

BEF UKCC Level 4 Qualification - Professional Practice in Sport Coaching

Introduction and Background

The British Equestrian Federation (BEF) and British Rowing are working with the University of Gloucestershire to deliver the UKCC Level 4 Coaching Qualification. The course consists of a bespoke programme, which has been developed specifically for both sports. This advanced syllabus of professional education is intended for high performing Coaches with significant experience who have already completed the UKCC Level 3 (or equivalent) qualification.

The UKCC Level 4 Coach

The Level 4 Coach is expected to have considerable experience in their environment. However, whilst the Level 4 qualification is designed for 'high performing' Coaches, it is not exclusively for those Coaches working in a 'high performance environment'. Those who are high performing in other environments are encouraged to apply. For example, this might include coaches who are primarily working with adults in a participation environment or Coaches primarily coaching young athletes.

The Vision for a UKCC Level 4 Coach:

UKCC Level 4 Coaches will be visionary and knowledgeable decision makers who display exceptional skills, behaviours and the highest professional and ethical standards. They will advance their own and others development, lead cutting-edge programmes, or a specialist part of a programme, and make a positive impact on sport performance and behaviour.

For Coaches to be successful at this level, they will need to:

- Develop as highly motivated active learners
- Be able to work autonomously and manage their own learning process
- Take responsibility for identifying their own learning needs and aspirations

The Combination of UKCC and PGDip II Qualifications

The BEF UKCC Level 4 Qualification incorporates the opportunity for Coaches to gain a Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip) in Professional Practice in Sport Coaching and is designed to support and credit learning within the workplace. Forming an integral part of the UKCC Level 4 qualification for high performing Coaches, the PG Dip element has been created around work-based learning (WBL) modules that are focused on the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to develop professional practice, as well as the ability to manage academic learning.

Please note: The BEF will be the awarding body for the UKCC Level 4 Qualification, whilst the PG Dip element of the course will be awarded by the University of Gloucestershire.

Using a range of flexible work based learning situations the course enables coaches to explore the following areas: reflection on practice, action learning, critical enquiry to support methods of coaching and advancement of professional knowledge and practice. This provides a broad structure, appropriate to the needs of the professional Coach's working environment.

There will also be an opportunity for Coaches to undertake an additional dissertation in their third year, to gain a Masters qualification. This would be at an additional cost to the Candidate.

Course Outline and Commitment

The programme runs over two years starting every September of the academic year and concludes with a final panel presentation at the end of year two. The PG Dip Course consists of six taught days per year, arranged in three two day blocks. These are scheduled to take place in October, December and February (dates and venues tbc). In addition to these days, the programme will include on-line webinars, one to one tutor support, project work and field based visits in your coaching environment from both University and technical mentors.

The following modules are covered during the course programme :

- Reflective Practice for the Coaching Professional
- Coach Development Models and Systems
- The Expert Coach in a High Performing Setting
- Work Based Project
- Academic Recognition of CPD in Sport Coaching
- Work Based Dissertation (for Coaches who wish to continue to the Masters qualification – additional to the UKCC Level 4 process).

The “BEF level 4” element of the programme requires coaches to maintain a reflective log over the period of the programme. The purpose is to record the impact of personal development on coaching practice. The log will combine reflections of the PG Dip learning on personal development, feedback from the 360 reviews and input from a technical mentor.

Coaches will be required to identify a ‘technical’ sport based mentor, with considerable expertise in both the equestrian discipline and the context in which the Coach is working. The mentor must be approved by the relevant BEF Member Body as appropriate for this role.

Coaches will be required to evidence the nature of their high performing coaching activities in specific contexts or environments. These are likely to be as follows :

- Elite Performance (ie. World Class, International)
- Performance Development (ie. International and National Federation & Member Body Development Programmes for Athletes aged 14 – 25yrs)
- Adult Performance (ie. National, Regional, competitive engagement)
- Adult Participation (Local, competitive and non-competitive)
- Youth (in age groups between 8yrs and 18yrs, competitive and non-competitive)

Entry Pre-requisites.

Coaches will be required to demonstrate the following:

- Hold the UKCC Level 3 or recognised equivalent qualification
- Recognition as a “high performing” Coach in a specific environment and a minimum of 5 years’ experience demonstrating high performing characteristics aligned to the level 4

criteria. On request, two references who are able and prepared to verify the Coach's expertise and experience.

As part of the full application process, it will also be necessary to demonstrate that :

- The Coach can provide a range of evidence of on-going professional development
- The Coach can provide evidence of their current "high performing" coaching practice
- The Coach employs an athlete centred approach to their coaching
- The Coach is capable of holding an ambassadorial role in equestrianism
- The Coach can identify a mentor who will support with specialist, sport based, "technical development"

Enrolment will take place annually (dependent on numbers of applicants)

Course Costs:

Course fees for the UKCC Level 4 qualification, including the Postgraduate Diploma will be split into two annual fees. Course fees for the upcoming year to be confirmed.

Coaches may eligible for support from their County Sports Partnership or other grant-aiding organisation. Coaches will be required to investigate and pursue funding individually. Previous level 4 candidates have successfully achieved grant contributions towards their level 4 fees.

If you would like any more information about the UKCC Level 4 qualification, please email info@bef.co.uk with the subject 'UKCC Level 4'.