CIMSPA

Coach Developer

(FULL STANDARD)

CIMSPA PROFESSIONAL STANDARD: Coach Developer

Contents

ABOUT THIS STANDARD

This document is a CIMSPA professional standard (full version).

The full version of this standard is available to CIMSPA awarding organisation, training provider, higher education and further education partners.

1. Overview

Professional standard: Coach Developer

This professional standard outlines the capacities of a Coach Developer and the knowledge and skills that are needed to meet the requirements of practitioner membership with CIMSPA (the sector minimum deployment standard).

This full version of this standard is available to CIMSPA awarding organisation, training provider, higher education and further education partners. It provides guidance for the development of educational products that will be endorsed by CIMSPA.

The Coach Developer sits in the sport and physical activity sector as part of the professional and community sport industries.

Endorsed qualification logo

CIMSPA endorsed education products that meet the requirements of this CIMSPA professional standard will display this official CIMSPA endorsement logo.

2. Coach Development and the Scope of the Coach Developer

Coach development refers to the process through which coaches engage in formal, non-formal and informal learning[1] to develop their capacities and expertise. Coach development therefore represents a broad range of activities that help the coach to develop their personal resources.

Coach developers are support practitioners who plan for, implement, and sustain interventions to support the development of a sport coach's capacities and expertise. The role of the coach developer is to offer deliberate interventions that complement coaches' self-directed learning, and is characterised by a focus on the demands of a coach's role, their prior experiences, and an awareness of context.

The practice of a coach developer takes a coach's current role and experience as its starting point, preparing for and supporting learning with regard to both current and anticipated, future needs. It is an evolving process, reviewed as the relationship develops, and built on trust, mutual respect and professional curiosity.

The coach developer's work is educational, developmental, caring and support-oriented, concerned with the growth of a coach's capacity for action. Interventions may include the development of pedagogical skills, enhancing interpersonal relationships, or evolving strategies to manage specific demands. Coach developers frequently work with other stakeholders that share a coach's environment in order to support sustainable, long-term change. Whatever the specific nature of a coach developer's work might be, it will always be characterised by prioritising the health and well-being of the coach. It will also be collaborative, contextually situated, and concerned with helping coaches to develop their expertise.

This standard outlines the distinctive capacities required to fulfil the role of a coach developer. It does not prescribe a single approach to practice; rather, it highlights the extent of the skills and adaptability needed to respond effectively to the varied needs of coaches, drawing on a breadth of pedagogical approaches.

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[1] Nelson et al. (2006)

Core Topics

Planning and initiating coach learning and development

Coach Developers continually plan and prepare for interaction(s) by gathering relevant information on the coaches they are working with, the context in which they operate, other stakeholders in that environment, and existing relationships. This information about biographies, prior learning and motivations helps shape the nature of support and informs the coach developer's pedagogical approaches. Coach developers' practice is flexible and adaptable, collaborative in style and forms a caring relationship with the coach. The planning process is iterative as the coach developer progresses through implementation, sustaining, and review of coach learning and development.

Supporting and sustaining coach learning and development

Supporting and sustaining planned, support-oriented interactions and interventions requires the coach developer to work flexibly and dynamically as coach needs, context(s), and environment(s) change. This explicitly requires the coach developer to use a combination of pedagogical approaches to best meet the needs of those they are working with. Coach developers draw upon novel combinations of the most appropriate evidence, theories, and their own experiences to create rich, contextually-sensitive learning experiences that can extend beyond their period and scope of involvement. Sustainable support relationships prioritise the health and wellbeing of people, and are further characterised by ongoing learning and development, professional and ethical practices, growth, and autonomy.

Evaluating and reviewing coach learning and development

The evaluation and review of planned support forms a critical component in the ongoing process of planning, implementing, and sustaining coach learning and development. Coach developers use knowledge and skills to form judgements about their interactions with coaches and others. In this way, evaluation and review serves as assessment *of* and *for* learning that generates meaningful feedback. In turn, this enables an ongoing iteration of objectives, interactions and interventions.

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[1] Informed by the relevant environmental standard.

The effective practitioner

Becoming a skilled and effective coach development practitioner involves the development and maintenance of occupational skills that form both a *foundation* and a *scaffold* for coach developers' contextual knowledge and skills. The effective coach developer is engaged in an ongoing evaluation of their practice, underpinned by both their own critically reflective skills and by the support offered by a network of others. The scope of effective practice extends beyond the planning, sustaining, and review of direct interaction with coaches: it includes an applied understanding of appropriate professional standards and boundaries, working discreetly, ethically, and within relevant laws and codes of conduct.

2.1 Role of the Coach Developer: A conceptual framework

The framework shows how coach development practice is comprised of three domains of knowledge — *Who, What and How* — and a number of contextually situated, professional skills.[2]

Who knowledge consists of ideas, concepts and theories that may be used to think about coaches' wants and needs, motivations and experiences, skills and knowledge. Also sitting within the *Who* domain, it is important to recognise that all knowledge domains are influenced by a coach's particular experiences — personal and professional — which in turn shape and influence a coach's beliefs, values and perspectives. The context(s) in which a coach is working, and the coach developer themselves, has a similarly influential role and affects the understanding and application of *Who, How* and *What* knowledge.

How knowledge consists of ideas, concepts and theories that may be used to shape and influence meaningful learning opportunities for coaches.

What knowledge has been further divided into two sub-domains. Both relate to ideas, concepts and theories that may be used to think about the intended curriculum.

The *What* of the curriculum includes knowledge of intended athlete/participant experience, general and specific models of the sport or activity, general and specific structures and pathways in the sport or activity, and accompanying social, political, and cultural factors. The *What* of coach curriculum includes ideas, concepts and theories that may be used to think about coaching practice, development pathways in the sport/activity, and how multiple learning and development needs may be integrated.

The framework shows how skills combine knowledge domains. For example, gathering information about a coach's working environments requires skills that combine knowledge of *Who* the coach is, and *How* to support learning.

Whatever the context, these skills draw upon combinations of knowledge domains: the combination of *Who* and *How* knowledge; the combination of *How* and *What* knowledge, and the combination of *Who* and *What* knowledge.[3]

There are three contextual situations: The **planning and initiating** of coach learning and development refers to the way in which knowledge is used when preparing for interactions with a coach. These skills are represented by the inner, solid line that runs through the *Who*, *What*, and *How* knowledge domains; the **supporting and sustaining** of coach learning and development refers to the way in which knowledge is used when dynamically maintaining a meaningful and supportive relationship with a coach. These skills are represented by the dashed line that runs through the *Who*, *What*, and *How* knowledge domains; the **evaluation and review** of coach learning and development refers to the way in which knowledge is used in the ongoing assessment of work with a coach, including goals, objectives, environments, and the relationship itself. These skills are represented by the dotted line that runs through the *Who*, *What*, and *How* knowledge domains.

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[2] Adapted from Abraham, Muir and Morgan, 2010; Muir et al., 2011; Muir et al., 2015; Muir 2018.
[3] Of course, there is a constant interplay of all knowledge domains at work, but this simplified framework is intended to illustrate the most significant knowledge-skills relationships that a coach developer draws upon.

The role of the Coach Developer: A conceptual framework
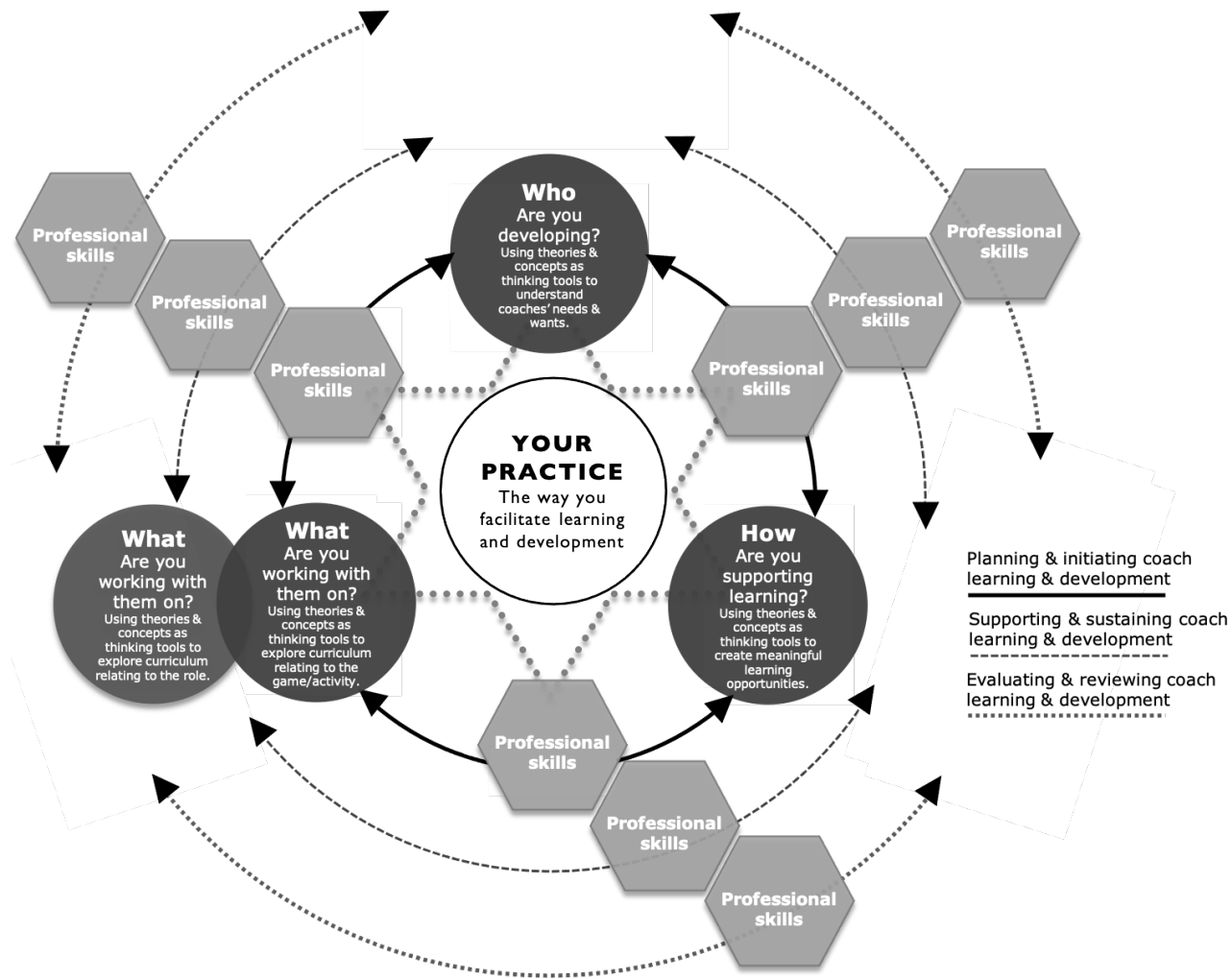
3.   CIMSPA membership eligibility

Practitioners who meet this standard will have demonstrated competence across the core topics required for recognition as a Coach Developer Practitioner.

They will:

UNDERSTAND

- How to plan, initiate, support, sustain, evaluate and review coach learning and development.

HAVE DEMONSTRATED

- The ability to plan, initiate, support, sustain, evaluate and review coach learning and development.

4. Knowledge and skills requirements

Coach Developer

Topic	Knowledge and understanding
Who are you developing	Theories and concepts to understand coaches' needs and wants. The coach developer has applied knowledge of: • Biological psychological, and social theories and concepts of learning and motivation[4]; • personal development plans and needs analysis strategies; • sport system structures; key roles, processes and stakeholders; • theories and concepts regarding the influence of political, social, organisational, and cultural norms on practices, relationships and decision-making.
How are you supporting learning	Using theories and concepts to create meaningful learning and development experiences. The coach developer has applied knowledge of: • theories and concepts relating to practitioner learning and development. • theories, concepts and ideas relating to coach and athlete development practice; • strategies for building effective relationships; • inclusive practices which reflect principles of equality and diversity; • working with individuals and groups; • a breadth of pedagogical approaches, including instruction, modelling and guided practice • theories, concepts and ideas regarding contextually effective communication – listening, questioning, negotiating – to support learning and development; • collecting and using data to stimulate learning through feedback, practice, and reflection, including dialogue transcripts, notation, video and audio materials. • the design and sequencing of learning tasks that reflect the complexity of coaching practice

Topic	Knowledge and understanding

What are you working with them on	Using theories and concepts to understand the athlete and coach curricula. The coach developer has applied knowledge of:
	
	 • sport and system strategy;
	
	 • using concepts, ideas, and frameworks to support coaches' goal formation;
	
	 • training and preparation practice and how these impact on scheduling;
	
	 • contracting effectively;
	
	 • the professional expectations and responsibilities of being a coach developer, including duty of care, understanding of role boundaries and scope of practice, and appropriate representation of skills and knowledge;
	
	 • theories, concepts, ideas, frameworks, and models with which to explore:
	
	 • curriculum relating to the athlete, including:
	   – athletes' needs and wants;
	   – sport, activity, and performance models;
	   – strategies for supporting learning on and off the 'field of play';
	   – pedagogy;
	   – skill acquisition;
	
	 • curriculum relating to the coach, including:
	   – integration of learning and development experiences into work environments;
	   – role-relevant developmental needs and wants;
	   – a coach's roles, responsibilities, and aspirations;
	   – working with, managing, and influencing others.

Topic	Skills
Who and how	Combining an understanding of coaches' needs and wants with an understanding of meaningful learning and development experiences for: **Planning and initiating coach learning and development;** • using bio-psycho-social theories, concepts, ideas, frameworks, and models as thinking tools to evaluate a coach's practice; • gathering information about a coach's working environments; • planning and scaffolding learning opportunities to support a coach's understanding; • selecting appropriate strategies in order to build effective relationships; • contracting effectively; • planning to engage identified stakeholders in support of an intervention. **Supporting and sustaining coach learning and development:** • considering and prioritising athlete/participant, coach and personal wellbeing; • establishing and maintaining purposeful, inclusive, and support-oriented relationships; • judgements regarding a coach's capacity and tolerance for the degree, pace, and complexity of change; • introducing ideas and using thinking tools relevant to the current experience and understanding of the coach; • generating meaningful feedback in support of learning goals; • working with others to inform and support coach learning; • help coaches to identify and develop support networks; • working with individuals and groups. **Evaluating and reviewing coach learning and development:** • creating opportunities for coach reflection and sense-making; • offering concepts, ideas, and frameworks for review and reflection.

Topic	Skills
What and how	Combining knowledge of the athlete/participant and coach curricula and an understanding of how to create meaningful learning and development experiences for:

Planning and initiating coach learning and development;

- planning for representative learning interactions which challenge and stretch the coach;
- developing and monitoring appropriate learning environments, tasks and communication strategies to meet learning goals;
- contracting effectively;
- managing the integration of intended learning experiences in the context of the coach's broader learning and development;
- planning with the coach and sport context in mind.

Supporting and sustaining coach learning and development:

- supporting and challenging coaches to clarify and critically reflect on their intentions;
- supporting coaches' reasoning and reflection in order to consolidate or accommodate new ideas and practices;
- developing pedagogical strategies and reasoning;
- drawing upon theories, concepts, and ideas from coaching science to enhance practice;
- using bio-psycho-social theories and concepts as thinking tools to evaluate activity design and intentions;
- using skill acquisition theories and concepts as thinking tools to form intentions for activity design and style of coaching;
- adapting intentions to reflect changing contextual factors.

Evaluating and reviewing coach learning and development:

- adapting interventions to the constraints of short-, medium-, and long-term relationships;
- evaluating progress against goals at regular intervals and responding to change;
- generating development goals and objectives with a coach that may be shared with others;
- demonstrating the ability to collect, interpret and utilise field-based data to create and inform interactions;
- critically reviewing the appropriateness of learning interactions, and interventions in achieving intentions;
- assessing the integration of intended learning experiences in the context of the coach's broader learning and development;
- supporting coaches to habitualise effective reflective practices. |

Topic	Skills
What and who	Combining knowledge of the athlete/participant and coach curricula with an understanding of coaches' needs and wants for: **Planning and initiating coach learning and development;** • gathering information about the prior knowledge and biography of the coach; • establishing the coach's goals, intentions and sport, activity or performance model; • using psycho-social theories and concepts to understand coaches' wants and needs. **Supporting and sustaining coach learning and development:** • managing the integration of learning experiences in the context of coaches' work; • assisting coaches in negotiating the tensions between differing perspectives and conflicting ideas about coaching practice; • support coaches to recognise, use, and generate feedback; • where appropriate, influencing and managing stakeholders to provide coherent support to a coach; • recognising boundaries, constraints and limits to practice and intervention. **Evaluating and reviewing coach learning and development:** • using evaluative strategies to assess progress towards learning goals; • evaluating the appropriateness of learning goals and modifying strategies as required; • recognising and responding to the impact of expectations and strategic pressures on coach practices.

Topic	Skills
The effective practitioner	Developing and maintaining effective practices and becoming a skilled coach developer by: • seeking support from others to gain alternative views and enable critical reflection on practices and interventions; • identifying and developing support networks; • generating personal development goals and objectives which may be shared with others; • critically appraises and applies research to practice • drawingon theories and concepts from expertise research to critically evaluate own practice; • understanding the skillset of the coach developer related to other practitioners, such as tutors, assessors, mentors and executive coaches; • establishing — and working within — professional boundaries (protocols, legal, ethical and professional standards); • demonstrating diligence with regard to the scope of coach development practice; • ensuring data is collected, stored, and handled in line with relevant laws, and recognising and working under an expectation of confidentiality; • portfolio management.

[1] Adapted from Abraham, Muir & Morgan, 2010; Muir et al., 2011; Muir et al., 2015; Muir 2018.

5.   Product development guidance

This section is aimed at organisations developing educational products mapping to this professional standard. The requirements should be taken into account in the development of all educational products seeking CIMSPA endorsement.

The CIMSPA professional development board (PDB) has agreed that any of the following educational products can be developed for the role of Coach Developer.

Educational product	Mapping requirements	Professional standard achieved on attainment?
Regulated vocational qualification	Fully mapped	YES
Apprenticeship programme	Fully mapped	YES
HE programme/modules	Fully mapped	YES

Where evidence of all elements of the professional standard are included then CIMSPA endorsement can be sought.

Awarding organisations and higher education institutions seeking CIMSPA endorsement for a product against this professional standard are asked to consider the following:

a) They determine and justify the level of the product they have developed, in line with the regulator's guidance. To ensure parity, the level for all educational products that fully map to this professional standard should be the same; the level assigned is determined by leading awarding organisations currently offering qualifications in the sector in which the role resides. This is not a first-to-post exercise but one in which awarding organisations/higher education institutions are invited to submit their levelled units/full qualification for review as part of the CIMSPA endorsement process. Once agreed by CIMSPA, all subsequent fully-mapped educational products must conform to the level set for this professional standard.

Level descriptors set out the generic knowledge and skills associated with the typical holder of a qualification at a given level and it should be ensured that educational products fully mapping to this professional standard are a 'best-fit' for the level assigned.

b) They determine the total qualification time for the qualification/unit and outline the minimum requirements for practical assessment.

They stipulate practical assessments must be conducted where possible in a real-work environment ideally 'on the job'/at work.

c) Their quality assurance meets the appropriate regulator's guidance. Including; internal and external quality assurance, staffing requirements and assessment generation and evidence.

d) Coach developers need to engage with, and support, a range of coaches from a variety of different contexts, backgrounds and environments. Applying knowledge and developing skills across a variety of coaching contexts is critical.

e) Learning and development experiences should be representative of the tasks and contexts that a coach developer is expected to encounter, combined with appropriate stretch and challenge.

f) Learning and development experiences should be integrated into a coach developer's existing working environment(s). In turn, these experiences should be informed by, and integrated with, the context of the coach developer's broader learning and development.

g) Learning and development interactions will provide coach developers with an opportunity to apply ideas, make decisions and judgements, use feedback, explore their wants and needs, and to make sense of their experiences.

h) The health and wellbeing of coach developers, coaches, and athletes/participants should always be of the highest priority in any programme of learning and development. Similarly, care for the impact on coaches and athletes/participants must form the overall context against which coach development interventions, goals and objectives are considered;

i) Whilst the conceptual framework shows the knowledge domains and contexts separately, for the purpose of clarity, any programme of learning and development should reflect the connection and interdependency between these knowledges, professional skills and practice.

6.   Glossary of Terms

Assessment of and for learning – assessment of learning is concerned with what individuals know and can do. Assessment for learning is intended to inform the learning process, understanding where the individual is and involving them in the learning process.

Contextually situated – occurring within the context of an individual's work (e.g., their coaching environment with real athletes/performers).

Pedagogy – the design and delivery of teaching and learning activities.

Representative – typical and authentic. In the context of this standard, this refers to activities, interactions, and challenges that replicate real coaching situations in typical coaching environments.

Thinking tool – models, frameworks, theories and contexts used to make sense of situations, challenges or problems from different perspectives (e.g., Self Determination Theory – used as a thinking tool to explore the motivations of individuals).

7. Acknowledgements