brown skin, her cheekbones, and her muscular physique". Williams has been mocked by other coaches and fellow players for her body, which goes to show how ingrained this mindset of "feeling like a woman" is in the world of women's sports.

(Kendall, 2015) This dilemma between the strive to succeed in sport while maintaining a specific "feminine" aesthetic to appeal to society is characterised as "The female/athlete paradox". It is very problematic as it neglects taha tinana and caring for the body, leading to body image issues in women's sports and eating disorders.

A 2021 survey by the WHISPA reporting to High Performance Sport New Zealand displayed the impacts of extreme weight loss in women's sports. It showed that "half the female athletes had experienced changes to their menstrual cycles and nearly a quarter had had stress fractures. Fifteen percent reported eating disorders." (Sherson, 2021)

This directly links back to the first theme of the report, the toxic pressures, in relation to themes of member safeguarding and the "right to be safe" in the framework, as well as pushing the body to its limit in order to win at all costs. These physiological impacts from weight loss are unhealthy and are not worth the aesthetic or perceived thought that being slimmer equates to being fitter. "I created the narrative that the more weight I lost, the fitter I would be," states Silver Ferns goal shooter Maia Wilson. Social media is also a contributing factor in pressuring athletes to lose weight, as female athletes are fat-shamed online because they do not fit into the stereotype of "hegemonic femininity".

These athletes may feel the need to look skinny and model-like as they're always in the eye of the public, being commented on their appearance, and wearing thin/tight-fitting sports gear. It is important for them to recognize that "We don't have to look like what people say. We don't have to look like supermodels; we are athletes and we are allowed to have muscles and curves." - Former Silver Fern Cathrine Tuivaiti

More discrimination female athletes face involves the sexualisation and the commodification of the female body. Many female athletes are praised for their appearances, overshadowing what skills and performances they offer to their sport, which is unfortunate and discriminatory as it does not show that they are "treated with respect and empathy" but rather are being exploited and valued for their looks over their talents. However, some female athletes could potentially see this insidious view as an

opportunity and incentivise it to gain media attention, popularity, sponsorships, and brand deals. An example of a female athlete using the sexualisation of women in sports to an advantage is Russian tennis player Anna Kournikova. She has never won any grand slam titles but is extremely popular due to the media and the public's interest in her sex appeal over her athletic career. (Liszewski, 2021) Though this has opened up many opportunities in Kournikova's life, I believe that this does not uphold Integrity in sports as it reinforces "femininity" and gender expectations.

Fortunately in New Zealand, a report from a major study into the gender balance of coverage and reporting of women's sports finds that of all 40,000 media items in New Zealand, "there is almost no evidence of sexualisation or demeaning images (less than 1%)" (*NZ Leading the World in Gender Balance of Sports Coverage | Sport New Zealand - Ihi Aotearoa*, 2021) for females in sport. This shows the relative success of New Zealand's value towards female athletes, seeing them as individuals, and coverage is "more likely to focus on preparation/training and selections/contract signing" showing women in sport with a "positive regard". However, it is unfortunate that women's sports accounts make up for only 15% of sports coverage, though it is more than that of most countries around the world, far from equality to men- showing discrimination and inequality due to gender. Another unfortunate finding is that "females are three-times more likely to have their appearance commented on" proving that the sexualisation of female athletes has been rooted deeply in society, to the point that no triggers or suggestive images need to be present for comments on women's appearances to be made.

One of the expected discriminatory actions in elite sports would be the assumption that males get paid more than females when playing the same sport at the same level. However, fortunately, there is no pay gap between the two genders in elite sports such as cricket and football. In cricket, women are paid the same match fees as men, however, in the end, men are paid more due to the difference in the number of matches they play. (*New Zealand Cricket Strikes Pay Equity Deal so Women and Men Earn Same Match Fees*, 2022) In football, a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) has been agreed upon that offers both the senior male and female teams pay parity, equal prize money, equal rights for image use, and, parity across travel while representing New Zealand. (*Equality for Elite Male and Female Footballers*, n.d.) This is a large milestone for sport as well as equality for men and women because, in New Zealand's general employment, men tend to earn around 10% more than women. (*Gender Pay Gap » Employment New Zealand*, 2022) Another positive in women's sports in New Zealand is that they receive much funding from the government to "fund the Women in High Performance Sport pilot project designed to address systemic issues associated with gender equity in high performance sport." (*Women in High Performance Sport Project - HPSNZ*, n.d.) Though this is a project of High Performance Sport NZ, integrity is shown throughout as it promotes equity and the anti-discrimination of women.

The integrity framework seems to be more effective when addressing issues relating to the anti-discrimination of women, however, it is unknown whether it is the framework itself that is upholding the safety and anti-discrimination of women or other strategies and organisations such as the Women and Girl's Strategy or Women in Sport Aotearoa. The framework, again, does not go into any detail to address specific issues such as the



sexualisation and commodification of women in sports, the female/athlete paradox, the physical health consequences of the toxic culture, or how media is involved in the perception of female athletes. It primarily serves as a holistic guideline, with aims rather than policies set, in what an “ideal” sport culture in NZ would look like. The only mention of women is the word “gender” which I believe is not enough and more detail on issues regarding women could be brought up in the framework by pushing a focus area of gender equality rather than anti-discrimination.

### **Theme 3: Anti-Doping and Performance-Enhancing Drugs**

A core aspect of the Integrity Framework along with the themes of safeguarding is regulation. It makes up the latter half of the framework and these themes are to ensure justice and fair competition in sports. A focus area that is covered is anti-doping, and how it is “unhealthy to the individual and contrary to the law and ethics of sport”. The framework supports Drug-Free Sport NZ, the World Anti-Doping Agency, and many other organisations to uphold its values of being fair and drug-free. Commendably, there are not many cases of anti-doping violations in New Zealand as well as a decrease in cases throughout the years. This is an indication of the positive impacts the Integrity Framework and Drug-Free Sport NZ has on elite sports however, there is recent evidence that this focus area has failed to be upheld and enforced.

New Zealand professional cyclist Olivia Ray has been suspended for two and a half years for her use of Human Growth Hormone (hGH), clenbuterol, and oxandrolone. Though her reasons for doping are due to pressure in an abusive relationship, the main

reason why most elite athletes dope is to increase their athletic performance. This all relates to pressure, technocentricity, and the commodification of the athlete's bodies.

Technocentricity and commodification of the body, in this case, come hand in hand. In the end, sports isn't just a game but a whole industry that involves national pride, politics, and entertainment. As stated under the first theme of toxic culture and pressures, athletes are pressured to do well and obtain better results in order to receive funding for their sport, and money to survive. They may treat their body like a machine, neglecting their Hauora to win and receive sponsors. Again, it is like a cycle as these sponsors obtain money from people watching the sports event, and people watch the sports events for entertainment. For the average person, sports events are only entertaining when athletes break records but human performances are approaching their limits and records are being harder to break than ever.

A "shortcut" for breaking records and obtaining better results could be the use of performance enhancing drugs, where Vlad (2018) argues that most of the time the coaches are the people that offer these drugs to the athletes. It shows the flaws in the organisational culture of the sport, that pressures are so immense to the point that athletes must resort to illegal substances, while fully knowing the repercussions if they get caught.

Overall, the Integrity framework seems to be quite effective in its enforcement of anti-doping as it works alongside Drug Free Sport New Zealand, to prevent, educate and test athletes against performance-enhancing drugs. Nonetheless, an aspect of this focus area that I challenge is how it deals with new performance-enhancing drugs that

emerge. I recognise that because new drugs will constantly be developed, there will always be a gap in time before these will be listed as prohibited substances. The framework does not address this issue, and it could be the reason why the number of athletes caught doping is so low in New Zealand, as most may go undetected in competitions. This is very problematic as it means that sports competitions won't be safe and fair, with some athletes gaining an unfair advantage depending on the type of performance-enhancing drug they use.

### **Recommendations:**

As stated earlier in the report, the main issue I had with understanding the document was that it was too vague and general- merely stating what each focus area wanted to achieve and why it wanted to achieve the aim. It did not state the steps it would take to achieve each aim and made assumptions that providers of sports were capable of regulating sports.

Nevertheless, as I did my research, I found out that an independent integrity working group was set up in 2018 and is working towards developing an independent body for sport integrity. Drug-Free Sport NZ and the Sport and Recreation Complaints and Mediation Service will be part of this body and a National Code of Sport Integrity will also be implemented, which I believe will be very effective and beneficial for upholding a safe environment for elite athletes as well as all other participants in sports and recreation.

What would have been very useful in the Integrity Framework was specific policies and examples for each focus area e.g. a definition of a “safe and fair” environment. Yet as I was browsing through the Sport NZ website, I found the Integrity Guidance Portal which had many resources and policies, guiding what each focus area meant and all the details that it covered. The anti-doping focus area in the online portal did not have much information as it redirected to DFSNZ, the official website dedicated to performance-enhancing drugs, and not much information was made for women in sport as there are other frameworks specially created for women and roles in sport.

I believe that New Zealand is taking the right steps to achieve its aims of sports integrity, but how the framework document is written could be changed and redirected to the portal which has the bulk of the resources and information such as e-learning resources.

An approach to the presentation of sports integrity I quite enjoy is Australia’s National Integrity Framework, while New Zealand’s seems to be heavily inspired by it. The Australian Framework is a website that’s easier to use and has different links for different positions in sports (the organization, the members) as well as a link to make a report on sports, similar to the Sport and Recreation Complaints and Mediation Service. The format is nice and simple and has extra information on research and education, combining all of NZ’s focus areas into one place that is an independent body of Sport Australia. There are videos as well that appeal to the younger audience so they can be educated on their rights when they place sports.

For my first theme regarding the toxic cultures and pressures in sports, I think that annual reviews and surveys should be taken from organisations that sign up for the protection of the framework, to ensure that the elite athletes do not face abuse or immense pressure to the point of treating themselves like a machine. An advantage of New Zealand is we have Maori core values, such as Hauora which can be integrated into the framework and taught to athletes to learn to value their well-being as a whole. This framework should refer to women more and the inequalities in sports that women face compared to men, with a possible new focus area being on equality instead/alongside anti-discrimination.

Ultimately, education on all levels is a key recommendation I would like to instill in this framework. Though I understand and commend that there are e-learning sources available, Sport NZ could make a compulsory course for its elite athletes, organisers of sport, and other stakeholders to educate them on what a safe environment means to each individual position and what goals it has for sport in NZ. It would be customised to each sporting organisation but has to be approved by the independent integrity unit as a whole. Compulsory content would also be included such as reporting issues, resources to access mental and physical help, and an underlying understanding of Maori concepts and values.

## **Conclusion**

This report has discussed the Integrity framework in regard to how it attempts to uphold a safe environment for elite athletes. The first theme of toxic cultures and pressure, more specifically the athlete-coach relationship suggests that the focus area of organisational culture in the framework is ineffective in upholding a safe environment. It is backed up by underlying theories of hegemony and technocentricity, with news providing real examples of toxic sports cultures in New Zealand. The second theme regarding women identified the sexualisation of women and masculinisation of sport, as well as the commodification of the female body. This is in regard to the focus area of anti-discrimination and member safeguarding of the framework. The last theme is focused on the regulatory theme of anti-doping in relation to treating the body like a machine to break records for funding. It recognises that the framework has contributed to the reducing trend of doping in New Zealand sport, yet raises a question if this is actually the case or not.

Overall, the changes for the document that I would like to see are more detail and indicators of how the aims of each focus area would be achieved. Fortunately, the majority of the information already exists on the Integrity Guidance Portal, which could be translated into the framework document itself.

It is refreshing to see that Sport NZ is continuously making progress and improvements toward its framework and I am looking forward to seeing how elite athletes will be affected when the new independent integrity body is established in 2024.

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## Scholarship Exemplar 2022

Subject	Health and Physical Education	Standard	93501	Total score	15
Annotation					
<p>The report is constructed with a logical structure, using headings and themes to organise the information in a systematic and clear way, where a critical perspective is evident through each section. The report opens with a quote to set the scene of the report, followed by a discussion of the candidate's own childhood experiences of idolisation of professional sportspeople. The Integrity Framework is introduced early, stating that the candidate will question and challenge the efficacy of the Integrity Framework in safeguarding elite athletes, and introduces three themes that report will explore this through. The candidate defines what a safe environment would look like and somewhat integrates hauora to indicate a holistic approach is needed. The critical evaluation of the Integrity Framework starts early in the report by asserting that it is vague and relies too much on providers to ensure participants enjoy a safe and fair environment.</p> <p>In theme 1, the candidate integrates hegemony, technocentricity, and briefly mentions social learning theory. This is done in connection with examples from an Aotearoa New Zealand context. It uses some overseas statistics on injury where NZ statistics would be more relevant. The understanding of the underlying concepts of hauora and attitudes and values to do with the 'win at all costs' mentality is evident but implicit. Theme 1 is concluded by questioning and challenging the Integrity Framework's robustness in regard to Member Safeguarding and Organisational Culture.</p> <p>In theme 2, the candidate integrates commodification, the female/athlete paradox and stereotyping. This section uses a mixture of international and New Zealand examples and covers several topics broadly, where more depth could have demonstrated stronger application of knowledge. Again, the theme is concluded by critically evaluating how the Integrity Framework safeguards women, and the supporting structures such as WHISPA and Women and Girls in Sport strategy. This section also demonstrates independent reflection and integrates the candidate's own experience and thoughts as a female.</p> <p>Theme 3 lacks depth and does not add to the overall coherence of the report. The recommendations focus on making information more accessible, educating athletes, and conducting annual reviews and surveys. This is coherent but somewhat superficial and does not have the insight or perception seen earlier in the report when critically evaluating the Integrity Framework.</p> <p>The report has not used the preferred method of footnoting references. The reference list would be strengthened by using more scientific research and publications, rather than general media websites. However, the report has fluent and reasoned discussion and evaluation around the Integrity Framework and associated issues and practices within sport, and mostly uses New Zealand based evidence to substantiate key points. There is sufficient depth in some areas, particularly theme 1, and the candidate has shown a good understanding of Health and Physical Education concepts.</p>					