



**THE SESSION
COACH COURSE**

CURRICULUM GUIDE

VERSION 2026/V1

Purpose of the Curriculum Guide

The curriculum guide is designed to provide a clear and coherent overview of each course or programme within the wider coaching curriculum. Its purpose is to communicate the intentions, expectations, standards, and developmental experiences associated with a particular stage of practice. In doing so, the guide supports learners, developers, tutors, mentors, and stakeholders in understanding not only what is being developed, but why it matters and how it connects to the broader philosophy of coaching that underpins the curriculum.

Rather than functioning solely as a course handbook or list of content, the curriculum guide acts as a developmental map. It outlines the responsibilities, challenges, standards, and forms of practice that learners are expected to engage with as they progress through their coaching journey.

Relationship to the Curriculum Framework

The curriculum guide works in partnership with the wider curriculum framework. The framework establishes the overarching philosophy, principles, progression pathways, standards, and design concepts that shape the curriculum as a whole. The curriculum guide then translates these ideas into the context of a specific course or programme.

In this sense, the framework provides the strategic architecture, while the curriculum guide provides the practical interpretation of how this is enacted within a particular learning experience. Each guide therefore aligns with the broader purposes, standards, and expectations of the curriculum while responding to the unique responsibilities and developmental needs associated with that level of coaching practice.

How the Curriculum Guide Can Be Used

The curriculum guide can be used in different ways by different people across the coaching system. For learners, it provides clarity around the purpose of the programme, the standards expected, the types of learning experiences involved, and the responsibilities they are preparing to undertake. It also helps learners reflect on their current practice and identify areas for growth and development.

For tutors, mentors, and coach developers, the guide supports the design and facilitation of meaningful learning experiences aligned to the intentions of the curriculum. It can also act as a reference point for assessment, feedback, reflection, and developmental conversations. For organisations and stakeholders, the guide provides transparency regarding the aims, standards, and developmental expectations of the programme, helping ensure greater coherence and alignment across coaching environments.

The Session Coach Course

The Session Coach Course is designed to introduce learners to the craft of coaching, enabling them to develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence required to coach independently, and the skills to continue to grow and develop their practice over time.

The course learning experiences will support coaches understand not just *what* to coach but *how* to coach and *who* is being coached. Coaches will learn how to apply and adapt ideas *for* practice and *in* practice to meet the different needs of individual athletes, participants and contexts.

Through practical exploration, guided reflection, and shared learning, coaches will build the skills to make informed coaching decisions.

Who is this for?

This course is for new and developing coaches who want to be able to deliver quality, effective coaching sessions. It is suited to coaches who are curious, open to learning, and motivated to learn to coach through practice. Whether new to coaching or building on some existing experience, the course will support people to grow in confidence and expand their coaching skills.

What coaches will experience?

The course involves a blend of learning events, coaching observations, sense-making sessions, professional conversations, and – most importantly – practical coaching. Coaches will learn experientially by trying out ideas, adapting activities, and reflecting on what they notice in real time. Social learning is central: coaches work together to analyse sessions, share insights, and make sense of their experiences. This combination of these experiences will ensure coaches develop the skills and judgement needed for competent session delivery.

Responsibilities and Standards

This table outlines the coaching responsibilities and standards of the Session Coach Course.

Who-What-How	Coaching Responsibilities	Coaching Standards
Who	Develop caring reciprocal relationships, understanding people and their reasons, goals and motivations to engage in sport.	<p>The coach will care by taking the time to understand and attend to people and their different motivation, reasons and goals to engage in sport.</p> <p>The coach will actively care by being attuned to how people are and responding to what they want and need from sport.</p>
Who-How	Create a positive, engaging and motivational environment for all participants.	<p>The coach will focus on developing people in sport by building on their personal and sporting strengths and growing their self-confidence.</p> <p>Coaches will aim to support people to be involved in decision making.</p> <p>Coaches will prioritise process over outcome creating a mastery focused environment.</p>
Who-What	Prepare and plan for athlete / participant development generating relevant and appropriate sessions that support and guide people towards their goals.	<p>With input from participants, the coach will devise a plan and a set of shared objectives that will structure and guide their work together.</p> <p>The coach will respond, adjust and adapt coaching for individuals both in planning and in real time.</p>
What	Understand a range of fundamental sport specific technical skills and principles.	<p>The coach applies technical drills / sets / practices / learning activities with the aim of supporting athlete learning and technical acquisition.</p> <p>The coach uses technical principles to adapt coaching to be more individualised and effective.</p>
What-How	Use a range of ideas and principles of learning from pedagogy and skill acquisition to support learning and learners.	The coach applies and adapts different learning strategies to develop practical knowledge in coaching.

		<p>The coach considers and judges which learning strategy might be most effective and why.</p> <p>The coach aims to use strategies that will support the learner to be an active participant and become an increasingly better learner.</p>
Effective and Ethical	<p>Learn to become person centred, intentional and reasoned with decision making.</p> <p>Develop the habits and skills of reflective practice to continually learn.</p>	<p>The coach purposefully reflects on their actions and decisions.</p> <p>The coach actively evaluates the session considering its effectiveness and to what degree individual needs and wants have been met.</p>
Community	<p>Participate in the coaching community by collaborating, learning and reflecting with and from other coaches.</p>	<p>The coach will proactively invest energy in becoming a part of a coaching community.</p> <p>The coach will discuss and integrate their plans to contribute to a larger coherent coaching programme.</p> <p>The coach will engage in joint reflective conversations to support their own learning and the overall improvement of the coaching programme.</p>

Session Coach Course Overview

Duration: Three months

Discipline: The Session coach course is sport / discipline specific

Learners: Up to 12 learners

Coach Educator: Typically, one coach educator will facilitate the course

Levelling - for illustration purposes only

The Session Coach Course is a **non-regulated qualification** that is notionally benchmarked against the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) at Level 2, with several learning outcomes aligned to Level 3.

The course develops foundational coaching knowledge, basic technical principles, and the ability to plan and deliver coaching sessions with guided reflection and support. With 67 total learning hours and a focus on practical competence, applied skills, and supported decision-making, the programme aligns with the expectations of an introductory vocational coaching qualification.

Session Coach Course Structure

The curriculum is structured around a continuous cycle of doing coaching and reflecting on coaching, ensuring that ideas are applied, tested and adapted in real coaching contexts.

Learning events provide the opportunity to introduce new ideas as well as generate ideas for practice. Then these ideas are applied and adapted in practice through the course learning tasks. With each learning event progressively building on the previous one, learners gain breath as well as depth in their coaching.

Coaches will naturally encounter problems, challenges and questions as they coach people in the real world. The sense making sessions are designed to support learners to make sense of these with these problems with a view to becoming more effective and ethical.

← 1 month cycle →			
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Learning Event		Sense-making session	
	← Learning Tasks →		
	A professional discussion		
← a full course = 3 cycles →			

Learning activities explained

Learning Activity	Description
Learning Events	Learning events are where ideas will be introduced and understanding developed. Coaches will have an opportunity to observe real coaching in action to develop their noticing skills. Understanding and knowledge will be generated by inquiry, sharing and dialogue with learners actively participating in that process.
Learning Tasks	Learning tasks follow learning events and are opportunities to apply and adapt with ideas in practice. Central to this will be the learner's reflection on themselves and their coaching. Learning tasks are designed to produce materials for further learning and evidence that will contribute to the achievement of the standards.
Sense-making session	Sense-making offers the opportunity for learners to access support and discuss the problems and challenges the face in doing the practical coaching tasks.
Professional discussion	Professional discussion is an opportunity to talk with the coach educator on a 1:1 basis. Sharing and discussing the coaches work relative to the standards will generate feedback for development.

Course Learning Hours

Learning Activity	Mode	Time per session (h)	Number of sessions	Total time (h)
E-introduction	Online asynchronous	0.5	1	0.5
Online Introduction	Online synchronous	1.5	1	1.5
Learning Events	In person live	7	3	21
Sense-making Session	Online synchronous	2	3	6
Learning Tasks	Completed in the coaches own learning environment	6	3	18
E-learning	Online asynchronous	1 - 6	7	20
Total learning time				67 hours

Learning Event Structure

The intended delivery model for learning events is that they take place over the course of a full day, following an established and carefully sequenced structure (see below). However, if the live coaching session needs to occur at a different time from the planned schedule, the remaining elements of the learning day can be arranged flexibly around it.

Furthermore, where circumstances do not allow for a full-day, in-person learning event, the components '**Developing Strategies to Support Learning**' and '**Developing Skills to Coach People**' may be delivered online.

An example plan (recognising that plans might start at 9 or finish at 5)

Time	Duration	Learning Activity Description	Coaching Standards
09:00–09:15	15 mins	Welcome	
09:15–10:15	60 mins	Observation of a live coaching session	What What-How
10:15 - 10:45	30 mins	Debrief and making sense	
10:45–11:00	15 mins	Break	

11:00–12:30	90 mins	Technical skills development	What
12:30–13:00	30 mins	Lunch	
13:00–15:30	90 mins	Developing strategies to support learning	What - How
15:30–15:45	15 mins	Break	
15:45–16:46	60 mins	Developing skills to coach people	Who (Day 1) Who-How (Day 2) Who-What (Day 3)
16:45–17:00	15 mins	Summary and Learning Tasks	

Assessment as learning

By positioning assessment as a process that supports learning, rather than as a final judgement of competence, the course seeks to promote curiosity, reflection, and growth. This approach reduces the pressure on learners to simply demonstrate that they are “right” by avoiding mistakes or uncertainty. Instead, learners are encouraged to engage openly with the standards as a stimulus for action and reflection.

Each aspect of the curriculum provides opportunities for learners to reflect on their coaching and appraise their practice in relation to the course standards, thus generating meaningful self-feedback. Through this ongoing process of reflection and appraisal – supported by the Coach Educator – learners will deepen their understanding and continue to raise their own coaching standards.

This table shows where different elements of the coaching responsibilities are standards are prioritised.

Learning Activity	Coaching Responsibilities and Standards		
Learning Event 1	What	What-How	Who
Learning Tasks 1	What, What-How, Who, Effective and Ethical, Community		
Sense making 1	Effective & Ethical, Community		
Learning Event 2	What	What-How	Who-How
Learning Tasks 2	What 2, What-How, Who-how, Effective and Ethical, Community		
Sense-making 2	Effective & Ethical, Community		
Learning Event 3	What	What-How	Who-What

Learning Tasks 3	What 3, What-How, Who-What, Effective and Ethical, Community
Sense-making 3	Effective and Ethical, Community

E-Learning

There are seven e-learning modules embedded within the Session Coach course. Each module supports the coaching responsibilities in different ways, and engagement with the modules contributes to learners' progress towards the coaching standards.

The e-learning is designed to complement and support the wider curriculum rather than function as a standalone learning experience. In this sense, the modules act as a stimulus for learning by introducing information, ideas, perspectives, and language that can support understanding and reflection. These ideas are then explored, applied, and reflected upon within authentic coaching practice and the broader learning experiences provided throughout the course.

Module	Description	Standard
Professional duties	This module explores the key responsibilities that underpin the role of the coach. Participants will learn about risk, duty of care, confidentiality, and the professional boundaries of being a coach.	Effective and Ethical
Ethics 1	This module explores the character and virtues that guide ethical behaviour in coaching. Through scenario-based learning, participants will explore ethical situations and dilemmas, learning how to navigate challenging situations while maintaining professional and ethical practice.	Effective and Ethical
Planning 1	This module introduces the essential principles of planning in coaching. From preparing and planning for a session to planning for a series of sessions over time. Participants will explore how to set clear objectives and progress goals. They will learn how to create a plan that progressively works toward the identified goals while maintaining flexibility to adapt plans to meet the needs of people.	Who-what What-how
Technical skills 1	This module focuses on developing the core sport specific technical & tactical skills and principles required to coach. Participants will explore how to observe, understand, analyse and develop technical skills.	What

Training 1	<p>This module introduces the basic principles of training theory and periodization, helping coaches understand how coaches plan and structure programs that develop performance over time.</p> <p>Participants will be introduced to concepts such as intensity, volume, and recovery, and how these can be adjusted to design progressive training cycles.</p>	What
Physiology 1	<p>This module introduces the components of fitness and physiology and how the body responds to training.</p> <p>Participants will explore concepts such strength, stamina / endurance, muscular endurance, flexibility, speed, power and agility.</p>	What
Domains of Coaching	<p>This module examines the different coaching domains – participation, development and performance coaching, and a sub domain of coaching emerging athletes / performers.</p> <p>In addition, this module will explore coaching different ages – children, adolescents and adults.</p>	Who Who-What Who-how Effective and Ethical

Glossary

Curriculum – A curriculum is the totality of the learning experiences available to learners.

Pedagogy – The methods and approaches used to teach and support learning effectively.

Social Practice – The ways in which coaches interact with athletes, peers, and the wider community i.e. the relational component of coaching

Ethical Practice – Acting with character and following professional standards to protect, support and treat people with respect and integrity.

Coherent planning - Designing sessions so objectives, content, and activities are logically connected to support clear learning outcomes.

Coach Decision Making – The process by which a coach assesses situations and chooses actions to support athlete learning, performance, and wellbeing.

Motivational Climate – The learning or coaching environment created by a coach that influences athletes' motivation, engagement, and effort.

Reciprocal Relationships – Connections in which coaches and athletes mutually influence, support, and learn from each other.

Reflective Conversations – Dialogues in which coaches and learners discuss experiences, explore thinking, and draw insights to improve practice.

Skill Acquisition – The process through which athletes develop, refine, and consolidate physical, technical, or cognitive abilities over time.

Scenario-Based Learning – A learning approach where coaches engage with realistic situations to practice decision-making, problem-solving, and applying knowledge in context.

Mastery-Focused Environment – A learning setting that emphasises personal improvement, effort, and skill development rather than comparison or competition with others.

Technical Skills – The specific sport-related abilities and techniques that athletes need to perform effectively.

Coaching Context – The specific environment, setting, or group in which coaching takes place, including factors such as age, ability, goals, and culture.

Domains of Coaching – The specific type of coaching such as children, adult, age –group, performance development, performance, participation etc.

Online Asynchronous – Learning that takes place online at the learner's own pace and time, without real-time interaction with instructors or peers.

Online Synchronous – Learning that takes place online in real time, with live interaction between instructors and learners.

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