



IDF Educational Plan and Academy

The EU Physical Activity Guidelines identify three main policy areas which are critical to achieve the objective of a better and healthier society through physical activity: sport, health and education. The proposal is based on the premise that higher education institutions can play a fundamental step in implementing such an integrated and cross-sectorial vision on physical activity in the EU society, as they offer a perfect context where the leaders of tomorrow (students) can participate in sports and physical activity, develop fundamental life skills, forge a life-long healthy lifestyle and fully understand the potential of sport for the development of a healthier and wealthier society. The importance of sport and physical activity at the school and university level cannot be underestimated. In 2015 there were 19.5 million students in tertiary education in the EU-28, of which 7.2% attended short-cycle courses, 61.4% attended first-cycle degree courses level, 27.8% of the second level and 3.7% of the third level. (Source: Eurostat) 24% of the young age group between 15 and 24 indicate they exercise at school or university. (Source: Special Eurobarometer for Sport and Physical Activity N°472 – March 2018). Out of the total (EU-28) of the population in 2018 (512.379.225), we can consider 73.7% employment (persons aged between 15 to 64 years old). 82.9% of the total EU-28 employment is represented by people with a medium-high education level.

These 5 areas are the conceptual pillars on which the Academy is based:

1. Sports-study harmonization and dual career (PL1)
2. Stage at the main sporting events (PL2)
3. Élite sport and grassroots sport (PL3)
4. Social inclusion, equal opportunities and fight against discrimination (PL4)
5. Role of technology for innovative coaching and sport development (PL5)

(PL1) One of the key features of sport is that athletes and coaches are requested to pursue a double commitment: sport training and academic studies. Both academia and sport clubs / federations see the other activity as a potential threat to performance in their respective fields, and the result is that lots of student-athletes are faced with a very difficult decision: quit (or postpone) their academic studies, or quit elite sport. The Academy aims at creating a new generation of coaches who fully understand the core missions of universities (education, research and innovation) and know how

to use sport and physical activity to support their fulfilment. This means for example that they need to recognise the value – and the intrinsic difficulties – of dual career programs for student-athletes and must be able to use sport as a unique instrument to develop life skills not only for elite athletes but also for a wider population of students. At the same time, coaches need to be prepared at the university level, having a double career program

(PL2) Sport means also large-scale sport events (e.g. Summer and Winter Olympic Games, EUSA championships, university sport championships, national sport championships, down student leisure tournaments). Very often these events have the complexity of major sport events, but reflect a different view on sport and its role in education and in society. These macro events should be used to stage the coaches at worldwide level, the Academy will make sure that coaches be aware of this specificity, and be able to contribute to the organisation of these events in the spirit of sport.

(PL3) Sport is not only elite sport. It is self-evident that elite athletes are a very small fraction of athletes. For most of the people, sport is a means to stay fit, to meet people, to have fun after the long days of studying, to make new experiences in managing student sport clubs, to volunteer in university sport events. The Academy aims at raising the awareness of coaches towards this very large population of students, who do not practice sport in other clubs, tend to have sedentary habits, have a low motivation towards an active life style. Coaching these students requires not only a deep technical knowledge, but also leadership, understanding of psychological drivers, openness to sport-for-fun activities.

(PL4) Several policy documents and studies highlight that sport is a universal language, which can help to fight different forms of discrimination, promote social inclusion, reduce gender gaps. As such, sport is a very powerful tool that universities can use to promote positive value and to pursue social and ethical objectives. For this reason, coaches must be aware of this potential role of sport and know how sport can be used to achieve these objectives.

(PL5) Sport is one of the most promising domains where innovation will have a huge impact in the next few years. New technologies will help improving training methods and sport performances, will make sport facilities smarter and safer, will change the experience of fans and open different forms of engagement, will offer new platforms for engaging people in sport activities, will expand the offer of sport and training methods, will prevent injuries and speed up rehabilitation. It is important that coaches become aware of these opportunities, understand how to support the collaboration between athletes and researchers, become the first adopters of new technologies to provide a validation on the field.

“Coaches are among key figures of sport contributing to address the challenges facing society, as among other tasks, depending on their roles, positions, as well as context of coaching, they may:

- influence an individual's earliest experience of sport and physical activity, supporting the development of habits related to sport, and participating in the creation of the social and economic benefits stemming from sport culture;
- have an increasing social role in the personal development of sport participants, especially of young athletes, by being positive role models, by instilling motivation and self-confidence, and influencing their values, behavioural habits and social skills;
- have a unique position in advancing social inclusion and gender equality, teaching respect for common values¹², diversities and promoting physical activity in all social groups;

- defend and develop sport integrity and the rules of fair play, as well as being among the first to be able to intervene by showing a duty of care when problems occur, e.g. in match fixing, doping, violence, exploitation of minors, etc.;
- lead leisure time services related to sport and physical activity and participate in sport-related innovation, including goods, services and training methods;
- shape the sport experience for other important interested parties, such as the athletes' family members, spectators and fans, and other social stakeholders, their impact extending beyond sport into other key areas.”

Coaches play a central role in promoting sport participation and enhancing the performance of athletes and teams. In accordance with internationally recognized and domestic sporting codes, coaches guide the participation of children, players and athletes. Across 28 member states, it is estimated that up to nine million coaches - volunteer, part-time paid and full-time paid - deliver an array of sporting opportunities to hundreds of millions of participants (The European Coaching Framework, 2017). In addition to their core role, coaches contribute to the development of athletes as people, to the creation of cohesive teams and to the building of communities with a shared interest. Coaching can also contribute to social aims by promoting activity and health (Sport coaching as a 'profession, 2011).

For the coaching skill development and education process the international standard to be applied are based on the ICCE Framework: International Sport Coaching Framework (ISCF) and European Sport Coaching Framework (ESCF).

Created in conjunction with the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF), and Leeds Beckett University (LBU), the ISCF represents a significant step toward understanding and establishing consensus on key coach education, development and employment areas. It is intended to serve as a common reference point for establishing a common language and set of principles about coaching and coach education that can be adapted and applied across all nations and sporting contexts.

The European Sport Coaching Framework specifies six primary functions for guiding athlete development and improvement, essentially defining the daily work of the coach. These primary functions have been derived from consultation and from a substantial review of the existing literature and newly developed primary research.

1. Set the vision and strategy. The coach, in partnership with athletes and teams, creates a vision and a strategy based on the needs and stage of development of the athletes and the organisational and social context of the programme. The coach develops a specific plan that outlines the steps required to bring the strategy to life and realise the vision.
2. Shape the environment. The coach works with a group of athletes and takes responsibility for the individual objectives and the institution's goals. In order to do so, the coach seeks to optimise the environment in which the programme occurs through the procurement and maximisation of personnel, facilities, resources and working practices and through the management of other coaches and support personnel.
3. Build relationships. The coach builds positive and effective relationships with athletes and others associated with the programme. This includes personnel at the club, school, federation and other levels. The coach is

responsible for engaging in, contributing to and influencing the organizational context through the creation of respectful and effective working relationships with those he is accountable to (e.g., performance managers, board of directors).

4. Conduct practices and prepare and manage competitions. The coach organises suitable and challenging practices using effective pedagogy and methodology to promote learning and improvement. The coach prepares for targeted and appropriate competitions and also oversees and manages the athletes in these competitions. The coach creates additional and relevant internal and external competitive opportunities as appropriate to promote individual and team development.

5. Read and react to the field. The coach observes and responds to events appropriately, including all on-field and off-field matters. Effective decision making is essential to fulfil this function and is a capability that should be developed in all coaches at each stage of their development.

6. Reflect and learn. The coach evaluates the programme as a whole, as well as each practice and competition, and is continually seeking improvements. In addition, personal evaluation and reflection underpin a process of ongoing learning and professional development. An important element of this process is the coach's efforts to support the education and development of other coaches.

On the other hand, European members of ICCE analyzed the current status and needs of coaching in Europe and developed a European Sport Coaching Framework to enhance coaches' learning, mobility and employment.

A suite of guidance and development tools to support European countries and sport federations build their coaching systems and qualifications also became available as a result. ICCE has extended its commitment to support the development of coaching at all levels within the Para/disability sport context. Doing so, recognizes that coaches play a pivotal role in ensuring the social inclusion of disabled people within sport and physical activity.

Hence, e-learning courses and online community of shared practices are crucial to support coach learning opportunities and ensuring this under developed, under researched and under resourced coaching context receives greater attention and support. Indeed, Coaches play a central role in promoting sport participation and enhancing the performance of athletes and teams. In accordance with internationally recognised and domestic sporting codes, coaches guide the participation of children, players and athletes. In nearly 200 countries millions of volunteer and paid coaches deliver an array of sporting opportunities to hundreds of millions of participants.

For instance, governmental bodies and sport organisations have invested in a range of programmes to enhance the quality of coaching and increase the number of coaches to meet present and future needs. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has recognised the significance of coaching through its Olympic Solidarity Programmes and the recent creation of the Entourage Commission. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has identified coaches as key agents in the fight against doping.

The framework seeks to provide a clear architecture in which the roles assumed by coaches are more clearly defined according to levels of competence and responsibility, target populations they serve and the coaches' status (i.e., paid, part-time paid and volunteer). Expected codes of conduct in meeting those responsibilities are also addressed.

The above mentioned is an enabling tool for all those involved in coaching and the development of coaches.

However, the process has clearly demonstrated that there is a strong desire to map the capabilities associated with various coaching roles. In this respect, the framework will provide a mechanism to assist in defining minimum standards for training, certifying and evaluating coaches, as well as enhancing the effectiveness of coaching in various contexts.

The International Sport Coaching Framework advocates the use of these four descriptors of coaching roles in each coaching occupation and domain. It does so while acknowledging that any given domain may or may not have coaches fulfilling each of the roles. The extent to which the roles of Master/Head Coach, Advanced/Senior Coach, Coach and Coaching Assistant exist will depend on the athlete profile and demographic within the sport and the extent to which the sport or country has begun to more clearly focus on the coaching domains required for delivering participation and performance goals.

This above-mentioned system fit perfectly with the EQF one.

Over the last twenty years, the ECC has led a number of initiatives to develop coach education within the Union. These initiatives have reflected the wider changes in the overall education landscape. The European Framework for the Recognition of Coaching Competences and Qualifications adopted at the Rio Major Convention (EFRCCQ; ECC, 2007) kick-started the process of modernising coach education in Europe and laid the foundation for its alignment with wider European structures such as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF).

In particular, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a translation tool that helps understand and compare qualifications awarded in different countries and by different education and training systems. Each of the 8 levels is defined by a set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to qualifications at that level in any system of qualifications. Therefore, its eight levels are described in terms of learning outcomes: knowledge, skills and competences.

It is therefore crucial to start developing learning opportunities for university coaches based on a EQF system. The need to transition coaching qualifications for university coaches from input-based (i.e., focused on number of hours, subject knowledge and curriculum) to output-led (i.e., centred around the development of skills and competences required to fulfil specific jobs and practical and flexible learning) is a major development need stressed by the International Qualification Coach standard and systems.

Therefore, the partners of this Academy will work together to create a new University-oriented knowledge management platform open to coaches and other stakeholders that would like to be certified for their skills and knowledge. The learning opportunities of the Academy will be based on the International Sport Coaching Framework (ISCF) and the European Sport Coaching Framework (ESCF), with the possibility to develop certain skills and knowledge according to the EQF system.

Coaches play a central role in promoting sport participation and enhancing the performance of athletes and teams. In accordance with internationally recognized and domestic sporting codes, coaches guide the participation of children, players and athletes. Across 28 member states, it is estimated that up to nine million coaches—volunteer, part-time paid and full-time paid—deliver an array of sporting opportunities to hundreds of millions of participants.

In addition to their core role, coaches contribute to the development of athletes as people, to the creation of cohesive teams and to the building of communities with a shared interest. Coaching can also contribute to social aims by promoting activity and health; coalescing citizens behind a common cause; and generating economic activity through employment, education, purchase of equipment, use of facilities and attendance at events.

In today's landscape, coaches work with increasingly diverse populations and face heightening demands from their athletes, their athletes' parents, administrators and fans. Even in voluntary positions, coaches are required to fulfil a variety of roles, such as educator, guide, sport psychologist and business manager.

At higher levels of competition, coaches are asked to emphasize positive interaction and overall development of athletes rather than simply the win-loss record. And in this digital age, the public has greater access to information, and there is increased visibility to a larger community. All of these factors make coaching both more exciting and taxing than ever before.

Each country and sport need to find the most suitable way to meet the needs of coaches and athletes. This does not happen in isolation but is the result of the interactions between the constituents of the coaching system.

A coach's primary mission is to help sport participants develop not only as athletes, but also as people. To fulfil that aim, a coach needs functional and task-related competences that are underpinned by knowledge and reflection. Coaches will have different levels of expertise, based on their experience, education and development pathway.

Coach development must therefore proceed in a progressive and sustainable way. There is thus a need for long-term coach development (LTCD). This approach to coach development takes into consideration the coach's stage of development, how the coach learns and which participants the coach is working with.

National and international federations and other providers have a key role in identifying the optimal developmental process that will enhance the learning and progression of their coaches. Recent research has indicated that the combination of athletic experience, coaching experience and a mix of educational opportunities provides the basis for a pathway that may lead to higher levels of expertise in performance coaching.

Education and development in general must support the establishment of effective behaviours, skills and attitudes, and not merely the accumulation of knowledge.

We will use three types of learning situations: mediated, unmediated and internal.

1. Mediated learning is aided directly by another person or through the use of a medium that simplifies the material of teaching. This can be formal (e.g., college or federation program of instruction) or non-formal (e.g. mentoring and coaching clinics).

2. Unmediated learning refers to when coaches initiate their learning, choose what they want to learn and decide how they wish to learn it (e.g., observing others coach, having a discussion with a fellow coach, reading a book or watching a DVD). This has also been referred to as informal learning.

3. Internal learning is the process of consciously or unconsciously reflecting on our lived experiences, which leads to new realisations. This process is constantly taking place, yet the amount of learning we take from it can be optimised.

Beginning coaches are not a blank slate. Whether through personal experiences as an athlete or spectator, they arrive at their first coaching experience with their own conception of what coaching is. From that starting point, as research indicates, coaches learn in multiple ways. However, the relevance of the different learning modes changes as coaches progress through their developmental journey.

In the early stages, coaches may benefit strongly from mediated learning opportunities provided through formal education. These can be seen as laying a knowledge foundation. This formal education challenges or confirms initial personal theories and supports the creation of a conceptual framework that helps coaches organise and make sense of their coaching practice. As coaches continue to develop, non-formal learning opportunities become more relevant; the interaction with clinicians, mentors, open-source material and other coaches provides a chance to check and challenge their emerging philosophy and way of doing things as well as gain new knowledge.

Traditionally, coach education has provided mediated, predominantly formal, learning situations. Very often, coach education has been classroom based, assessment focused and compliance driven. However, the general education trend in Europe is to facilitate the translation of knowledge into practical skills through the completion of practical assignments and practicum periods. Coach education is no different, and there is ample evidence that coaches learn well from practice-based experiences and interaction with other coaches.

The need to ensure that knowledge imparted in the classroom can be assimilated by coaches through reflection on what it means for their practice is also paramount.

All this points to the need to balance formal coach education in the classroom with learning experiences on the field, court, track, pool or gym. Experiential learning, which is central to coach development, is different from learning from day-to-day experiences: Experiential learning is intentional and can be mediated or unmediated.

An effective on-the-job learning option is the use of trained mentors. Coaching organisations must value, recognise, respect, trust and encourage the contribution that experienced coaches can offer in guiding, educating, mentoring and developing less seasoned colleagues. Coaches with more seniority must also recognise that this mentoring and support role is a core part of their professional responsibility.

Mentors can come from the same sport, a different sport or another professional field altogether. Their role may be that of trusted advisor, sounding board, critical friend or any combination of these, based on the needs of the coach and the specific situation.

Clarification of coaching roles allows for the definition of core capabilities and competences needed to fulfil them. This will, in turn, assist in charting coaches' development and employment pathways and provide a basis on which coaching roles are described and compared. Clear

descriptors of coaching roles will also help employers identify suitable candidates and potential training needs.

Likewise, such clarity will support training providers, be they federations or educational institutions, in developing qualifications with a strong focus on the acquisition of job-related competences.

Four main coaching role descriptors are proposed:

- Coaching Assistant,
- Coach,
- Advanced/Senior Coach,
- Master/Head Coach (see table).

Each of the four role descriptors applies to coaching for participation and coaching for performance.

Each of these coaching roles consists of core functions, the nature of which will vary according to sport, country, and context in which the coach is engaged.

Due to considerable variances across cultural and sport contexts, the labels of Advanced/Senior Coach and Master/Head Coach merit further consideration.

The progression from Coaching Assistant to Master/Head Coach is hardly automatic. For many reasons coaches may wish to remain in one of the three other roles specified. Some coaches, though extremely knowledgeable and experienced, prefer certain duties for which they may be or seem overqualified.

Coaching Assistant	Assists in the delivery of sessions*
Coach	Delivers sessions over a season, often as part of a wider programme
Advanced/ Senior Coach	Oversees and contributes to the delivery of programmes over seasons and in specific contexts Involved in the management and development of other coaches
Master/Head Coach	Oversees and contributes to the delivery of programmes over seasons, in medium- to large-scale contexts, underpinned by innovation and research Involved in designing and overseeing management structures and development programmes for other coaches

*Sessions include both practices and competitions

These proposed classifications of coaching roles are tied directly to on-the-job activities of coaches. They do not necessarily reflect four levels of coaching qualifications. Of course, completion of an educational qualification in no way guarantees that a coach is able to fully discharge the role-defined duties at a high level. Coaching courses that embed on-the-job training in which core competences must be demonstrated on a consistent basis provide greater assurance that the proper link between qualifications and role will be made.

A competency-based set of role descriptors (see table), therefore, represents a departure from a focus on traditional levelled qualifications which emphasise generic knowledge and are often not related to the requirements of the job.

Such qualification systems have, in the main, tended to associate the lower levels with the coaching of children and young participants and the higher tiers with coaching in the performance context.

	Coaching Assistant	Coach	Advanced/Senior Coach	Master/Head Coach
Main Roles	Conducts basic coaching sessions, sometimes under supervision	Plans, leads and evaluates coaching sessions and blocks of sessions	Plans, leads and evaluates coaching sessions and seasons independently	Plans, leads and evaluates sessions, seasons and multi-annual programmes with input from experts and others
		Leads own sessions, but will often work under supervision as part of a programme's coaching staff	Works independently and plays a leading role within the structure of the programme	Works independently and oversees the entire structure of the programme
	Encourages the engagement of pre-coaches	Supports Coaching Assistants and pre-coaches in their development	Supports the management and development of less experienced coaches	Oversees and supports the development of other coaches
Competences	Basic knowledge	Extended knowledge	Extended and integrated knowledge	Extremely broad, current and integrated knowledge
	Cognitive and practical competences required to perform basic coaching functions, with guidance	Cognitive and practical competences to perform basic coaching functions independently within an open yet structured environment	Specialised practical competences to perform advanced coaching functions independently within a changing environment	Wide spectrum of competences to perform coaching functions to an advanced level within a changing environment
	Ability to carry out a basic evaluation of results leading to low level correlations	Ability to carry out a basic evaluation of results leading to simple changes in practice	Ability to carry out an advanced evaluation of results, consider alternative courses of action leading to comprehensive and, at times, innovative changes and solutions	Ability to carry out an all-encompassing evaluation of results, considering research, varying criteria, circumstances and leading to comprehensive and innovative solutions

In performing their primary functions, coaches carry out a range of tasks that require demonstration of a variety of competences.

These can be classified according to the six primary functional areas:

Set the vision and strategy

- Appreciate the big picture. Be aware of and fully understand the context and the implications for the coaching programmes.
- Grasp the position's alignment and governance (i.e., chain of command). Gain a good working knowledge of the formal structures in which the programme operates and align the programme's rules, standards and operating procedures accordingly.
- Conduct a needs analysis. Develop a clear picture of what the coaching programme needs to look like, based on the needs of the athletes and the social and organisational context.
- Establish a vision. Develop and effectively communicate values and goals, the direction to be taken and the way of working with and for those whom they coach.

- Devise a strategy. Develop a sound strategy to realise the vision. This includes the short-term, mid-term and long-term planning of sessions, seasons and programmes.

Shape the environment

- Develop an action plan. Create sound operational plans for implementing the strategy.
- Identify and recruit personnel. Bring into the programme athletes and staff who are willing and able to help achieve the vision.
- Organise the setting and personnel. Prepare an efficient, safe and effective environment for maximising learning and improvement.
- Safeguard and protect athletes. Employ all reasonable measures to keep athletes from harm.
- Develop progress markers. Specify desired individual and team standards throughout the season.

Build relationships

- Lead and influence. Shape wider organisational priorities and promote the support of personnel to share those objectives.
- Manage personnel positively. Foster a well-functioning team composed of enthusiastic athletes, coaches, support staff and other people related to the programme.
- Nurture individual relationships. Build and maintain healthy connections with athletes, other coaches, the support team and others in the organisational context.
- Be an educator. Teach others (athletes, coaches, parents and administrators) in and around the programme what is essential for achieving the specific outcomes sought by the programme.

Conduct practices and structure competitions

- Guide practice. Promote improvement through appropriate practice and learning opportunities.
- Structure competitive experiences. Identify and manage suitable competition opportunities to contribute to athletes' ongoing development.

Read and react to the field

- Observe, analyse and provide feedback. Closely watch the performance of the athletes and team in practice and competition and offer feedback and instruction.
- Record and evaluate. Gather and examine data to gauge progress.
- Make decisions and adjustments. Make good decisions on next steps and adjust practice and competition experiences accordingly.
- Respond with sensitivity to wider events. Read and respond to the wider social and environmental context in which coaching occurs.

Learn and reflect

- Develop professionally. Seek out relevant formal and informal opportunities to grow as a coach and educator.
- Innovate. Be creative, find new solutions and improvise to add beneficial features to the programme.
- Evaluate the programme. Consider all aspects of the programme and identify strengths to build on and weaknesses to address.
- Self-reflect. Systematically reflect on all aspects of coaching—from philosophy to practice schedules—to identify ways to accelerate and maximise learning.

Whilst coaches can develop their competency on the job, the competency and knowledge areas identified in this chapter should be embedded within basic qualifications for coaches.

COACHING ROLES					
Functional Areas	Competency Area	Coaching Assistant	Coach	Advanced/Senior Coach	Master/Head Coach
Set the Vision and Strategy	Understand big picture	*	**	***	****
	Align and govern	*	**	***	****
	Analyse needs	*	**	***	****
	Set the vision		*	***	****
	Develop strategy		*	***	****
Shape the Environment	Create action plan		*	***	****
	Organise setting and personnel	*	***	***	****
	Identify and recruit athletes, staff and resources	*	**	***	****
	Safeguard participants	***	***	****	****
	Develop progress markers		*	***	****
Build Relationships	Lead and influence		*	***	****
	Manage		**	****	****
	Manage relationships	*	**	***	****
	Be an educator		*	***	****

COACHING ROLES					
Functional Areas	Competency Area	Coaching Assistant	Coach	Advanced/Senior Coach	Master/Head Coach
Conduct Practices and Structure Competitions	Guide practice	*	**	***	****
	Structure competition	*	**	***	****
Read and React to the Field	Observe	*	**	****	****
	Make decisions and adjust	*	**	****	****
	Record and evaluate	*	**	****	****
Learn and Reflect	Evaluate session and programme	*	**	***	****
	Self-reflect and self-monitor	*	**	***	****
	Engage in professional development	*	**	***	****
	Innovate		*	**	****

Coach developers must have a genuine interest and passion for their task. It is therefore paramount that they be carefully selected and recruited, have a suitable support system and be evaluated regularly so that their competence and growth in the role can be assessed.

Coach developers also play a vital role in the delivery of non-formal learning situations and the promotion of coaches' engagement in unmediated, on-the-job learning. Coaches with sufficient experience and a real desire to develop other coaches' skills may wish to train to become coach developers.

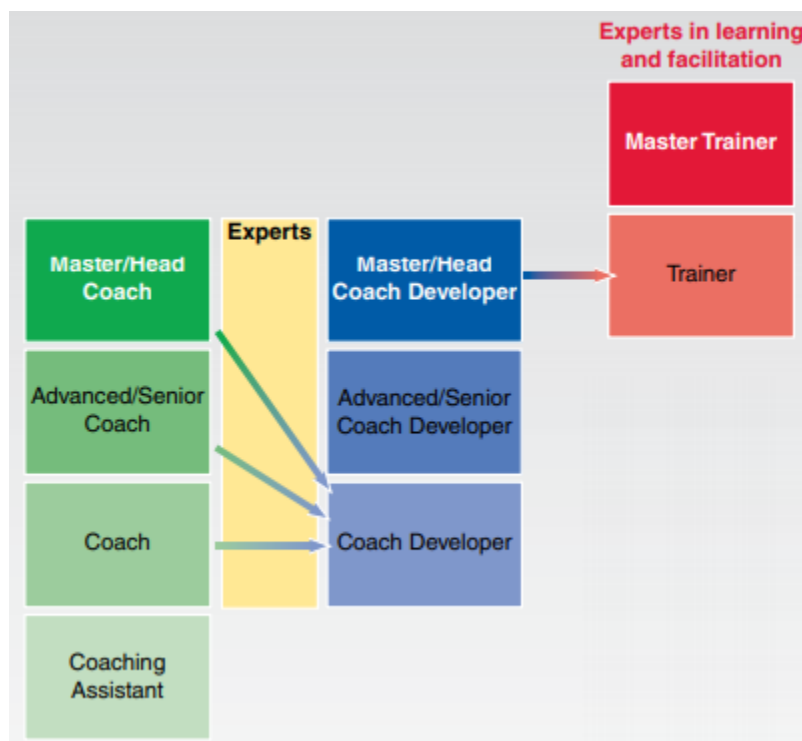
Each sport and nation should establish a long-term career pathway for coach developers, clearly linked with and aligned to the coaching occupations, domains and roles described in this document. Figure provides an overview of just how this pathway works.

Senior and master coach developers have an inherent responsibility in supporting the development of less experienced developers. Coach developer trainers (CDTs) play a significant leadership role in facilitating learning and mentoring.

The following four steps will help to develop a sustainable, high-quality coach developer programme:

1. Analyse current and forecasted coach developers (numbers, skills and experience), taking into account the needs of the coaching workforce and the availability of more experienced coaches to support the development of other coaches.
2. Based on step 1, formulate a strategic plan.
3. Using established criteria, select from coach developer applicants.
4. In accordance with predetermined guidelines, induct, train, develop and support developers through the pathway.

In summary, countries and sport organisations should invest time and resources in creating a fit-for-purpose coach developer workforce. This will enhance their ability to develop existing coaches as well as increase the number of new coaches coming into the system in those areas where they are needed.



Coaches deserve to receive appropriate recognition nationally and internationally for their expertise and qualifications. Coaching qualifications should be referenced against appropriate national and international benchmarks in education and vocational training.

Figure presents a model showing how certification programmes of national and international federations might align with coaching roles and with other forms of educational advancement. An increasing number of countries may require coaching preparation, certification, and continuing education programmes to align with national qualification frameworks.

Formal coaching certification systems should also factor in the prior learning and experience of coaches. This is particularly important given the demonstrated benefits of experiential learning in coaching. Also, in sports and countries with relatively new certification programmes, recognition of previous coaching experience is a means of opening the pathway to higher levels in the system until those seeking to advance complete their coursework.

As the relationship between formal coaching curricula and on-the-job training is clarified, systems for licensing coaches can be introduced. Coaching licences, which attest to competency and right to practise, are particularly relevant for all coaches earning income from their work and for volunteer coaches operating in Master/Head and Advanced/Senior coaching roles.

IDF Educational Level of Certification

Coaching Roles	Achievement Standards		
	National and International Federation Levels	University/Higher Education Awards	Other Coach Education Institution and Agency Awards
Master/Head Coach	Level 4	University Degree or Postgraduate Degree	
Advanced/Senior Coach	Level 3	University Diploma or Degree	
Coach	Level 2		Coaching Certificate
Coaching Assistant	Level 1		Coach Introductory Course Award

1 LEVEL – ASSISTANT COACH

The first level does not correspond to a professional qualification that enables a technician to act immediately autonomously on the field, but serves for the introduction / approach to the career as a coach. The activities of the apprentice coach must be carried out under the guidance and supervision by an experienced technician or federal technical contact, as specified regulations. The main goal is to understand the use of the disc and the development of Soft Darts.

2 LEVEL – COACH

It is the first autonomous operational technical qualification. It requires the assessment of skills necessary to work with teams and athletes engaged in local, regional activities or initial specialization.

3 LEVEL – SENIOR COACH

The qualification features a coach able to coordinate other technicians, and train any athlete or team at national or international competitive level.

The qualification typically enables the coaching of national top-flight teams or belonging athletes to the national elite.

4 LEVEL – MASTER HEAD COACH

The qualification identifies coaches capable of working with complex team responsibility tasks in high-level national and international contexts, competent to participate and direct activities research and training programs or federal talent development programs: technical director of teams national, sector manager (training, territory, etc.).

It is the last level and it is an international multidisciplinary level covering the highest standard in preparation, physical education, sport management and sport development.