ICCE
International Council for Coaching Excellence

ICCE STANDARDS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION SPORT COACHING BACHELOR DEGREES

October 2016

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I. Executive Summary

Sport coaching is at a pivotal moment in its short history. The publication of the International Sport Coaching Framework in 2013[1] has fostered a fundamental shift in the way coach education and development is understood and conducted world-wide. The Framework defined coaching as 'a process of guided improvement and development in a single sport and at identifiable stages of development' (p14) and positioned coaches as key actors in the ever growing and demanding sporting landscape.

The demands on coaches are greater than ever as sport participation and competition has expanded to new populations, sport disciplines and countries. So are the opportunities. Sport coaching plays a significant role in the development of elite athletes and also in the promotion of physical activity for all. This latter role of sports coaches has the potential to greatly contribute to national and international health prevention and promotion agendas and strategies and is being paid increasing attention world-wide. In addition, sport coaches also deliver against inclusion agendas in areas such as disability, gender equality, immigration and community cohesion. The figure of the coach is central in 21st century society.

As the role of the coach evolves and coaching progresses along the road to professionalisation, a growing number of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) around the world have started to offer and deliver Sport Coaching Bachelor Degrees (hereon Coaching Degrees). As the world-wide co-operative body leading and supporting the development of coaching globally, ICCE recognises the new landscape in which coaching and coaches operate and welcomes these very positive developments.

While at all times respecting the national idiosyncrasies of different countries, the leadership role of national education and coaching agencies, the vital role played by national and international federations, and, of course, the institutional autonomy of HEIs around the world, the ICCE's International Sport Coaching Degree Standards (hereon the Standards or ICDS) aim to provide an internationally accepted reference point for those HEIs wishing to contribute to the development of the coaching workforce world-wide. They are envisaged as complementary to the guidance provided by the aforementioned organisations, not as a substitute and therefore need to be read in the context of existing relevant policies. The Standards are a flexible, non-compulsory set of guidelines for the development of high quality, suitable curricula and delivery programmes to develop the next generation of coaches at graduate level. In bringing the Standards to life, specific national and local contexts and domains of practice need to be appreciated and respected. There will be different best-fit models based on specific situations and requirements, and all of them may deliver the required learning outcomes and coaching competencies in different ways. The Standards aspire to be the common thread running through the various models.

The coaching profession and the ways in which coaches are educated and developed will continue to evolve. The Standards are a live, working document that will need to be organically and formally reviewed and updated. Monitoring their adoption and implementation will be central to this process. In order to do this, ICCE will put in place a voluntary degree endorsement process to support those institutions wishing to formally review their sport coaching programmes. In addition, ICCE will carry out a formal review of the Standards every four years starting in 2020 after the celebration of the XXXI Olympiad in Tokyo

[1] ICCE, ASOIF & LBU (2013). *The International Sport Coaching Framework, v1.2.* Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics

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ICCE wishes you all the best in your efforts to support the education of coaches in your countries and sports through the contribution of your HEI. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries.

II. International Sport Coaching Degree Standards Group Members & International External Consultation Experts

The Standards aim to meet the requirements of different coaching stakeholders. Coaching degrees and their graduates will need to fulfil the needs of athletes and participants, but also those of government ministries and departments, coaching agencies and bodies, national and international federations, higher education institutions, and clubs and coaches' associations to name but a few. The Standards therefore must respect the views and needs of all coaching stakeholders. For this reason, ICCE put in place a three-phase process (Figure 1) to ensure adequate levels of representation and transparency.

During the first phase, an expert working group containing a mix of stakeholders was formed. An initial stakeholder consultation to ascertain the need for the ICDS was held during ICCE's Global Coach Conference in Vierumaki in August 2015. Subsequently, and over a period of four months that included six meetings and nine versions of the document, the group developed the Consultation Draft of the Standards. In the second phase, a wider group of experts containing over a hundred representatives of all stakeholder types, reviewed the Consultation Draft and provided relevant feedback to the expert working group. Based on this feedback, the group developed the final version of the Standards. In phase three, the final consultation draft was distributed again amongst the wider group of experts to ensure their feedback had been understood correctly and where possible and appropriate added to the current document.

It is the ICCE's intention to review the Standards every four years following the review of the International Sport Coaching Framework the year after the celebration of the Summer Olympiad. The first review of this Standards will take place after the Tokyo Olympic Games of 2020. This review will be carried out by an ICCE driven Standards Review Expert Group and supported by a Job Task Analysis targeting different coaching occupations and domains.

Figure 1 – ICDS Development Process

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Members of the International Coaching Degree Standards[2] Expert Group:

- Independent Group Chair: Alfonso Jiménez – Professor of Exercise Science and Health, Centre for Applied Biological and Exercise Sciences, Coventry University (ESP & GBR)

- Technical Officer: Sergio Lara-Bercial – Manager for Strategy & Development, ICCE; Senior Research Fellow, Leeds Beckett University (ESP & GBR)

- Members at large:

    - Dr Andy Abraham: Head of Subject (Coaching), Leeds Beckett University (GBR)

    - Dan Jaspers: former Coach Education Manager, ISAF (GBR)

    - John Bales: President, ICCE (CAN)

    - Dr José Curado: President, Treinadores Portugal (PRT)

    - Dr Kristen Dieffenbach: Associate Professor, West Virginia University (USA)

    - Dr Lutz Nordmann: Director, Trainerakademie, Köln (GER)

    - Dr Masamitsu Ito: Associate Professor, Nippon Sport University (JPN)

    - Olivia Mokgatle: South African Sport Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) representative, (Director for National Standards & Reviews, Council on Higher Education) (ZAF)

    - Pascal Colmaire: Coach Education Manager, World Archery (CHE)

    - Dr Steven Rynne: Senior Lecturer, University of Queensland (AUS)

International Experts who participated on the external consultation process:

Name	Organisation/Institution	Country
Barker-Ruchti, Natalie	University of Gothenburg	Sweden
Bloemhoff, Johan	University of the Free State	South Africa
Bolger, Christine	United States Olympic Committee	USA
Burhe, Torsten	Malmo University	Sweden
Chroni, Stiliani	Hedmar University College	Norway
Collings, Sarah	sportscoachUK	UK
Cooppo, Yoga	University of Johannesburg	South Africa
Crespo, Miguel	International Tennis Federation	UK
Crisfield, Penny	Apollinaire Consultants	UK

[2] For the purpose of this exercise, a coaching bachelor's degree is referenced against a number of international and national reference points such as EQF L6 (Europe), DQR L6 (GER), AQF L7 (AUS), Associate to Bachelor's Degree (USA), QCF L6 (UK) and NQF L8 (ZA)

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Dray, Katie & Balsdon, Andrew	University of Canterbury Christchurch	UK
Faller, Francis	University of the Witwatersrand	South Africa
Froberg, Karsten	University of Southern Denmark	Denmark
Galatti, Larissa	Universidade Estadual Campinas	Brazil
Gano-Overway, Lori	Bridgewater College	USA
Gavaldá, Juan María	National Coaching Council Spain	Spain
Gearity, Brian	University of Denver	USA
Grant, Andy	sports coach UK	UK
Lafreniére, Lorraine	Coaching Association of Canada	Canada
Lyoka, Philemon	University of Fort Hare	South Africa
Moggan, Liam	Coaching Ireland	Ireland
Paulus, Urte	Archery Austria	Austria
Potinkara, Pekka	Saval – Coaches Association Finland	Finland
Ptacnik, Martin	Archery Austria	Austria
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Thompson, Melissa	University of Southern Mississippi	USA
Trudel, Pierre	University of Ottawa	Canada
Vardhan, Desiree	South African Sport Confederation & Olympic Committee	South Africa
Vilas-Boas, João Paulo	University of Porto	Portugal
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III - Introductory Statement about the Scope, Need and Impact of ICCE International Coaching Degree Standards

Sport Coaching Today

Coaching is in its most dynamic era. The publication of the International Sport Coaching Framework in 2013 has meant a step change in the way coach education and development is understood and conducted world-wide. The Framework defined coaching as 'a process of guided improvement and development in a single sport and at identifiable stages of development' (p14) and positioned coaches as key actors in the ever growing and demanding sporting landscape.

The framework also presented coaching as a blended professional area where a mix of volunteer, part-time and full-time paid coaches coexist. Notwithstanding this, the coaching community, practitioners, academics and researchers, have made considerable strides in moving coaching along the road towards professionalisation. Positioning some coaching as a profession and some coaches as professionals is an important goal so that the field keeps pace with similar developments in, for instance, sport science, sport medicine and teaching. Failing to do this will inevitably mean that coaching, the institutions that develop and employ coaches, and coaches themselves are viewed as less professional than those engaged in supporting athletic and/or educational development.

Consequently, if coaching is to keep abreast with these developments, all stakeholders involved in coach education and development need to progress in a way which reflects the fact

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that the field meets certain recognised criteria[3] of professions such as: providing an important public service; working from theoretically as well as practically grounded expertise; having a distinct ethical dimension; requiring a certain level of regulation; and its practice being based on the high degree of individual autonomy – independence of judgement – of its practitioners. Creating standards for coaching degrees supports this progress.

Governments, national federations, clubs and individual athletes invest heavily in coaches at the Olympic, Paralympic and professional end of the spectrum. Coaches support these elite athletes to fulfil their potential, ambitions and dreams and to constantly extend the boundaries of what is possible. In doing so, they inspire generation after generation of participants and spectators.

Notably however, coaches work not only with elite athletes. They also play a pivotal role in the promotion of sport participation and the development of a lifelong habit of physical activity and all its associated benefits[4]. In fact, sport, when delivered appropriately, has the potential to attract, motivate and inspire people, making it a highly effective tool for engaging and empowering individuals, communities and even countries to take action to improve their health[5]. Appropriately trained coaches can play a very significant role in bringing this potential to reality.

In addition, coaching also contributes to the development of cohesive groups and communities and has become a catalyst for employment, education and overall economic growth in societies around the globe. Millions of volunteer and paid part-time and full-time coaches guide and support children, adolescents, adults and whole communities all around the world to fulfil sport and social objectives.

As a result, coaches work with increasingly diverse populations and face heightened demands from athletes, their parents, employers, fans and the media. Coaches are required to fulfil a variety of roles which may include educator, personal mentor, and business manager, all within any given day. Their performance is evaluated not only in terms of win-loss records, but also with relation to the development of social and economic capital for their participants and communities. More and more research points at the value, contribution and wide range of developmental outcomes achieved by sport coaches. All these factors make coaching more exciting yet taxing than ever before. The pressure is on coaching and coaches to deliver on its promise of positive benefits for individuals, groups and society. The coach is and will be a central figure of 21st century life.

Coach Education & Development Globally

Participants, athletes and their parents place ever higher demands on coaches and on the relevant authorities which educate, develop and employ them. Countries, federations, local authorities, schools, clubs and all other stakeholders of the sport delivery system have invested to varying degrees in the creation of a fit-for-purpose coaching workforce. The International Olympic Committee has recognised the significance of coaching through its Olympic

[3] Criteria drawn from the work of David Carr (1999). Professionalisation and ethics in Teach-ing. Abingdon: Routledge.

[4] ICCE wishes to emphasise the role of the coach in contributing to the social agenda, including health prevention and promotion, gender equality, inclusion and social cohesion. Vast amounts of research support the relevance of coaches in this area and the need to equip them with necessary knowledge and skills to be able to contribute at this level. ICCE would like to encourage HEIs delivering or looking to deliver Coaching Degrees to carefully consider this area and to adapt their degrees accordingly.

[5] Dodd, R. & Cassels, A. (2006). Centennial Review: Health Development and the Millenium Development Goals, *Annals of Tropical Medicine & Parasitology, 100*(5), 379-387

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Solidarity programmes and the creation of the Athlete's Entourage Commission which considers the coach as central to the consecution of athletes' personal and sporting objectives.

The International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE), in conjunction with the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF), and Leeds Beckett University published the International Sport Coaching Framework (ISCF) in 2013. The Framework is as an internationally recognised reference point for the development of coaches globally. It outlines the key components of an effective coach education, development and employment system and encourages countries and national and international federations to benchmark their programs and initiatives against international best practice. Continuous improvement of coaching globally to deliver on its promise is at the heart of this document. Many countries, sports and organisations are using the Framework to guide their efforts in coaching.

At the core of this improvement and effort is the recognition that people engage in sport for different reasons at different stages of their life. The ISCF distinguishes between participation and performance sport. The former emphasises the benefits of involvement and the sheer enjoyment of taking part; the latter accentuates competition and achievement. Coaches' philosophy, knowledge and capabilities need to reflect this in order to maximise the chances of participants and athletes having positive developmental experiences in and through sport. This has been referred to as Athlete-Centred Coaching. Organisations with responsibility over the education and development of coaches are increasingly recognising that a one-size-fits-all model of coach education can fall short of current and future demands of the sports market.

Coach Education and the Higher Education Sector

A coaching system comprises of all the organisations, structures, programs and people which play a part in the education, development, deployment and employment of coaches.

Coaches learn in a variety of ways: i.e. mediated (formal and non-formal learning), unmediated situations (informal learning) and from conscious and subconscious reflection. Within a given system, coaches are educated and developed in a variety of ways which, in the main, cater for the various types of learning coaches can engage with.

Different types or organisations within different segments of the education sector provide coach education and development opportunities to coaches on a daily basis. In some countries, coaches have traditionally been educated by national sporting organisations and governing bodies of sport (national and international federations). In others, coaching has typically been the domain of the higher and further education sector (universities, colleges and specialist sport education institutes). More and more, however, a mixed model operates in most countries whereby a variety of organisations at different levels of the educational pathway provide various opportunities for coaches to be educated and developed.

With increased demands on coaches, certain countries, sectors and sports have started to implement a set of minimum standards for the deployment of coaches. These vary amongst countries and sports and are meant to guarantee that coaches are appropriately equipped to provide participants and athletes with positive and fulfilling experiences.

At the same time, opportunities for coaches to access part- and full-time paid jobs have proliferated in recent years in many parts of the world. The demand for professional coaching has extended beyond the traditional realm of professional and Olympic athletes to the provision of school, club, local authority and personal coaching. This has opened new pathways that were only aspirational not so long ago.

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In addition to educating coaches, higher education institutions all over the world have, over the last century, made a tremendous contribution to advance the science of coaching. A very broad portfolio of coaching research has steadily emerged. Coaching research builds on the applied knowledge developed by coaches in the field and provides support and even a healthy level of challenge for its implementation and further development. HEIs play a very important role in advancing coaching.

Establishing the Need for the International Coaching Degree Standards

With higher than ever expectations placed on coaches and greater demand for professional services, a growing number of HEIs around the world have started to offer and deliver Sport Coaching Bachelor Degrees in conjunction with or as a complement to coach education provided by other organisations such as national and international federations. These degrees are not intended as a substitute to governing body provision, but as a complement. ICCE recognises the new landscape in which coaching and coaches operate and welcomes these very positive developments. Such programmes aim to train coaches to graduate level with the purpose of enhancing their ability to coach effectively as well as their employability.

In some institutions, coaching is not yet a stand-alone degree, yet it receives a vast amount of attention within kinesiology and sport science courses. At times coaching can even be a specialism or major offered in the last years of these related degrees.

ICCE thus wants to acknowledge the important role played by HEIs in the education and development of coaches. In this context, it is paramount to ensure Coaching Degrees are fit for purpose and sensitive to the needs of the job and the labour market. Consensus must thus be built around the minimum standards Coaching Degrees need to satisfy in order to provide optimal preparation for the next generation of coaches that choose this educational route. To this effect, the ICCE has developed the International Coaching Degree Standards (hereon the Standards).

The creation of the Standards will support:

- the creation of an optimal match between Coaching Degrees and the needs of coaches, athletes and the labour market
- The comparison and translation process between existing Coaching Degrees from different countries
- The mapping and complementarity of Coaching Degrees to other existing coach education and development routes.
- Greater cooperation between HEIs and other coach education providers such as national and international federations.
- Recognition of prior learning between different coaching qualifications at degree level.
- A greater exchange and cooperation between academia and practitioners for the benefit of athletes and participants
- The quality assurance process of existing Coaching Degrees

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- In countries where there is no clear regulatory framework for coaching practice, the Standards may positively influence policy development.
- The raising of the profile and recognition of Coaching Degrees and Coaching majors
- The development of student and faculty professional profiles
- The overall process of professionalisation of sport coaching

The Nature of the Standards

The International Coaching Degree Standards are a support mechanism for the development and professionalisation of sport coaching. As such, they are intended as foundational minimum standards of quality deemed necessary to train coaches in a professional manner within HEIs. They are however, non-compulsory, inclusive and flexible in order to account for the different contexts in which Coaching Degrees may be delivered. HEIs are encouraged to exercise their academic autonomy and look at them as a starting point, not as the end result.

The Standards are also a work in progress tool, and will evolve as does the coaching profession following the needs of athletes and the labour market. It is paramount that HEIs wishing to develop and deliver Coaching Degrees, in conjunction with coaching organisations and listening to the voice of the coach on the ground, conduct a thorough analysis of the current landscape in which their graduates will be seeking employment. This analysis needs to take into account the professional prospects of graduates and the participant populations that need to be catered for. As a result of such analysis, institutions may need to adapt their degrees accordingly to meet demand. The Standards aim to provide a reference point for the development of curricula and study plans. HEIs must exercise discretion to ensure that, while informed by the Standards, their degree programmes are fit for purpose in their context.

Coaching Degrees aim to develop professionals who will employ their skills in the real world. The International Coaching Degree Standards reflect the nature of such degrees as professional qualifications, as opposed to academic qualifications. While needing a theoretical base to inform their practice, as recognised by the ISCF, coaching is a practical occupation and thus coaches need to learn practical skills they can deploy in their day-to-day practice.

In recognising this, the Standards also acknowledge the mandatory practical nature of coach education and development. A large part of coach learning happens on the job. As coaches deploy their knowledge and skills to specific programmes, athletes and situations, they make connections which facilitate the embedding of existing knowledge and skills and the development of new ones. Coaching Degree curricula and delivery programmes need to strongly reflect this practical element.

It is a logical consequence of the above that HEIs must strive to form a faculty of coach developers who have the relevant combination of knowledge and skills at both academic and practitioner level. This will guarantee that graduate coaches are developed with the constraints and challenges of the workplace in mind, thus reducing the likelihood of a potential disconnect between the world of education and the reality of the workplace. Where necessary and possible partnerships with existing coach education organisations and national governing bodies of sport should be sought to strengthen this process.

It is hoped that through the extensive consultation process the Standards have gone through, all stakeholders feel represented and supported appropriately. Especially, ICCE hopes the

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voices and needs of coaches on the ground, at the frontline of the delivery of sport, have been adequately considered and safeguarded for their benefit and the benefit of millions of participants and athletes under their care.

Future Steps

The coaching profession and the ways in which coaches are educated and developed will continue to evolve. The Standards are a live, working document which will need to organically and formally be reviewed and updated. Monitoring their adoption and implementation by HEIs will be central to this process. Communicating with coaches, especially those graduating from Coaching Degrees, will be paramount to adequately gauging the impact and suitability of the standards. ICCE will carry out a formal review of the Standards every four years starting in 2020 after the celebration of the XXXI Olympiad in Tokyo.

IV - The Essential Requirements for Graduates Holding a First Academic Degree meeting the International Coaching Degree Standards

Introductory information

In order for HEIs to be able to develop suitable Coaching Degrees, the Coaching Standards need to define key criteria and parameters under which they need to operate. Fundamental to this process are the qualification criteria relevant to a bachelor's degree, including knowledge, skills and competencies; the translation of these to the sport coaching world through the definition of relevant occupations and domains of practice; the clear definition of the professional purpose and role for which graduates are being prepared; and the expected knowledge and competences required to fulfil the degree.

What are the qualification criteria relevant to a Bachelor's Degree?

As per earlier footnote, the competence level has been mapped against several international and national benchmarks and each HEI will have to operate within the parameters provided by the national agency in charge of higher education in their respective country. Table 1 offers a composite graduate criteria profile. The first two criteria; knowledge and skills, represent the basis of professional qualities that when learned allow students to display the required outcomes of the course typically captured through:

- Programme level professional competences and/or
- Programme level learning outcomes

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Bachelor's Degree General Qualification Criteria	
Summary	Graduates at this level will have broad and coherent knowledge and skills for professional work and/or further learning
Professional Knowledge	Graduates are in possession of advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories, principles, routines and applications.
Professional Skills	Capacity to engage in diagnosing, creating expectancies, recognising and reacting to field of application, predicting & planning, work in complex non typical settings, manage uncertainty, self-regulation through reflection and self and awareness.
Professional Competences	Defined as "the habitual and judicious use of communication, knowledge, technical skills, reasoning, emotions, values, and reflection in daily practice for the benefit of the individual and community being served."[6] Full professional competences are probably beyond graduates yet they should offer the direction of travel.
Learning Outcomes	Describe what a student should be able to do on completion of a course of study and learning at a particular level. They reflect ways of thinking and practising[7]. They should be Active, Attractive, Comprehensible, Appropriate, Attainable, Assessable, Visible[8]

Table 1 – Bachelor's Degree General Qualification Criteria

[6] Epstein, R., Hundert, E. (2002) Defining and assessing professional competence. The Journal of the American Medical Association. 287. P226-235

[7] McCune, V., Hounsell, D. (2005) The development of students; ways of thinking and practising in three final-year biology courses. Higher Education. 49, 255-289

[8] See; Baume, D. (2009) Writing good learning outcomes. Leeds Beckett University. Leeds. Retrieved from: www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/publications/files/Learning_Outcomes.pdf

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What are the potential professional occupations and domains in a sport coaching context?

The following table describes some examples of the various coaching occupations and domains coaching degrees may prepare coaches for, and the relevant target audiences for each of them.

Qualification Criteria	Occupation/Domain	Target Audience of the Coach
Bachelor's Degree	Participation Coach	Adolescent and adult participants who do sport for recreational and health and fitness purposes
	Children/Youth Development Coach	Children who are having their first experiences of sport at school or club level and children and young people at the lower end of the performance development pathway
	Performance Coach	Adolescent and adults competing at national and international standard

Table 2 – Sport coaching occupations, domains and relevant target audiences which degrees may prepare graduates for

Professional Title

Sports Coach at Bachelor Level (hereon SCBL).

Linkage with International Sport Coaching Framework and existing coach education provision

The Standards recognise that coaching expertise develops and accrues over time, and that the HEI preparation of coaches should be coordinated with the programs of federations and coaching agencies. In relation to the terminology used in the ISCF v1.2, a SCBL is expected to achieve a level of competence at minimum at the Coach level, and depending on personal and professional experience gained prior to entering the degree or during the degree programme, may achieve the Advanced / Senior Coach level (Figure 2).

Coaching Roles	Achievement Standards	
	National and International Federation levels	University / higher education awards
Master / Head Coach	Level 4	
Advanced / Senior Coach	Level 3	SCBL – possible, based on experience
Coach	Level 2	SCBL – minimum
Coaching Assistant	Level 1	

Figure 2 (adapted from figure ISCF 9.2, p.45)

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This implies that the SCBL would be expected to acquire the extended knowledge, competence and decision-making to independently deliver programs. Greater autonomy and responsibility levels may fall below the threshold of Advanced/Senior Coach and would be expected to be achieved with relevant coaching experience over the course of 24-36 months post-graduation depending on personal and professional circumstances. SCBL with prior practical experiences and access to relevant experiences during the degree may achieve Advanced Coaching status on completion of the degree programme. Overall, the final aim of the programme of studies is to set someone on the journey to becoming an Advanced and ultimately Master / Head Coach over time.

Professional Purpose

To provide high quality sport experiences which meet the needs of the participants/athletes and institutions

Professional Role Description and Primary Functions

A SCBL plans, leads, delivers and reviews sport coaching sessions and seasons. This includes, where necessary, planning for and leading participants and athletes into organised competitions. The SCBL may work independently or as part of a team. Depending on professional experience, the SCBL may be able to play a leading role in the overall programme. Likewise, where appropriate, SCBL may also play a role in the management and development of less experienced coaches, coaching assistants and pre-coaches.

SCBL will typically be able to fulfil the six primary coaching functions as adapted from the ISCF (see appendix 1):

1. Set a relevant vision, goals and strategy/plan for the programme/participant/athletes.
2. Create an effective environment for the fulfilment of programme/participant/athlete goals
3. Build positive relationships with all stakeholders (i.e. participant/athletes, other coaches, club officials, parents, etc.)
4. Conduct appropriate practices and where appropriate select and prepare for appropriate competitions
5. Make informed decisions related to programme/participant/athlete training and performance in a dynamic environment
6. Reflect on one's own performance and embrace a lifelong learning attitude to the profession to strive for continuous improvement

SCBL may work in different domains (i.e. participation or performance) and with participants/athletes at different stages of development. These could be considered as different occupational types. All types of SCBL occupations have the same professional purpose and require similar levels of knowledge, skills and competences. However, to be able to fulfil the purpose of a specific type (i.e. a coach of children), each of the occupation types requires contextualised knowledge, skills and competences specific for that type. This needs to be acknowledged and reflected in the degree construction process.

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V - ICCE's International Coaching Degree Standards

The profile for a Bachelor's Degree in Sport Coaching has three main components as shown in figure 3. These are underpinned by the required faculty of lecturers and practitioners who are in charge of bringing the degree to life for the students.

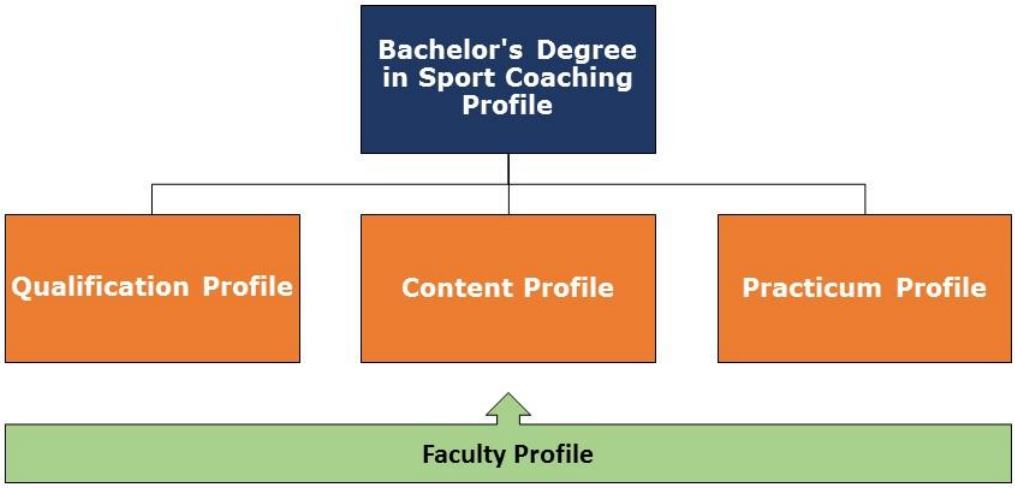

Figure 3 – Bachelor's Degree in Sport Coaching Profile

Qualification Profile

The SCBL holds an undergraduate degree comprising of a relevant number of units of learning and credit points. These units of learning are made up of learning outcomes which are expected to be able to prepare SCBL to fulfil the primary functions and achieve the skills and competences and underpinning knowledge described in tables 3 and 4 below. Note that the undergraduate degree may be specifically designed for a particular sport, domain or both.

Content Profile

The content profile of a bachelor's degree in sport coaching comprises of two main areas. First, the content has to be constructed around the notion of supporting student coaches to fulfil the primary functions of a coach in a particular context. In order to do this, the degree must ensure that SCBL acquire the relevant skills and competencies, and that these are underpinned by the appropriate knowledge base. Second, degrees must comply with the relevant requirements at national and international level in relation to how the outcomes of the degree are articulated and how the student workload is structured. The following two sections address these areas.

- **International Sport Coaching Degree Content Framework**

The ICDS Content Framework is fundamentally both descriptive and prescriptive. It represents a combining of the guidance already offered while drawing on established ideas in policy documents, published research and current degree practice. The framework is split into two sections. In keeping with the ideas already presented, table 3 offers an adaptation of the ISCF's

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Primary Functions of the Coach and deliberately flows towards a set of related Exemplar Professional Competencies and Skills. The second part of the framework (Table 4) shows the Core Knowledge Domains underpinning the professional competencies and skills of the SCBL and offers a non-exclusive sample of explicit theoretical areas and theories which may be included in the curriculum. The knowledge domains have been drawn from theoretical research examining the knowledge required to engage effectively in the coaching process. It is important to understand that the domains are not isolated silos of knowledge, nor are they necessarily defining the way in which knowledge should be 'packaged'. However, they are a way of checking and challenging whether all relevant curriculum that could be included is included.

The framework is therefore prescriptive on the basis that courses will be expected to show that they are working toward facilitating a graduate's capacity to engage in the Primary Functions of a coach using a range of interdependent competences that in turn are underpinned by a broad and interconnected theoretical knowledge base. It is however, also descriptive on the basis that there is no predefined gold standard of competences to be gained or curriculum to be followed. The competences that are included are, as described, exemplar. There is (and must always be) a level of autonomy in the way in which universities design their own degrees. There is flexibility in the occupation and domain that the degree will prepare graduates for that will inevitably change and contextualise the specific competences (or learning outcomes) worked towards and therefore the curriculum that will underpin those competences.

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Primary Functions[9]		Exemplar Professional Competencies/Skills *The Sports Coach at Bachelor Level is able to:*
Set a relevant <u>vision</u>, <u>goals and strategy/plan</u> for the programme/participant/athletes *The coach creates a vision and a strategy based on the needs and stages of development of the athlete and the organisational and social context of the programme*	**The capacity to engage in meeting these primary functions requires a synoptic application of knowledge, skills and professional competences. The contribution of each being dependent of the specific context and demands.**	• Understand the big picture and align practice with local, regional and national policy and objectives • Develop a suitable vision for the program relevant to the athletes in it and also to institutional priorities • Set up a relevant strategy that supports the fulfilment of the vision • Make effective and informed decisions relating to the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of longer term programmes of practice and competition based on institutional and participant/athlete needs
Create an effective <u>environment</u> for the fulfilment of programme/participant/athlete goals *The coach is employed or deployed to work with a group of athletes for a specific period. The coach seeks to maximise the environment in which the programme occurs through the appropriate allocation and use of personnel, facilities, resources, working practices and the management of other coaches and support personnel*		• Effectively identify and recruit participant/athletes and staff • Identify, reflect on and challenge prevailing beliefs, values and assumptions within the coaching environment • Identify and source the relevant resources (human and material) required to fulfil programme and participant needs; • Employ all reasonable measures to keep participants/athletes and staff safe from harm
<u>Build positive relationships</u> with all stakeholders (i.e. participant/athletes, club officials, parents, etc.) *The coach builds positive relationships with athletes and others associated with the programme, including personnel at the club, school, federation and other levels. The coach is responsible for engaging in, contributing to and influencing the organisational context through the creation of respectful working relationships.*		• Lead and influence the attitudes, behaviours and understanding of key stakeholders (i.e. parents, managers etc.) through meaningful presentation of ideas. • Establish and maintain an ethical, effective, inclusive and empathetic relationship with athletes, staff and other stakeholders. • Appreciate physical, mental and cultural diversity in participants and adapt practice accordingly • Adhere to established codes of conduct and legal requirements in coaching • Educate participant/athletes, staff and other stakeholders to enhance their contribution to their own objectives, the program's and their overall wellbeing

[9] Adapted from the International Sport Coaching Framework v1.2 (ICCE, ASOIF & LBU, 2013)

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Conduct appropriate <u>practices</u> and where appropriate select, prepare and manage appropriate <u>competitions</u> *The coach organises suitable and challenging practices using effective techniques to promote learning and improvement. The coach prepares for targeted competitions and also oversees and manages the athletes in this competitions.*		• Conduct comprehensive needs analyses for individual athletes and/or teams in order to design and deliver tailored coaching programmes, taking into account participant needs and capabilities in the context of wider programmes, curricula, policies and targets • Select, design and justify appropriate pedagogy, practice and communication methods to facilitate the short, medium and long term learning needs of participants • Conduct a functional analysis of multi skill[10] activity or of their chosen sport(s) and identify the implications for coaching practice. • Identify the core elements of multi skills or of their chosen sport(s) at the key stages of participant development. • Devise, interpret and apply an appropriate curriculum for a multi skill environment or in their chosen sport(s) in line with participant needs and the agreed industry standard • Deliver a series of coaching sessions in the context of medium term and long term planned programmes of practice and competition using a wide range of appropriate learning modes for participants and coaching behaviours • Can conduct and work to risk assessments in order to deliver safe and ethical coaching practice. • Identify, create and manage suitable competitive opportunities to contribute to participant/athlete on-going development • Develop appropriate competition strategies to maximise chances of learning and success • Maintain a professional attitude towards coaching practice, athletes and all stakeholders at all times.
<u>Make informed decisions</u> related to programme/participant/athlete training and performance in a dynamic environment *The coach observes and responds to events appropriately, including all on- and off-field matters. Effective decision-making is essential.*		• Conduct an insightful analysis of coaching practice to make informed judgement relating to the efficacy of the learning environment established • Conduct an insightful analysis of athlete/team performance to make informed decisions regarding 'on the spot' adjustments to enhance it. • Conduct an insightful analysis of the programme to make informed judgement relating to the efficacy of the environment established
<u>Reflect</u> on own performance and embrace a <u>lifelong learning</u> attitude to the profession to strive for continuous improvement *The coach evaluates own performance in relation to the all the above primary functions. This underpins a process of lifelong learning and improvement whereby the coach constantly seeks relevant learning opportunities. The coach also supports efforts to educate and develop other coaches*		• Identify and reflect on assumptions and practices as a coach and student, demonstrating the ability to conduct informed analysis and a willingness to apply the principle of continuous improvement to own coaching. • Identify own learning needs and take responsibility for the development and application of strategies for further self-development, as part of an on-going profiling process • Take an objective and critical approach to problem identification and solution, using evidence-based approaches and appropriate research methodologies • Develop an initial personal coaching philosophy and style, recognising the need for further growth based on learning, evidence and experience

Table 3 – Bachelor Degree in Sport Coaching Primary Functions, Competencies and Skills

[10] Multi skill activity refers to sport sessions aimed at the development of overall psychomotor skills, typically in children, sometimes referred to as Fundamental Movement Skills. These types of activity can be done as part of a sport specific session (i.e. multi skills with a theme of tennis) or as outright multi skills sessions

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There is a strong level of linearity linking Competences to Knowledge and Skill domains. However, there is also an obvious interrelationship between all of these boxes.

Core Knowledge Domains (Côté & Gilbert, 2009; ISCF, 2013)	Sub Domains	Broad Theoretical Areas	Exemplar Areas of Study/Theories
Professional Knowledge	Understanding of the Process and Practice of Coaching	Planning Theories Reviewing/Reflecting Theories	Constructive Alignment Integrative/Synoptic Thinking Critical Thinking Reflective Practice Periodisation
		Doing Theories	Naturalistic Decision Making Reflection in Action
		Theories of Coaching	Coaching as Decision Making Coaching as Orchestration Coaching Effectiveness
		Theories of Competition	Competition for Learning Competition for Inclusion Competition for Comparison (performance)
	Understanding of Context	Theories of Policy	Policy development, implementation and evaluation (i.e. Impact of sport on physical and mental health)
		Theories of Politics	Micro and Macro Politics Social Theories
		Theories of Strategy	Market/Product Analysis Theories Strategy Development Theories
		Sport Administration	Budgeting Project Planning Human Resources Company Relations
	Understanding the Sport and Sport Curriculum	Theories of Technique	Biomechanics Motor Control Skill Acquisition
		Theories of Tactics and Strategy	Cognitive Psychology Decision Making Philosophy of the Goal of Sport Notational Analysis
		Theories Psychological Demands	Performance Psychology Sport Psychology
		Theories of Physiological Demands	Performance Physiology Strength and Conditioning Motion Analysis Sports Nutrition

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				Sport Injuries
			Theories of Movement Demands	Motor Control Motor Development Functional Movement
		Understanding of the Participant	Biological Theories	Anatomy Developmental Physiology Exercise Physiology
			Psychological Theories	Emotional Intelligence Developmental Psychology Cognitive Psychology Social Psychology Sport Psychology Performance Psychology Motivational Theories
			Sociological theories	Cultural Psychology Social Psychology Group Dynamics Group Theory Socialisation Theory
			Participant Development & Talent Development Integrative Models	Bio-Psycho-Social Models of development
	Intrapersonal Knowledge	Understanding of Self	Theories of Self-Regulation Theories of Values and Beliefs Theories of Personal Development Theories of Coaching Research and Knowledge Generation	Developmental Psychology Reflective Practice Metacognition Epistemology Mental Skills Self-Regulation Research Methods Sociological and/or Psychological Interpretations of Coaching Positive Youth Development
	Interpersonal Knowledge	Understanding Human Relationships & Pedagogy	Learning Theories	Cognitive Learning theory Social Learning Theory Sociological learning theory Experiential Learning Theory Self-Directed Learning Theory Transformative Learning Theory
			Skills Acquisition/Motor Learning Theories	Ecological/Constraints Theory Information Processing Theory

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			Learning Management Theories	
			Leadership Theories	Transformational Leadership Relarional Leadership Servant Leadership Persuasion Power
			Communication Theories	Communication Models and Strategies Non-violent Communication Conflict Resolution Models
			Theories of Culture	Sociological, Historical & Psychological Theories of Inclusion and Exclusion, Power etc Culture Management Cultural Competence
			Theories of Ethics	Virtue Ethics Utilitarian Ethics Deontological Ethics Care Ethics Theories of Moral Development & Morality

Table 4 – Bachelor Degree in Sport Coaching Knowledge Basis and Exemplar Theoretical Foundations

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- **Degree Workload Requirement**

In line with international trends and UNESCO recommendations, bachelor degrees in sport coaching should be structured around the notion of learning outcomes, units of learning and credits[11].

- Learning outcomes are verifiable statements of what learners who have obtained a particular qualification, or completed a programme or its components, are expected to know, understand and be able to do. As such they emphasise the link between teaching, learning and assessment. Learning outcomes statements are typically characterised by the use of active verbs expressing knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation[12].
- Units of learning may comprise a number of learning outcomes and are coherent sets of knowledge, skills and competence that can be assessed and validated with a number of associated credit points.
- Credit points are used to define the workload (typically in hours) students are expected to complete in order to achieve expected learning outcomes. The value of a credit point may vary between countries.

A degree based on learning outcomes, units of learning and credit points facilitates the transfer of credits via the comparison and recognition of learning outcomes (CoachLearn, 2016[13]). Learners can achieve a qualification by accumulating the required units, achieved in different contexts or countries providing they comply with the respective national legislation. This increases student mobility and provides more flexible routes to gain the degree. It also aids quality assurance and builds a stronger link between the education system and the labour market.

A bachelor's degree is an undergraduate academic degree awarded by colleges and universities upon completion of a course of study lasting usually three to four years (depending on institution and academic discipline). In general, it will involve the completion of a concrete number of academic credits (ranging from about 360 credits for 3-4 year degrees in UK universities; between 180 to 240 ECTS credits for other European countries; 120 to 130 credits for USA institutions; 486 credits in South Africa; etc.). As a result, a typical annual academic load for a full-time student ranges from 120 UK credits, to 60 ECTS or 30 USA credits. An academic credit represents formal learning done in class plus independent study or research and preparation done for study courses. Academic credit systems in Universities worldwide keep track of student academic progress, help set tuition fees, facilitate student transfers to other higher education institutions and more.

It should be noted that in a Sports Coaching programme the contents and subject matter may be embedded in a variety of papers, modules or courses within a degree rather than as specifically nominated topics.

[11] UNESCO GUIDELINES for the Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of the Outcomes of Non-formal and Informal Learning. (2012). Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

[12] European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. (2015). Available from:<http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/ects_en.htm>. [15 August 2015].

[13] CoachLearn (2016). Recognition of Prior Learning and Work-Based Experience in Coach Development. *Report #2 – Project CoachLearn.* Leeds: CoachLearn Consortium

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Practicum Profile (Coaching Experience)

A SCBL is expected to learn in a variety of forms and environments. Research shows the importance of on-the-job learning for the development of coaching expertise and how coaches learn in mediated, unmediated and internal learning (reflection) situations[14]. To facilitate unmediated and internal learning, it is expected that a comprehensive practicum period will be completed prior to graduation. Various viable models exist. For example, in the early years of the degree, students could focus on shorter practicum periods where a combination of observation of experienced coaches and first hand coaching takes place. In the latter part of the degree the emphasis could shift towards longer and more independent periods of practice and competition. This could culminate in the final degree year including a full season with a group of athletes, a squad, club, school or local authority. In this way, the future coach can be exposed to all the eventualities which emerge through the course of this longer engagement. Research also shows the importance of documenting the critical reflective process that takes place during the internship in order to facilitate and evidence learning. As previously stated, the practicum has to be related to the role and domain the coach is being trained to do.

Note that the practical internship included in the undergraduate programme, as long as it was accomplished in a sports coaching setting or equivalent, is eligible as "minimum professional/coaching experience". Appropriate supervision, mentoring and a verified statement from the employer or coaching supervisor will be compulsory.

As a result, and based on the professional skills, knowledge and competencies achieved during the completion of a bachelor degree programme, the SCBL is deemed capable of performing the activities detailed above under the professional knowledge and competences section.

Given that Bachelor Degrees will be regulated by the national agency in charge of higher education, in each respective country, this document should be read in conjunction with relevant National Qualification Frameworks at Bachelor's Degree level requirement profiles.

Faculty Requirement

Given the aforementioned requirements, it is envisaged that the faculty must be composed of teaching staff with a solid footing in both academia and practical coaching. Where this is not possible, efforts should be made to ensure that there is a suitable balance of staff with either an academic or practice orientated profile.

Technology Requirement

Technology and its use and benefits has become pervasive in XXI Century society. HEIs educating SCBL must consider the role technology will play in their degrees. This role is two-fold: first, how technology is used to enhance the learning experience of the student-coach; and second, how student-coaches gain the relevant theoretical and practical knowledge to make the most of technology whilst coaching. ICCE recognises that access to technology is subject to issues of resourcing and procurement. The conditions will be different in different countries and contexts, yet the Standards encourage HEIs to maximise the use of and learning about technological advancements to benefit the education, practice and employability of future SCBL.

[14] For a full description of this process please go to chapter 8 of the International Sport Coaching Framework (ICCE, ASOIF & LBU, 2013). The ISCF is free on request for all ICCE members and can also be purchased at www.humankinetics.com

Professional Capacity and Responsibility

Although SCBL may be able to provide general advice in a number of areas, it is important that they have the professional capacity to determine when a participant or athlete must be referred to a specialist. Therefore, the SCBL is **not** qualified to:

- Prescribe rehabilitation programmes;
- Provide exercise testing on high risk populations;
- Prescribe any kind of medication or supplements;
- Prescribe nutritional programmes;
- Diagnose any psychological disorders or mental health conditions;
- Provide any kind of clinical psychological treatment;
- Diagnose diseases, disabilities or other clinical conditions.

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Table 5 offers a summary of the Standards.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Bachelor's Degree General Qualification Criteria: Graduates are in possession of advanced professional, interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories, principles, routines and applications. Graduates have the capacity to engage in diagnosing, creating expectancies, recognising and reacting to field of application, predicting & planning, work in complex non typical settings, manage uncertainty, self-regulation through reflection and self and awareness.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Professional Title
Sport Coach (at Bachelor Level) - SCBL</td><td>Professional Purpose
To provide high quality sport experiences which meet the needs of the participants/athletes and institutions</td><td>Professional Role
A SCBL plans, leads, delivers and reviews sport coaching sessions and seasons. This includes, where necessary, planning for and leading participants and athletes into organised competitions. The SCBL may work independently or as part of a team. Depending on professional experience, the SCBL may be able to play a leading role in the overall programme. Likewise, where appropriate, SCBL may also play a role in the management and development of less experienced coaches, coaching assistants and pre-coaches.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Primary Functions - A SCBL will typically be able to fulfil six primary functions:
1 - Set a relevant vision, goals and strategy/plan for the programme/participant/athletes
2 - Create an effective environment for the fulfilment of programme/participant/athlete goals
3 - Build positive relationships with all stakeholders (i.e. participant/athletes, club officials, parents, etc.)
4 - Conduct appropriate practices and where appropriate select and prepare for appropriate competitions
5 - Make informed decisions related to programme/participant/athlete training and performance in a dynamic environment
6 - Reflect on one's own performance and embrace a lifelong learning attitude to the profession to strive for continuous improvement</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Bachelor's Degree in Sport Coaching Profile</td></tr>
<tr><td>Qualification Profile
The SCBL holds an undergraduate degree comprising of a relevant number of units of learning and credit points. These units of learning are made up of learning outcomes which are expected to be able to prepare SCBL to fulfil the primary functions and achieve the skills and competences and underpinning knowledge described in tables 3 and 4.

Faculty Profile
It is envisaged that the faculty must be composed of professors and lecturers with a solid footing in both academia and practical coaching. Where this is not possible, efforts should be made to ensure that there is a suitable balance of staff with either an academic or practice orientated profile.</td><td>Degree Workload Profile
A bachelor's degree is an undergraduate academic degree awarded by colleges and universities upon completion of a course of study lasting usually three to four years (depending on institution and academic discipline). In general, it will involve the completion of a concrete number of academic credits (ranging from about 360 credits for 3-4 year degrees in UK universities; between 180 to 240 credits for other European countries, called ECTS; 120 to 130 credits for US institutions; etc.). As a result, a typical annual academic load for a FT student ranges from 120 UK credits, to 60 ECTS or 30 US credits. An academic credit represents formal learning done in class plus independent study or research and preparation done for study courses.</td><td>Technology Requirement
Technological advances, subject to resourcing, must contribute to enhancing the learning and professional capacity of SCBL.

Practicum Profile (Coaching Experience)
A SCBL is expected to learn in a variety of forms and environments. Research shows the importance of on-the-job learning for the development of coaching expertise. To this purpose, it is expected that a comprehensive practicum period will be completed prior to graduation. The way this practicum is conducted may vary between institutions and countries, but the practicum must prove that it adequately prepares the SCBL for the role and domain the coach is being trained to do. The practical internship included in the undergraduate programme, as long as it was accomplished in a sports coaching setting or equivalent, is eligible as "minimum professional/coaching experience". Appropriate supervision, mentoring and a verified statement from the employer or coaching supervisor will be compulsory.</td></tr>
</table>

Table 5 – ICCE's International Coaching Degree Standards

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VI – ICCE Evaluation and Endorsement of Sport Coaching Bachelor Degrees

The Standards are non-compulsory and flexible guidelines the HEIs can use independently for the purpose of self-assessing their existing coaching degrees or to plan the development of new ones. However, for HEIs wishing to formally undertake an analysis of the current provision, ICCE will develop a formal evaluation and endorsement process. ICCE will work with such institutions to review their courses, award an endorsement status at the relevant level, and provide recommendations for further development of the degree. This evaluation and endorsement process is not a substitute for existing endorsing protocols led by the national higher education council or the national lead coaching agency. In fact, this process may be redundant for some HEIs. In other countries where there is no clear regulatory framework for coaching practice, the Standards may influence policy development. Ultimately, it is for each HEI to decide on the potential value of engaging in the ICCE's voluntary evaluation and endorsement process. If your institution would like to explore this option, please contact the ICCE at ICDS@icce.ws.

VII – Concluding Remarks

Sport coaching has evolved greatly in the last few decades. The roles and responsibilities of coaches in different domains are ever expanding. We owe it to coaches and their athletes and participants to provide them with the best possible education to fulfil their roles adequately. HEIs have a substantial part to play in this process. The International Sport Coaching Degree Standards offer an opportunity for institutions already delivering coaching degrees to review and where necessary adapt their programmes. For those considering the possibility of delivering coaching degrees in the future, it represents a starting point. In any case, HEIs are encouraged to consider the context and culture within which they operate, and to take them into account when reading and using this document. Institutions are also encouraged to liaise and cooperate with national education and coaching agencies as well as national and international federations. This will ensure their degrees are aligned with the requirements of such organisations and complement and strengthen the existing national and international efforts to improve the education of coaches.

The coaching profession and the ways in which coaches are educated and developed will continue to evolve. The Standards are a live, working document which will need to be organically and formally reviewed and updated. Monitoring their adoption and implementation will be central to this process. ICCE will carry out a formal review of the Standards every four years starting in 2020 after the celebration of the XXXI Olympiad in Tokyo

ICCE wishes you all the best in your efforts to support the education of coaches in your countries and sports through the contribution of your HEI. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries at ICDS@icce.ws

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VIII – List of Acronyms

- **AQF:** Australian Qualifications Framework
- **ASOIF:** Association of Summer Olympics International Federations
- **DQR:** Deutscher Qualifikationsrahmen Für Lebenslanges Lernen (German Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning)
- **ECTS:** European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
- **EQF:** European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning
- **HEIs:** Higher Education Institutions (also known as Tertiary Institutions)
- **ICCE:** International Council for Coaching Excellence
- **ICDS:** International Coaching Degree Standards
- **ISCF:** International Sport Coaching Framework
- **NQF:** National Qualifications Framework (South Africa)
- **QCF:** Qualifications and Credits Framework (United Kingdom)
- **SCBL:** Sport Coach at Bachelor Level
- **UNESCO:** United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

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