C-Diploma

Coach Education Framework

November 13th, 2024

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PREPARATION

APPLICATION

Rational:

Alberta Soccer is committed to providing equal opportunities for all individuals in Alberta. Grassroots coaches who wish to advance their coaching skills—whether for personal development or to meet competition or licensing requirements—should have the opportunity to register for higher-level coaching courses. To ensure fairness and consistency, registration should be open to everyone, followed by an established selection process.

Process

Potential students can apply for a spot on the list by submitting an online form. Each form will be opened 120 days before the course's official start (the first online session). The application window closes 90 days before the first session. This timeframe provides coaches with sufficient opportunity to address any missing requirements and plan for both in-person and online sessions. Applicants will need to provide the following information (but not limited to):

- Name
- Club
- Email address
- NCCP Number
- How many years has the coach been coaching?
- Which age group is the coach working with?
- Why does the coach want to obtain a C-Diploma?

SELECTION

Rational

We prefer to implement a selection process for inviting coaches to the biannual intake to ensure a fair selection and foster a diverse group of students. Establishing a selection process will promote transparency in choosing coaches and justify invitations based on the information provided in their applications.

Process

The application form will close 90 days before the course starts. Once the application period has closed, all applicants will be screened and evaluated based on the following requirements: Grassroots Trained (Soccer for Life or Learn to Train) and Safe Sport Roster (which includes Making Ethical Decisions Evaluation, NCCP Understanding the Rule of Two, NCCP Making Headway in Soccer, NCCP Emergency Action Plan, and Respect in Sport).

Each intake should have a minimum of 18 coaches and a maximum of 36 coaches. Alberta Soccer aims for an ideal cohort size of 24, with two Learning Facilitators (LFs) leading the course.

The distribution of coaches will be prioritized as follows:

- Equal numbers of men and women
- Equal age distribution
- 50% coaches from rural areas
- 33% of inexperienced coaches (fewer than 3 years of experience)
- 33% of coaches with some experience (3-5 years)
- 33% of experienced coaches (more than 5 years)
- If possible, the distribution should also aim for 50% head coaches and 50% assistant coaches (which includes goalkeeper coaches or team managers)
- Coaches with a focus on inclusive programs shall be invited

A selection group consisting of two staff members at Alberta Soccer to ensure fair and diverse selection, aiming for inclusivity and varied perspectives.

Student coaches will be informed to prepare for the course as soon as possible. The latest date to notify them of their participation is 60 days before the first phase begins.

DELIVERY

FIRST PHASE – ONLINE LEARNING

Rational

The C-Diploma course in Canada, designed for individuals aspiring to become certified soccer coaches, will start with online delivery. These sessions provide real-time instruction and interaction, bridging geographical gaps and making the course accessible to a broader audience of coaches. Synchronous learning promotes engagement, allowing participants to ask questions and collaborate.

Alberta Soccer aims to ensure that this initial interaction with the LFs is as smooth and straightforward as possible. Participants will learn about the course framework and clarify any requirements that must be fully understood. The online format allows coaches to remain in their familiar environment, facilitating a more focused approach to the province's current situation.

Process

The first step is to set up Google Classroom as a Learning Management System (LMS) for all participants. This will include the handbook, online modules, coaches' portfolios, and other relevant information about the course. The forum will also share links to the three online sessions. Alberta Soccer's preferred platforms for online delivery are Zoom and MS Teams. As the dates for the online sessions were published before the application opened, coaches will only need the link to join the video call.

Student coaches will experience a combination of traditional front-of-class teaching and group work in breakout rooms, including presenting their work to the groups.

Lead facilitators (LFs) will be informed of their involvement and the delivery process one week before the respective online session. They are expected to log in 15 minutes before the start time to greet participants and ensure a smooth arrival.

During the sessions, one LF delivers the content while the other monitors the chat for questions. Once the groups move into breakout rooms, both LFs visit different groups to support the learning process.

After each session, LFs should remain available for an additional 15 minutes to answer any questions from the student coaches.

SECOND PHASE – IN-PERSON TRAINING

Rational

In-person training is a critical component of this educational process. It is the only occasion coaches actively engage in coaching and feedback opportunities. The delivery must convert theory into practice and offer as many opportunities as possible.

Process

Organization:

To kick off the new C-Diploma program, Alberta Soccer has decided to hold the in-person portion of the course in Red Deer at Red Deer Polytechnic. The location features a natural grass soccer field that meets the FIFA requirements and is also used by the Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC). Additionally, the Gary W. Harris Canada Games Centre, utilized during the 2019 Canada Summer Games, offers an ideal learning environment for the course.

Once the first cohort is up and running, Alberta Soccer plans to alternate the course locations between Calgary and Edmonton to maintain high standards in the learning environment. This could be managed by either assigning locations based on the intake periods—such as the Spring Intake in Calgary and the Fall Intake in Edmonton—or by alternating locations for each intake, ensuring fairness for participants travelling to the venues.

Delivery Schedule:

The two in-person phases will always begin on Friday and extend to Sunday. Each of the three days will be full of practical and theoretical content. The delivery must adhere to the learner-to-facilitator ratio of 1:12. The weekend schedule follows Canada Soccer's suggestions, with in-class sessions in pink and on-field sessions in green. Any changes to this schedule must be discussed with a representative from Canada Soccer.

The LFs should be mixed-gender and receive on-site organizational support from Alberta Soccer. After the weekend, all documents used in the delivery, including the mentorship list for the participants, will be uploaded to Google Classroom.

Table 1: In-Person delivery example

The structured training and atmosphere will allow participants to focus on specific skills, such as setting up drills, managing team dynamics, and applying coaching strategies. The LFs will assign groups to encourage collaborative problem-solving and create a sense of belonging and community. The in-person weekend is also an excellent opportunity for real-time feedback from facilitators, followed by group discussions to encourage peer learning.

THIRD PHASE – ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE-LEARNING

Rational

The asynchronous learning phase offers flexibility for coaches with diverse schedules, allowing them to review materials at their own pace. It also reinforces learning by providing resources coaches can revisit, helping solidify theoretical knowledge. This process is supplemented by a mentorship phase in which coaches can speak to their mentor coach developer in a 1-on-1 conversation about everything relevant.

Process

Alberta Soccer will utilize Google Classroom to provide videos, readings, quizzes, and practical assignments for student coaches. This platform enables student coaches to monitor their progress and revisit materials as needed. Additionally, students can ask questions within the LMS, fostering group discussions and encouraging peer-driven learning.

The Google Classroom will also include a mentor list, assigning each student coach a mentor for optional support. While student coaches are not required to engage with their mentors, this resource allows them to exchange ideas, ask questions, and enhance their approaches to the challenges and tasks presented in the course. From the first in-person weekend to the planned evaluation weekend, each student coach will have one hour monthly for mentorship sessions.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
Introduction & Observation of Competency	Practice Theory & Practice Parts	Effective Practice Planning #2	Supporting the Grassroots Player #1	Importance of Small-Sided Games	Prepare & Manage a Game Plan
Positive Grassroots on Field	Exploring the Attacking Principles of the Game	Designing Environments to Support Skill Development (Attacking Organization)	The Coaching Process #1 (Defensive organization)	Games for Understanding	Coaching in a Match
Transformational Coaching	Effective Practice Session Planning #1	Planning Session Lab	Supporting the Grassroots Player #2	Roles & Responsibilities of the Team	Developing Weekly Plans
Applying Training Principles in Warm-Ups	Exploring the Defending Principles of the Game	Designing Environments to Support Skill Development (Attacking Organization)	The Coaching Process #2 (Defensive Organization	Coaching Roles & Responsibilities of the Team	Observation of Competency

Canada Soccer has prepared multimedia content, including presentations and other documents, for the upcoming courses. This approach guarantees consistent delivery, quality, and sustainability across the country. Throughout the process, coaches will participate in periodic quizzes and reflections provided through Nearpod online sessions to ensure they keep up with the material and understand the key concepts.

FOURTH PHASE – EVALUATION

Rational

To become certified as a coach under the Coaching Association of Canada framework, an evaluation is required. This evaluation confirms that coaches have achieved the necessary learning outcomes and can effectively implement their acquired skills. It will also serve as a benchmark to assess the program's effectiveness and help Alberta Soccer maintain high coaching standards.

The evaluation should occur in a central Alberta location to create an inclusive and collaborative environment that enables everyone to participate. It will involve a 20- —to 30-minute on-field coaching session led by the coach. The Learning Facilitators (LFs) will evaluate the coaches using a specific rubric to determine whether a coach passes the evaluation.

Process

The evaluation for successful certification includes several components: an exam, a portfolio submission, and a practical assessment.

Exam:

The exam will take place on the last day of the in-person session. Canada Soccer will provide all necessary materials, including files, papers, and links.

Portfolio:

The portfolio will be submitted through Google Classroom and cover all course modules. It consists of various questions and reflections on the topics discussed throughout the course. The portfolio must be submitted by the final day of the evaluation. The main goal is to ensure that each coach is fully certified in compliance with provincial regulations for provincials and other competitions.

Practical Evaluation:

The practical evaluation will occur at a central location, where Alberta Soccer will provide a team of 16 to 18 players (age group may vary across evaluation weekends, ranging from U13 to U17) for the coaches to work with. Each coach will receive a specific topic during the second in-person weekend, on which they will need to develop a complete session plan. The practical evaluation will last 20 to 30 minutes, including an introduction, a skill or skill development activity, and a full game. Suppose coaches need more time to be ready, able, and willing to

commit to the initially scheduled evaluation date. In that case, they can either be evaluated at the next available session (Spring or Fall) or apply for an online evaluation.

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AFTERMATH

FIFTH PHASE – CONSTANT PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Rational

Alberta Soccer is committed to fostering ongoing personal development specific to the sport and promoting a culture of lifelong learning. The primary goal is to keep coaches informed about the field's latest methodologies, regulations, and best practices. Once this initiative is in place, Alberta Soccer can cultivate a community of lifelong learners who continuously enhance the quality of soccer throughout the province. This project will also foster and strengthen the coaching community in the Districts and across Alberta

Process

Alberta Soccer is introducing a hybrid learning series featuring experts (universities, colleges, coaches, SPAR, CAC, and CSIA) from the soccer, sports, and science fields conducting 90-minute coaching clinics on various topics. These clinics aim to provide coaches with diverse perspectives, allowing them to gain insights from outside the soccer community, fellow coaches, and experts within Alberta and beyond.

The first step will involve creating a calendar that outlines two monthly topics for coaches to sign up for. These clinics will be available in person at the Alberta Soccer headquarters and online via Zoom or MS Teams. They will also be recorded for Personal Development (PD) purposes. This setup ensures coaches can earn their required PD points to maintain their licensing status while allowing everyone to participate in several clinics yearly.

FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV
Team analysis as foundation for the training week and game day	Communication and Leadership in Soccer	Women in Soccer	Tournament team preparation	Women Cycle in Soccer	How Futsal helps my players to develop.	Nutrition for Athletes	Introduction to Talent Identification	Mentoring Assistant Coaches	Performance analysis
Strength & Conditioning in Soccer	Data analytics in soccer	Intercultural sensibility – Leadership of diverse team structures	Stress management for coaches	Season planning (Periodization) in Soccer	Game analysis and scouting	Applied soccer rules	Goalkeeper training	Effective Coaching the Female Game	Creating a performance environment
Innovative Festival and Game ideas "aka Ballers League /	Perception, action coupling	Representative, task design	Differential learning	Ecological dynamics	Skill acquisition principles	Nonlinear pedagogy			

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Funky Minute"									

The second step will include practical clinics, demonstrating various skills development approaches and small-sided games in short, 90-minute training sessions. This helpful component will allow coaches to choose between theoretical and practical clinics to further their certification.

Table 2: Example list for a full year of soccer-related clinic topics

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