

“The Status of Coach Education: Towards a Global Framework”

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This presentation describes the development of the European structure for coaching qualifications, which provides a foundation for the future establishment of common standards and structures for coach education programs around the world. Among the reasons for creating such a framework are:

- Quality enhancement: to raise standards, improve quality and increase the relevancy of coach education.
- Recognition across jurisdictions: to be better able to recognize qualifications across programs and across borders (e.g. free movement of labour in Europe).
- Quality assurance: to establish common standards against which programs can be measured.
- Increase cooperation and reduce redundancy: to coordinate and recognize the roles of non-university and university sectors
- Facilitate development: to provide guidance to countries, institutions and federations developing coach education programs.
- Increase status of the coach: to encourage greater public recognition of coaching.

The requirement for the free movement of labour among European Union countries has stimulated the development of vocational and educational standards for different occupations within the European community, and coaching is no exception. In 1999 the **European Structure for the 5-levels of coaches' training** was produced as a common framework for the recognition of coaching qualifications. In 2004, the European Coaching Council, a division of the European Network of Sport Science, Education and Employment (ENSSEE), established a Review Group to undertake two complimentary projects:

- i. to review the 1999 European Union (EU) structure for coach qualifications; and

- ii. To develop a framework and model curriculum for sport coaching, within an EU project titled AEHESIS – Aligning European Higher Education Structures in Sport Science. (The overall AEHESIS project includes four areas of study: sport coaching, physical education, health and fitness, and sport management).

The members of the ECC Review Group are:

Chair: Dr Pat Duffy, sports coach UK and Chairman of the European Coaching Council; Mr Corrado Beccarini, CONI, Italy; Ms Jacqueline Braissant, Federation Equestre International; Mr Bruce Cook, International Rugby Board; Dr Miguel Crespo, International Tennis Federation; Mr Christophe DeBove, INSEP, France; Mr Elio Locatelli, International Amateur Athletics Federation; Dr Thierry Marique, Louvain, Belgium; Dr Ladislav Petrovic, Director, Coach Education, Semmelweis University; Mr Jose Rodrigues, Director, Rio Maior; Mr Agoston Schulek, European Athletics Association; Mr Ton Van Linder, European Handball Federation. External advisor: Mr John Bales, President, Coaching Association of Canada and President-elect of the International Council for Coach Education.

The ECC Review Group’s May 2007 paper, “**Review of the 5-Level Structure for the Recognition of Coaching Qualifications leading to a proposed revised structure for the recognition of coaching competence and qualifications**”, is a key document for those working in coach education.

Synopsis:

1. Guiding Principles for the education of coaches
2. Role and long-term development of the coach
3. Framework for the education of coaches
4. Coaching courses in the higher education sector
5. Mutual Recognition of coaching competence and qualification
6. Qualification and Licensing of coaches
7. Proposed convention for the recognition of coaching qualifications

1. Guiding Principles for the education of coaches

As a basis for the design of coach education programs, the following principles have been articulated:

A. THE PURPOSE OF COACH EDUCATION

Developing effective, inclusive and ethical coaches should be a central feature of coach education programs.

B. COMPETENCE TO DO THE JOB

Coach education programs should equip coaches with the competence to do the job.

C. LEARNING MODES

The format of coach education programs should include a range of learning modes.

Coaching expertise is built up through a combination of practical experience, formal training programs and self-reflection.

D. ATHLETE AND SPORTSPERSON DEVELOPMENT

Coach education programs should be designed so that the coach has the competencies to assist the athletes and sportspersons in achieving their goals throughout the appropriate stage(s) of development.

E. THE COACHING CONTEXT

The context in which the coach will work, and the potential role of the coach, should be taken into account when designing courses. Coaching includes paid and unpaid aspects.

F. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS

Coach education levels should be underpinned by systems of quality assurance and linked to national and European vocational structures.

G. RECOGNITION OF COACHING QUALIFICATIONS

National and international federations, as well as the competent national authorities, have a central role in the education of coaches and tutors and in the recognition of coaching qualifications.

Greater cooperation between the university and non-university sectors in the education of coaches and the recognition of coaching qualifications is encouraged.

2. Role and long-term development of the coach

The definition of coaching adopted by the European Coaching Council is “the guided improvement, led by a coach, in a single sport and at identifiable stages of the athlete/sportsperson pathway”.

Within the professional area of coaching, two coaching roles or standard occupations have been identified, based on an analysis of athlete pathways in sport:

- a. Coach of participation-oriented sportspersons, which includes the coach of beginners (child, junior, adult) and the coach of participation/non-competitive sportspersons (child, junior, adult); and
- b. Coach of competition-oriented athletes, which includes the coach of talent-identified/competitive athletes (child, junior, adult) and the coach of full-time/high performance athletes.

A key question in the design of a coaching structure relates to the long-term development of the coach: “How do coaches develop their expertise and what are the stages of development?” This has led to the classification of four coaching roles:

Apprentice Coach

- Assists more qualified coaches to deliver aspects of coaching sessions, normally under supervision. Delivers coaching sessions under direction/support.

Coach

- Prepares for, delivers and reviews coaching sessions.
- Demonstrates basic coaching competence.

Senior Coach

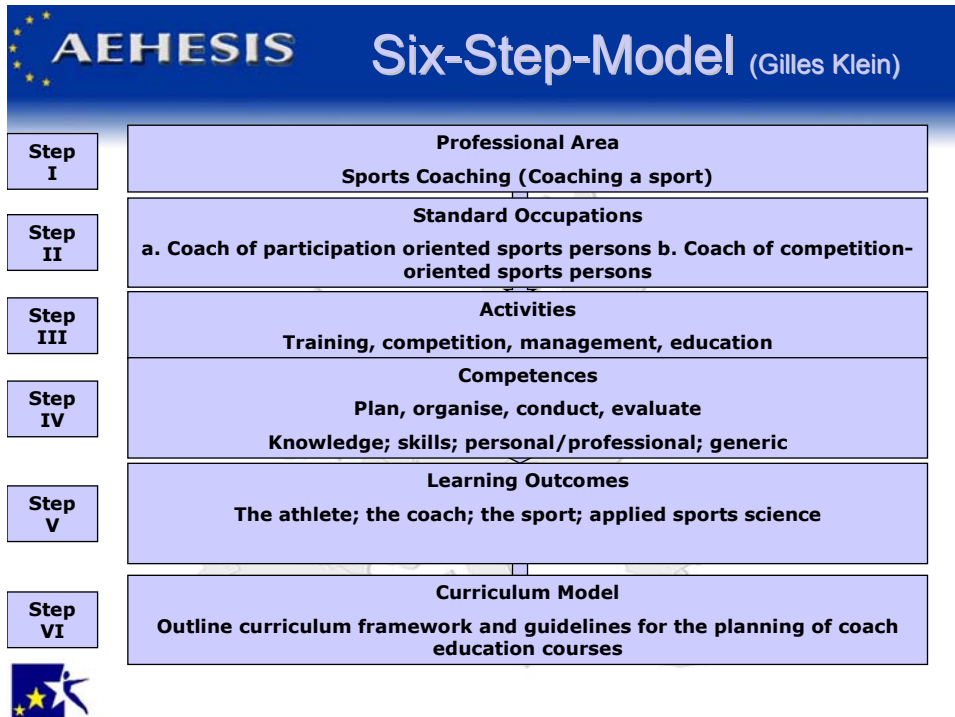
- Plans, implements and reviews annual coaching sessions.
- Demonstrates advanced coaching competence.

Master Coach

- Plans, implements, analyses and revises multi-annual coaching programs.
- Demonstrate advanced coaching competence, innovation and leadership.

3. Framework for the education of coaches

The AEHESIS project developed a six step model to guide their work:



(Ref. Thematic Network Project, Aligning a European Higher Education Structure in Sport Science, Report of the Third Year 2006)

Within the professional area of Sports Coaching, with the two standard occupations of the Coach of participation-oriented sportspersons, and the Coach of competition-oriented athletes, a curriculum framework has been established (see appendix 1) and detailed descriptions of the activities, competencies and learning outcomes have been developed for each of the four levels, as summarized in the chart below.

Revised structure at levels 1 to 4 for the education and qualification of coachesⁱ

| Keywords/Level/role | Level 1: Apprentice Coach | Level 2: Coach | Level 3: Senior Coach | Level 4: Master Coach |
|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Assist | x | x | x | |
| Plan | (x) | x | x | x |
| Deliver | (x) | x | x | x |
| Review | (x) | x | x | x |
| Supervise | | x | x | x |
| Mentor | | (x) | x | x |
| Coordinate | | (x) | x | x |
| Manage | | | x | x |
| Innovate/research | | | (x) | x |
| Plan strategically | | | (x) | x |

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---|--|---|---|
| TASKS | To assist in coaching one or more sportspersons or athletes, delivering aspects of supervised coaching sessions. | Prepare for, deliver and review coaching sessions. | Plan, implement and review annual coaching sessions. | Plan, implement, analyze and revise multi-annual coaching programmes. |
| COMPETENCE | Practice basic coaching competences | Basic coaching competence. | Advanced coaching competence. | Advanced coaching competence, innovation and leadership. |
| ACTIVITIES | | | | |
| Training | Organize participants, facilities and equipment under supervision. Conduct sessions or parts of sessions under supervision Review sessions under supervision | Plan training sessions, taking account of participant needs Organize and conduct safe and effective training sessions Review training sessions | Plan training sessions and annual plans, taking account of participant needs Organize and conduct safe and effective training sessions and season plans Review training sessions and season plans | Plan training sessions, annual and multi-annual plans, taking account of participant needs Organize and conduct safe and effective training sessions, season and multi-season plans Review training sessions, season and multi-season plans |
| Competition | Organize safe competitions, conduct and review coaching at competitions under supervision | Plan and Organize safe competitions, in line with the needs of participants. Conduct and review coaching at competitions | Plan and Organize safe competitions and annual competition plans, in line with the needs of participants. Conduct and review coaching at competitions and as part of annual competition plans | Plan and Organize safe competitions, annual and multi-annual competition plans, in line with the needs of participants. Conduct and review coaching at competitions and as part of annual and multi-annual competition plans |
| Management | No role | Coordinate the development of sportspersons through the delivery of a series of coaching sessions and competitions | Plan, organize and review the management of participant careers; other coaches and the integration of sports science experts and others | Plan, organize and review the management of participant careers; other coaches and the integration of sports science experts and the wider organization |
| Education | Assist in the education of participants | Plan, organize, conduct and review education of participants and apprentice coaches | Plan, organize, conduct and review the education of participants, parents, other coaches and the wider organization | Plan, organize, conduct and review the education of participants, parents, other coaches and the wider organization |

4. Coaching courses in the higher education sector

Another important aspect of the ECC Review Committee’s work has been to link the coach education framework to coaching courses in higher education (HE). Consistent with the definition of coaching, it is recommended that HE coaching courses equip students with the skills and relationships to coach in a sport, to a specified level. For example, in a bachelor’s degree program in coaching where a student specializes in one sport, it is reasonable to expect

that the program could offer sufficient education and practical application for a student-coach to achieve the standards of an apprentice coach (level 1) and coach (level 2). Possibly, depending on the experience of the student coming into the program, he or she may achieve the senior coach (level 3) standard. In a program with lesser specialization, where the student coach may have a concentration in three different sports, it is likely the student coach would achieve apprentice coach (level 1) status in the three sports.

This is depicted in the chart below:

| LEVEL # of sports in which a student specializes in Bachelor's | APPRENTICE COACH (1) | COACH (2) | SENIOR COACH (3) | MASTER COACH (4) |
|--|-------------------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | X | X | (X) possible | _____ |
| 2 | X | X | _____ | _____ |
| 3 | X | (X) possible | | |

In addition to coaching specialist degrees, other related bachelors degree programs fit within the framework; for example, a Bachelors in sports science with a specialization in coaching (maximum concentration in two sports) and one other area from physical education; health and fitness; and sports management.

It is important to note that degrees in coaching studies or coaching science, while providing useful underpinning knowledge for coaching, are not included in the classification of coaching courses if they do not include an identifiable coaching practical component that develops the competencies required to coach.




A critical element of this model is that these Higher Education programs should be subject to the licensing criteria of the national federations. The sport specific content needs to follow the specifications of the federations, and the federations need to develop guidelines for the inclusion of sport specific coaching within higher education programs.

5. Mutual Recognition of coaching competence and qualification

In addition to coaching programs offered through federations and degree or diploma programs in higher education, other public or private organizations may offer coach education and should be recognized and validated by the competent national authorities (the government designated or recognized agency responsible for overseeing coach education programs).

The diagram below emphasizes the importance of establishing mutual recognition of qualifications from the different coach education delivery agencies.





Outline framework for the recognition of coaching qualifications between sectors

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | National Competent Authorities recognize | |
|  |  |  |
| Federation-based education | Public or private coaching education agencies | Higher Education based education |
| MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF ALL QUALIFICATIONS FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES | | |
| <p>For example -recognition <u>by universities</u> of federation and coaching agency programs for coaches seeking further education in a university context. -recognition <u>by federations</u> of HE programs for coaches seeking their coaching license.</p> | | |

6. Qualification and Licensing of coaches

To extend the model from the design and mutual recognition of coach education programs, and to move towards a profession of coaching, the concept of coach licensing introduces requirements of coach experience and continuous professional development (see table below). Ultimately a coaching license, issued by the federation and recognized by the national competent authority, should become a mandatory requirement for all coaches, taking into account the volunteer, part-time and full-time paid nature of coaching.

Framework for the licensing of coaches

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | National Competent Authority recognizes | |
|  |  |  |
| Federation-based education | Public or private coaching education agencies | Higher Education based education |
| | | |
| MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS (WHICH MAY LEAD TO A LICENCE IMMEDIATELY OR MAY REQUIRE COACHING EXPERIENCE/CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT) | | |
|  | | |
| (COACHING EXPERIENCE AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT) | | |
| COACHING LICENCE ISSUED BY THE FEDERATION or the national competent authority and recognized by the national competent authority | | |

7. Proposed convention for the recognition of coaching qualifications

As a next step in the adoption of a new European coaching structure, the ECC Review Committee is recommending that the national authorities and international federations endorse a coaching convention for the recognition of coaching competence and qualifications that states the following:

- i. Coaches play a central role in providing sport experiences for sportspeople of all ages and skill levels
- ii. To fulfill their role, coaches must have appropriate competence and training, taking into account the target group(s) with whom they are working.
- iii. Coaches are expected to be as concerned with the well-being of the sportspeople as they are with optimizing performance.
- iv. Coaches should respect the rights, dignity and worth of every sports participant, and treat everyone equally, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or political conviction.

- v. Coaches are expected to work in an open and cooperative manner with all individuals responsible for the welfare and performance development of the sports people.
- vi. Coaches should develop and maintain a high standard of training; their action, whilst conducting training sessions, should reflect scientific knowledge and current expertise.
- vii. Scientific principles should be applied at every level of coaches' training.
- viii. Responsibilities and professional competence should gradually build up from the initial levels of coaches' qualification to the final ones.
- ix. All coaches should hold a coaching qualification that is recognized by the national competent authority.
- x. The framework for the recognition of coaching competence and qualifications as proposed by the European Coaching Council is the European recognized mechanism reference point for the period 2008-2011.
- xi. The establishment of a formal review mechanism will be investigated to provide a basis on which prior learning and current competence can be recognized and where coaching qualifications can be reviewed against the ECC framework.
- xii. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a licensing system that will have international recognition and currency.
- xiii. Each participating agency in the convention will undertake to use the framework as a reference point for their work and to contribute to the further improvement of the framework between 2008 and 2011.

Next steps

The European Coaching Council is now in the process of consultation, research and verification of this framework with higher education institutions, sport federations and coaches. The coaching convention will be presented at the September 2007 ENSSEE meeting in Rio Maior, with the intent that countries and institutions agree to use the coaching convention to guide the future development of their coaching programs. Discussions are also being held with the International Olympic committee and the ICCE to investigate how the framework can be applied outside the European Union.

References:

1. Commission of the European Communities (2005) Towards a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. Brussels
2. Duffy, Pat (2007). The European Union Coach Education and Training Structure. Presentation to the Wingate Institute, Israel
3. European Coaching Council Review Group (2007) Review of the 5-Level Structure for the Recognition of Coaching Qualifications leading to a proposed revised structure for the recognition of coaching competence and qualifications.
4. Petry, K., Froberg, K., and Madella, A., editors. (2006). Thematic Network Project, Aligning a European Higher Education Structure in Sport Science, Report of the Third Year. German Sport University Cologne