

**QQI**Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Independent Evaluation Report on an Application for Validation of a Programme of Education and Training

Part 1. Provider details

Provider name	Sport Ireland
Date of site visit	20 Sep 2021
Date of report	13 October 2021

Section A. Overall recommendations

Principal programme	Title	Certificate in Sports Coach Development
	Award	Certificate
	Credit	45
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory

Embedded programme 1	Title	na
	Award	
	Credit	0
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	

Section B. Expert Panel

Name	Role	Affiliation
Jack O'Herlihy	Chair	Former Head of Development, LYIT
Des Ryan	Subject Matter Expert	Director of Coaching and Performance, Setanta College
Dr Jean McArdle	Subject Matter Expert	Programme Leader BSc (Hons) in Sports Coaching and Performance, WIT
Mary Jennings	Secretary	Communications Consultant
Naomi Algeo	Learner Representative	Trinity College Dublin
Peter Farrell	Industry Representative	Director of Development, Tennis Coach Ireland

Section C. Certificate in Sports Coach Development

Names of centre(s) where the programme(s) is to be provided	Maximum number of learners (FT)	Maximum number of learners (PT)
Sport Ireland	N/A	30

Proposed Duration and Enrolment					
	First Intake Date	Duration	Intakes per Annum	Enrolment i.e. learners per Intake	
			Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Full-Time	05 Mar 2022	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Part-Time	05 Mar 2022	18 months	2	12	30
Intake Schedule e.g. January September		Intake 1: Stage 1 = March - August (5 weekends over 6 months). Stage 2 = Begin Aug/Sept Intake 2: Stage 1 = October - March (5 weekends over 6 months). Stage 2 = Begin March/April			

Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment:
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Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)
<p>The Sports Coach Development programme is aimed at experienced Sports Coaches who wish to lead or play a part in the development and support of coaches within their sport. The programme provides participants with the skills required to deliver effective coach education courses and to identify & deliver relevant support to coaches in non-formal contexts. The programme builds on the personal coaching experience of each participant as applied to their own sport(s).</p> <p>The programme involves the following for participants;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at contact training days with qualified Trainers of Coach Developers • Undertaking independent learning such as reading, tasks and assignments • Completion of a National Governing Body (sport-specific) work placement, supported by a mentor • Completion of assessments (on the course and during the work placement) <p>On successful completion of the programme, participants will be deployed by their National Governing Body (NGB) to train and support coaches at a level commensurate with their own coaching experience.</p> <p>They may also be deployed within their National Governing Body to develop and/or review coach education programmes.</p>
Target learner groups

The target learner group is experienced Sports Coaches who wish to lead or play a part in the introduction, development and mentoring of coaches within their sport.

Participants must;

- Hold a coaching qualification issued by a recognised sporting body.
- Have significant experience in coaching participants in at least one sport.
- Have expressed an interest in developing or mentoring other coaches.
- Be nominated by a National Governing Body (NGB)

Approved countries for provision	Ireland
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Part Time Only

The teaching and learning modalities

Face to Face/Direct Contact , Independent Learning (e.g. assignments and reading), Workplace learning

Summary of specifications for teaching staff

Role	Profile	WTE
Lead Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports Coach Developer Trainer Qualification • Experienced Coach Developer Trainer (5 + years) • L2 or above Coach Developer or Tutor Qualification • Experienced Coach Developer (5+ years) • L2 or above Coaching award (in one or more sports) Coaching experience (10+ years)	1
Assistant Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach Developer Trainer qualification • Experienced Coach Developer (5+ years) • L2 or above Coach Developer or Tutor Qualification • L2 or above Coaching award (in one or more sports) Coaching experience (10+ years)	2 x 0.5
Administrator	Admin experience including experience of registering participants on courses, uploading information to databases, issuing invoices and certificates and collating information for reports	0.5
Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports Coach Developer Assessor qualification (CDPI) • Experienced Coach Developer (5+ years) • L2 or above Coach Developer or Tutor Qualification • L2 or above Coaching award (in one or more sports) Coaching experience (10+ years)	15 x 0.5

Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
Direct/Face-to-face contact	1:30
Group sessions	1:6

Independent learning	1:1
Simulated practical sessions	1:7
Self-Reflection	1:1
Work Experience	1:2

Panel Commentary on programme outline and staffing:

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Last enrolment date
N/A	N/A	N/A

Section D. Other noteworthy features of the application

Part 1A Evaluation of the Case for an Extension of the Approved Scope of Provision (where applicable). Having examined appropriate QA / Governance procedures, comment on the case for extending the applicant’s Approved Scope of Provision to enable provision of this programme. (Especially relevant for move to online delivery / assessment)

Part 1. Evaluation against the validation criteria

Criterion 1. The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme

<p>a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme.</p> <p>b) The application for validation is signed by the provider's chief executive (or equivalent) who confirms that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed.</p> <p>c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.¹</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

Sport Ireland has met the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of this programme. It was noted that Sport Ireland has in place procedures for access, transfer and progression

Sport Ireland provided the panel with a copy of the letter to be submitted to QQI with the application for the validation of the programmes. The letter contained the signature and declaration required under sub-criteria 1b) and 1c).

¹This criterion is to ensure the programme can actually be provided and will not be halted on account of breach of the law. The declaration is sought to ensure this is not overlooked but QQI is not responsible for verifying this declaration of enforcing such requirements.

Criterion 2. The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought

- a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.
- b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.
 - (i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.
- c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).
- d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI's *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards*.
- e) The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
- f) The programme title and any embedded programme titles are
 - (i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
 - (ii) Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
- g) For each programme and embedded programme
 - (i) The **minimum intended programme learning outcomes** and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.²
 - (ii) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are **consistent with** the relevant QQI awards standards.
- h) Where applicable, the **minimum intended module learning outcomes** are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.
- i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.

For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.³

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

The panel is satisfied that the programme objectives and learning outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI award sought. The panel was informed that the Special Purpose Award carries 45 ECTS. It was said that Sport Ireland had given considerable consideration as to the level of credits accorded to the certificate award. In preparing for the validation, Sport Ireland had undertaken a trial run of the programme, observing the amount of time and effort that was required to complete all elements. As there is an emphasis on independent learning, in addition to classroom-based learning and work placement, it was deemed that the allocation of 45 ECTS reflected the level of study completed by participants.

The panel is satisfied with this approach.

² Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.

³ Not all modules will warrant minor awards. Minor awards feature strongly in the QQI common awards system however further education and training awards may be made outside this system.

Criterion 3. The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives)

<p>a) The development of the programme and the intended programme learning outcomes has sought out and taken into account the views of stakeholders such as learners, graduates, teachers, lecturers, education and training institutions, employers, statutory bodies, regulatory bodies, the international scientific and academic communities, professional bodies and equivalent associations, trades unions, and social and community representatives.⁴</p> <p>b) The interpretation of awards standards has been adequately informed and researched; considering the programme aims and objectives and minimum intended programme (and, where applicable, modular) learning outcomes.</p> <p>(i) There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme.</p> <p>(ii) The proposed programme compares favourably with existing related (comparable) programmes in Ireland and beyond. Comparators should be as close as it is possible to find.</p> <p>(iii) There is support for the introduction of the programme (such as from employers, or professional, regulatory or statutory bodies).</p> <p>(iv) There is evidence⁵ of learner demand for the programme.</p> <p>(v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant⁶.</p> <p>(vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.⁷</p> <p>c) There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.</p> <p>d) Employers and practitioners in the cases of vocational and professional awards have been systematically involved in the programme design where the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.</p> <p>e) The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

The panel was informed that the proposed programme was initially developed over 25 years ago and has evolved organically over the years and is working well in practice. In developing a programme that would fit into an academic framework, the team had looked at similar type programmes in other institutions and had mapped the objectives, learning outcomes and assessment methods against these as well as ensuring that they met QQI standards. Modifications were made following this initial run and, as a result, Sport Ireland is now confident that a Level 7 award is appropriate for the programme.

It was stated that providing opportunities for coach developers to have a recognised, accredited programme was welcomed by both the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and prospective programme participants. It demonstrated not only high standards in training but provided a route for further educational opportunities at higher levels on the NFQ and was a tangible acknowledgement of the complex skills they had attained.

⁴ Awards standards however detailed rely on various communities for their interpretation. This consultation is necessary if the programme is to enable learners to achieve the standard in its fullest sense.

⁵ This might be predictive or indirect.

⁶ It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

⁷ There is clear evidence that the programme meets the **target learners'** education and training needs and that there is a clear demand for the programme.

It was stated that, while the initial challenge for the programme team was to ensure that the well-established practical nature of the course was integrated an academic approach to teaching, learning and assessments that this challenge had been met.

In general, the panel is satisfied with this approach. See also Criterion 5 for further comment on the academic underpinning of the programme's curriculum. The panel made a specific recommendation in this regard.

Criterion 4. The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory

<p>a) The information about the programme as well as its procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with the procedures described in QQI's policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training. Each of its programme-specific criteria is individually and explicitly satisfied⁸.</p> <p>b) Programme information for learners is provided in plain language. This details what the programme expects of learners and what learners can expect of the programme and that there are procedures to ensure its availability in a range of accessible formats.</p> <p>c) If the programme leads to a higher education and training award and its duration is designed for native English speakers, then the level of proficiency in English language must be greater or equal to B2+ in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR⁹) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.</p> <p>d) The programme specifies the learning (knowledge, skill and competence) that target learners are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants).</p> <p>e) The programme includes suitable procedures and criteria for the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of access and, where appropriate, for advanced entry to the programme and for exemptions.</p> <p>f) The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Reflects the core <i>intended programme learning outcomes</i>, and is consistent with the standards and purposes of the QQI awards to which it leads, the award title(s) and their class(es). (ii) Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners; (iii) Has long-lasting significance. <p>g) The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

The panel was informed that the criteria for access to the programme were set out clearly to the National Governing Body (NGB) of sporting organisation who nominate the participants in the first instance. Participants must already hold a coaching qualification, preferably at Level 2 if the NGB provides training to this level, and have significant experience in coaching in at least one sport. Applications are then thoroughly reviewed by Sport Ireland and it is Sport Ireland who make the final decision as to whether to accept the candidate onto the programme or not.

It was noted that Sport Ireland has in place a process for recognition of prior learning (RPL) set out in section 4.2.9 of the Programme Descriptor document.

The panel considered that it would be advisable for Sport Ireland to ensure that the information and record of the prior learning (RPL) of candidates is more thoroughly documented during the application process to ensure that the criteria for access to the programme are clear, both to the NGBs and prospective

⁸ Each of the detailed criteria set out in the Policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training must be addressed in the provider's evaluation report. The detailed criteria are (QQI, restated 2015) arranged under the headings

- Progression and transfer routes
- Entry arrangements
- Information provision

⁹ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf (accessed 26/09/2015)

candidates. It was noted that this would be important for transparency. Having a clear RPL may also support graduates of the programme who wish to go on to further academic study.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Sport Ireland further clarify the criteria in relation to access to the programme for the purposes of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Criterion 5. The programme’s written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes. The programme (including any stages and modules) is integrated in all its dimensions. b) In so far as it is feasible the programme provides choice to enrolled learners so that they may align their learning opportunities towards their individual educational and training needs. c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended <i>programme</i> learning outcomes. d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme’s elements are clear to learners and to the provider’s staff. e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles¹⁰. f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented. g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes. h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes. i) Elements such as practice placement and work-based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements. j) The programme duration (expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion) and its fulltime equivalent contact time (expressed in hours) are consistent with the difference between the minimum entry standard and award standard and with the credit allocation.¹¹ 		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

There are two main stages in the programme the panel was informed.

Stage One typically involves 120 hours of contact time over a six-month period and over 300 hours of independent learning. Learners cover three modules during Stage One – Introduction to Coach Development, Coach Developer Practice and Leadership in Coach Development. They are provided with opportunities to practice their Coach Developer skills at regular intervals with feedback being provided by a qualified support team.

In Stage Two, learners are on work placement with their own NGB. This placement enables learners to apply skills and knowledge acquired in the first stage in a real-life sport-specific context. The placement typically lasts between six and eighteen months (400 hours of learner effort) but a period of up to five years is permitted in order to achieve all the outcomes.

In discussion with the team, the panel indicated that there was now a growing body of academic, evidence-based, scientific research and theory development on the whole area of coaching, coach development and leadership. The panel inquired if the academic research on these topics was an integral part of the taught modules as would be appropriate in a Level 7 programme. In response, the programme team indicated that participants were generally encouraged to undertake independent study on the more theoretical aspects of the programme and were guided as to which studies or articles were most appropriate.

¹⁰ This applies recursively to each and every element of the programme from enrolment through to completion. In the case of a modular programme, the pool of modules and learning pathway constraints (such as any prerequisite and co-requisite modules) is explicit and appropriate to the intended programme learning outcomes.

¹¹ If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

It was stated that much of the emphasis in Stage One was on the personal and practical development of participants as coach developers. The team noted that many of the participants did not come from an academic background and were interested in the practical acquisition of skills that would support their development, rather than, for instance, in the more theoretical aspects of coaching development.

The panel is not satisfied with this approach and is of the view that the taught modules, particularly in Stage One, would be more thoroughly underpinned by evidence-based research and theory as is appropriate to a Level 7 programme. It was acknowledged that many of the participants may not be familiar with studying academic research. It would be important therefore for Sport Ireland to ensure that the material presented is done so in an easily accessible, relevant way for the cohort of learners.

Recommendation

It is a recommendation that each module is appropriately underpinned by well-founded academic theory, presented in a manner appropriate for learning.

Criterion 6. There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned

<p>a) The specification of the programme’s staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose. The specifications include professional and educational qualifications, licences-to practise where applicable, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 c).</p> <p>b) The programme has an identified complement of staff¹² (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.</p> <p>c) The programme's complement of staff (or potential staff) (those who support learning including any employer-based personnel) are demonstrated to be competent to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes and to assess learners’ achievements as required.</p> <p>d) There are arrangements for the performance of the programme’s staff to be managed to ensure continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development¹³ opportunities¹⁴.</p> <p>e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.</p> <p>f) Where the programme is to be provided by staff not already in post there are arrangements to ensure that the programme will not enrol learners unless a complement of staff meeting the specifications is in post.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

The panel was informed that the proposed programme will have 2 core staff from Sport Ireland with 4 additional, experienced coach developers to deliver the programme as planned. In discussion with the panel at the visit, it was stated that Sport Ireland is seeking to have an additional full-time member of staff as part of the core team. The panel is not fully satisfied that the proposed programme will have a full complement of core Sports Ireland staff over the coming years as the programme develops and that this would need to be reviewed.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Sport Ireland review the staffing complement to ensure that the delivery of the programme is underpinned by Sport Ireland staff and/or a cohort of external experts available to them.

¹² Staff here means natural persons required as part of the programme and accountable (directly or indirectly) to the programme’s provider, it may for example, include contracted trainers and workplace supervisors.

¹³ Development here is for the purpose of ensuring staff remain up-to-date on the discipline itself, on teaching methods or on other relevant skills or knowledge, to the extent that this is necessary to ensure an adequate standard of teaching.

¹⁴ Professional or vocational education and training requires that teaching staff’s professional/vocation knowledge is up to date. Being qualified in a discipline does not necessarily mean that a person is currently competent in that discipline. Therefore, performance management and development of professional and vocational staff needs to focus on professional/vocational competence as well as pedagogical competence. Professional development may include placement in industry, for example. In regulated professions it would be expected that there are a suitable number of registered practitioners involved.

Criterion 7. There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The specification of the programme’s physical resource requirements (physical resources required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme, its defined purpose and its resource/learner-ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 d). b) The programme has an identified complement of supported physical resources (or potential supported physical resources) that are available in the context of existing commitments on these e.g. availability of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) suitable premises and accommodation for the learning and human needs (comfort, safety, health, wellbeing) of learners (this applies to all of the programme’s learning environments including the workplace learning environment) (ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided) (iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment (iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable (v) technical support (vi) administrative support (vii) company placements/internships – if applicable c) If versions of the programme are provided in parallel at more than one location each independently meets the location-sensitive validation criteria for each location (for example staffing, resources and the learning environment). d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Planned intake (first five years) and (ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake. e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required. 		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

The panel was informed that the taught elements of the proposed programme will take place, in the main, in the Sport Ireland campus in Limerick, which has modern facilities. These are sufficient to implement the programme as planned. It was stated that if and when other venues throughout the country are to be used, the team ensures in advance that similar or better resources will be available. Typically, this will be in a university setting which has a relatively large teaching space that can be used.

The placement element of the programme takes place in the facilities available to the participants within their own local area or facilities available to the sponsoring NGB.

The panel is satisfied with this response.

Criterion 8. The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme’s learners

<p>a) The programme’s physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment (recognising that the environment may, for example, be partly virtual or involve the workplace) including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes.</p> <p>b) Learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme’s learning environments including peer learners, teachers, and where applicable supervisors, practitioners and mentors.</p> <p>c) The programme includes arrangements to ensure that the parts of the programme that occur in the workplace are subject to the same rigours as any other part of the programme while having regard to the different nature of the workplace.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

The programme team advised the panel that there were clear processes in place to advise both the sponsoring NGBs and the nominated candidates of the level of work involved in the programme before they considered participating. It was stated that there are a number of information packs available to the NGBs, one with general information and one specifically on the requirements of the core work placement. Prospective participants receive a pre-application pack, to be read in advance of a formal application. A post-acceptance pack provides a wide range of information for learners on the requirements of the programme and the support and facilities available. There is also a formal contract, in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding, in place between the NGB, the learner and Sport Ireland which sets out what is expected from each party.

The panel was informed that the teaching and learning strategy (see also Criterion 9) is both practical and facilitative in approach, with learners supported to reflect continuously on their progress over the course of the 5 weekends on campus.

The panel was informed that, while on work placement, learners are supported by a mentor/Coach Development Assessor. It was stated that there is regular dialogue between the mentor, the NGB Coaching Contact and the Sport Ireland trainer to ensure that the learner is fully supported during the work placement. If the learner needs additional support, this can be provided. It was not clear to the panel that there was a sufficiently formal structure in place by Sport Ireland to support the learner while on work placement and that the kind of support offered to learners may vary considerably as a result. It was noted that, due to pressure of other work or commitments, learners may take some years to complete the programme and that a continuity of support would be important.

The panel considered that it would be prudent for Sport Ireland review this process and made the following recommendation.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Sport Ireland put in place a formal structure to support learners during the work placement period.

Criterion 9. There are sound teaching and learning strategies

<p>a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes.</p> <p>b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes.</p> <p>c) The programme enables enrolled learners to attain (if reasonably diligent) the minimum intended programme learning outcomes reliably and efficiently (in terms of overall learner effort and a reasonably balanced workload).</p> <p>d) Learning is monitored/supervised.</p> <p>e) Individualised guidance, support¹⁵ and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

The panel was informed that the principal teaching and learning modalities were a mix of independent learning, acquisition and application of practical skills in coaching development, and taught modules, delivered by core Sport Ireland staff or external experts in coach development.

As noted under Criterion 5, the panel recommended that each module in Stage One is appropriately underpinned by well-founded academic theory and this would form part of the overall teaching and learning strategy.

It was stated that, during Stage Two, the work placement element of the programme, learners are mentored and supervised on a regular basis by Coach Development Assessors who liaise with the sponsoring NGB and Sport Ireland in relation to learner development. See also Criterion 8 for further comment and a recommendation on formalising the structure to support learners while on work placement.

It was noted that independent learning consisted of study and reflective practice covering a wide range of topics including communication and leadership styles, planning and design of programmes, decision making and preparation of action plans. Learners were expected to undertake over 300 hours of independent learning, typically undertaken in the evenings of contact weekends and between the contact sessions.

As noted under Criterion 5, the panel recommended that each module in Stage One is appropriately underpinned by well-founded academic theory, presented in a manner appropriate for learning

¹⁵ Support and feedback concerns anything material to learning in the context of the programme. For the avoidance of doubt it includes among other things any course-related language, literacy and numeracy support.

Criterion 10. There are sound assessment strategies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with <i>Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards</i>¹⁶ b) The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures. c) The programme includes specific procedures that are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are acquired by all who successfully complete the programme.¹⁷ d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning. e) There is a satisfactory written programme assessment strategy for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules.¹⁸ f) Sample assessment instruments, tasks, marking schemes and related evidence have been provided for each award-stage assessment and indicate that the assessment is likely to be valid and reliable. g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results. h) The provider only puts forward an enrolled learner for certification for a particular award for which a programme has been validated if they have been specifically assessed against the standard for that award.¹⁹ 		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

The panel was informed that Modules 1-3 are assessed during Stage One of the programme and Module 4 is assessed during Stage Two (Work Placement). The programme team advised the panel that a diversity of assessment tasks is used to ensure the minimum intended programme learning outcomes are achieved. The main emphasis is on practical assessment tasks that involve learners planning, delivering and reflecting on coach development sessions/activities, initially in a simulated sport environment during Stage One and then progressing to a real-life sport environment during Stage Two. The mentor/Coach Development Assessor is involved in carrying out the assessment of the work placement (Stage Two).

The panel reviewed the Assessment Briefs and Rubrics document provided which set out the assessment strategy in more detail and showed how assignments were mapped against the learning outcomes. It was noted that the overall strategy was based on marking a percentage grade, rather than a simpler pass/fail approach which would also be appropriate for the programme. The panel suggested that Sport Ireland might review this strategy again, given the resources that were available to implement it. It was further noted that each element had to be passed in its own right.

The panel is not satisfied that the prerequisites for completion of work placement are sufficiently clear. It was noted, for instance, that it may take longer than the 18 months for enrolled learners to complete the

¹⁶ See the section on transitional arrangements.

¹⁷ This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

¹⁸ The programme assessment strategy is addressed in the Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards. See the section on transitional arrangements.

¹⁹ If the award is a QQI CAS compound award it is not necessarily sufficient that the learner has achieved all the components specified in the certification requirements unless at least one of those components is a capstone component (i.e. designed to test the compound learning outcomes).

programme, due to other commitments, and that it may be difficult for learners who have longer gaps in the work placement element to satisfactorily complete this essential part of the programme.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Sport Ireland review and clarify the prerequisites for completion of work placements and to reflect on the assessment methods used in assignments.

Criterion 11. Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) There are arrangements to ensure that each enrolled learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including the schedule of activities and assessments. b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme. c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures. d) If the programme is modular, it includes arrangements for the provision of effective guidance services for learners on the selection of appropriate learning pathways. e) The programme takes into account and accommodates to the differences between enrolled learners, for example, in terms of their prior learning, maturity, and capabilities. f) There are arrangements to ensure that learners enrolled on the programme are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it. g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs. h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities²⁰. i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the <i>Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students</i>²¹ and there are appropriate in-service supports in areas such as English language, learning skills, information technology skills and such like, to address the particular needs of international learners and enable such learners to successfully participate in the programme. j) The programme’s learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme, (e.g. while at the provider’s premises or those of any collaborators involved in provision, the programme’s locations of provision including any workplace locations or practice-placement locations). 		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

The panel is satisfied that learners on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for.

As noted in Criterion 8 above, the learners are advised in advance of the programme of the time and effort required to fully participate in the programme.

It was noted that learners may nominate a learner representative to liaise between the learners and the programme team or other staff within Sport Ireland. This provides an opportunity for learners to raise issues of general concern.

It was stated that the end of each study segment, generally over a weekend, learners complete a Learner Evaluation Form. Information is collated and the results considered by the Trainer, other Programme Delivery Team members, the Programme Lead Officer and Quality Officer. Any areas of concern and suggestions for improvement are reviewed, that, where necessary, minor adjustments to the programme are made to ensure that learners are supported and cared for throughout the programme.

During Stage 1, feedback on performance and on assignments is provided both orally and in written form, as appropriate, in a timely manner. This allows the trainers to identify any learner who may

²⁰ For more information on making reasonable accommodations see www.AHEAD.ie and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).

²¹ See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

need additional support and this is provided as far as possible.

During Stage 2, the work placement element, learners are guided and supported by their mentor, a Coach Development Assessor. Each learner completes a journal of activities and key tasks which are regularly reviewed. Additional support may be then be provided as necessary. See also Criterion 8 for further comment.

It was noted that the Sport Ireland Learner Handbook is provided to all learners on the programme and provides specific information on a wide variety of areas such as complaints and appeals procedures, compassionate consideration, learner supports and learner representation.

Criterion 12. The programme is well managed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The programme includes intrinsic governance, quality assurance, learner assessment, and access, transfer and progression procedures that functionally interface with the provider’s general or institutional procedures. b) The programme interfaces effectively with the provider’s QQI approved quality assurance procedures. Any proposed incremental changes to the provider’s QA procedures required by the programme or programme-specific QA procedures have been developed having regard to QQI’s statutory QA guidelines. If the QA procedures allow the provider to approve the centres within the provider that may provide the programme, the procedures and criteria for this should be fit-for-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not. c) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme’s staffing requirements and can be added to the programme’s complement of staff. d) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme’s complement of supported physical resources. e) Quality assurance²² is intrinsic to the programme’s maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria. f) The programme-specific quality assurance arrangements are consistent with QQI’s statutory QA guidelines and use continually monitored completion rates and other sources of information that may provide insight into the quality and standards achieved. g) The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable. h) There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification. 		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Certificate in Sports Coach Development	Yes	

The panel is satisfied that there are effective structures in place for the governance and management of the proposed programme. The QAH contains the governance structures for the Sport Ireland and procedures for access, transfer and progression, learner assessments and supports, and teaching and learning.

It was noted that the QAH and associated policies and procedures have been developed in line with QQI statutory guidelines.

²² See also QQI’s Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

Part 2. Overall recommendation to QQI

2.1 Certificate in Sports Coach Development

Select one	
Satisfactory	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the context of unit 2.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training;
	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination);
	Not satisfactory.

Reasons for the overall recommendation

The programme meets the criteria set.

Commendations

Special Conditions of Validation (directive and with timescale for compliance)

No conditions set

Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

Summary of recommendations to the provider

1. It is recommended that Sports Ireland further clarify the criteria in relation to access to the programme for the purposes of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
2. It is a recommendation that each module is appropriately underpinned by well-founded academic theory, presented in a manner appropriate for learning
3. It is recommended that Sport Ireland review the staffing complement to ensure that the delivery of the programme is underpinned by Sport Ireland staff and/or a cohort of external experts available to them.
4. It is recommended that Sport Ireland put in place a formal structure to support learners during the work placement period.
5. It is recommended that Sport Ireland review and clarify the prerequisites for completion of work placements and to reflect on the assessment methods used in assignments.

Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

This report has been agreed by the evaluation panel and is signed on their behalf by the chairperson.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jo Herlihy', written in a cursive style.

Panel chairperson:

Date: 17th November 2021

2.2 Disclaimer

The Report of the External Review Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.

While QQI has endeavoured to ensure that the information contained in the Report is correct, complete and up-to-date, any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the reader's own risk, and in no event will QQI be liable for any loss or damage (including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage) arising from, or in connection with, the use of the information contained in the Report of the External Evaluation Panel.

Part 3. Proposed programme schedules *(post panel feedback and consequent amendments, if any)*



Programme and stage schedules

PG24650 Certificate in Sports Coach Development

Name of Provider		Sport Ireland													
Programme Title		PG24650 Certificate in Sports Coach Development													
Award Title		Certificate						Exit Award		N/A					
Teaching and learning modalities		Directed Learning; Group Discussions/Interactions; On the job Training; Lectures / Classes; One-on-One Sessions; Practical Sessions; Self Directed Learning													
Delivery Modes	Award Class	Award NFQ Level	Award EQF Level	Stage	Stage NFQ Level	Stage Credits	First Intake		ISCED Code						
Part time	Special Purpose	7	6	Stage 1	6	25	01 Mar 2022		10.1.4						
Module				Total Student Effort Module (Hours)						Allocation of Marks					
Title			Semester	Status	Credit	Total Hours	Class Contact Hours	Direct e-learning	Hours of independent learning	Work-based learning efforts	C.A. %	Project %	Skills demonstration %	Exam %	Workbased %
Introduction to Coach Development			Not Applicable	M	5	100	18	2	80	0	0	100	0	0	0
Coach Developer Practice			Not Applicable	M	10	200	50	0	150	0	0	40	60	0	0
Leadership in Coach Development			Not Applicable	M	10	200	40	0	160	0	0	100	0	0	0

**QQI**Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann
Quality and Qualifications Ireland**PG24650 Certificate in Sports Coach Development**

Name of Provider		Sport Ireland													
Programme Title		PG24650 Certificate in Sports Coach Development													
Award Title		Certificate							Exit Award			N/A			
Teaching and learning modalities		Directed Learning; Group Discussions/Interactions; On the job Training; Lectures / Classes; One-on-One Sessions; Practical Sessions; Self Directed Learning													
Delivery Modes	Award Class	Award NFQ Level	Award EQF Level	Stage	Stage NFQ Level	Stage Credits			First Intake			ISCED Code			
Part time	Special Purpose	7	6	Stage 2	6	20			01 Mar 2022			10.1.4			
Module				Total Student Effort Module (Hours)						Allocation of Marks					
Title			Semester	Status	Credit	Total Hours	Class Contact Hours	Direct e-learning	Hours of independent learning	Work-based learning efforts	C.A. %	Project %	Skills demonstration %	Exam %	Workbased %
NGB Work Placement			Not Applicable	M	20	400	0	0	240	160	0	30	70	0	0