



COACHING CONVENTION 2025

Syllabus of minimum content: UEFA Elite Youth A diploma

Introduction

“**Quality coaching** is much more than teaching a sport. Coaches coach the person rather than the sport and so contribute to their participants’ development socially and emotionally, as well as physically and technically. Quality coaching is therefore more athlete-centred and athlete-driven, more focused on values and respect. Coaches play an important role in promoting enjoyable sports participation, helping people achieve their potential and enhancing individual and team performance.”

[Building your Coach Developer Workforce](#), International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE), 2024

UEFA adopts a competence-based approach to its diploma courses and their syllabuses of minimum content. **Quality coach education** is student-centred and output-focused, meaning it is based on the coaches’ occupational profile and required competencies and produces relevant learning outcomes for those coaches. This is a move away from the traditional teacher-centred, input-focused model.

UEFA provides syllabuses of minimum content to help national associations create consistent, effective UEFA diploma courses that result in coherent, comparable qualifications. The aim is not to dictate how associations design their courses but to provide a selection of evidence-based options derived from best practices. Our hope is that associations will draw on these best practices to design courses and qualifications that meet the needs of their coaches. Professional judgement that takes into account the association’s unique experience, expertise and context is not only encouraged but central to this process.

The vast majority of coaching competences are applicable to both **male and female players**, but some do require knowledge or adaptations that are specific to men or women, boys or girls. They are identified in the SMC with the symbols ♀♂. The specificities should be taught as part of the core content to equip all coaches with the skills to confidently coach men and women, boys and girls. Guidance on delivery methods and ready-to-use content can be found in the **Framework for Coaching Female Players**.

The **UEFA Elite Youth A diploma** is designed for coaches working with young players progressing from adolescence into adulthood, during the critical transition from elite youth football to the professional game. This course equips coaches with the advanced knowledge and skills needed to guide future professionals through this pivotal stage, fostering environments that support high-level development, performance readiness and long-term player potential.

Coach profile

Coaches awarded a UEFA Elite Youth A diploma must have a clear understanding of how to develop and coach future professional players transitioning from elite youth to professional football during their period from adolescence to adulthood. They must be able to provide a positive developmental experience that enhances young players’ enjoyment, knowledge and skill.

To achieve this, they must perform the **functions** listed in the **four areas** below.

Coach

- Understand the benefits of the player-centred approach and positive coach behaviour
- Work with elite youth players (typically from under-16 and older) of different cultures and backgrounds and prepare them for professional football

- Collaborate closely with coaching and support staff, including a multidisciplinary team and the youth academy director where relevant
- Evaluate and design player development plans and pathways for different scenarios, e.g. transition into senior professional team or being loaned
- Deal with all factors affecting team performance including sports ethics, media, parents/caregivers, player agents, supporters and scouts

Player and team

- Create a positive and ethical high-performance environment and develop a competitive, winning mentality
- Evaluate and design long-term player development plans
- Prepare talented players individually and as a team for the demands of the professional game according to the above-mentioned plans
- Involve players in the learning process and enable them to take responsibility for themselves

Training environment

- Create and maintain a consistent, safe, positive and motivating learning environment
- Conduct training sessions appropriate to the needs and ages of the players
- Understand all aspects of high-performance training
- Have a clear understanding of how to design training sessions that focus on long-term player development and performance
- Design game-oriented training sessions (opponent, pressure, intensity)
- Plan, deliver and review high-quality training sessions in accordance with the team's coaching philosophy
- Embrace and adopt an interdisciplinary approach to physical and mental preparation and development in cooperation with other members of the multidisciplinary team

Matches

- Ensure that training and matches are appropriately linked (reality-based learning)
- Prepare for and coach a team during the matches at elite youth level
- Use the match as a device for development, evaluation and learning
- Prepare the match plan in accordance with the team's playing philosophy, taking the opposing team into account
- Analyse matches with other coaching and support staff, during matches to optimise performance and afterwards as an evaluation and learning tool

Learning outcomes

Coach	
Competence	Module
• Understanding the role of a development coach in elite youth football^{9σ} • Demonstrating positive and ethical behaviour on and off the pitch • Using a participant-centred approach, i.e. based on players' needs • Creating a positive learning environment and having a clear understanding of what constitutes high-level performance for the individual players and the team^{9σ} • Showing leadership, management and quality coaching at elite youth level	Philosophy, values and beliefs
• Applying the team's vision of football, teaching football and player development at elite youth level • Applying the various teaching, learning and leadership styles (coaching models) • Coaching the team and players in a manner appropriate to their ages and stages of development from adolescence to adulthood^{9σ} • Promoting a high-performance development approach, including a focus on playing to win	Teaching methodology: art of coaching
• Collaborating effectively with coaching staff and multidisciplinary support staff within the development process • Understanding the benefits of a diverse coaching and support staff • Evaluating and applying the team's long-term player development plan and recruitment policy, in collaboration with other staff • Communicating effectively with people influencing players' long-term development, e.g. parents/caregivers, agents, etc.	Collaboration
The development coach section of the course requires at least 20 hours of reality-based education .	

Player and team	
Competence	Module
- Understanding the characteristics of high-potential players in order to meet the demands of the modern professional game^{9σ} - Setting and constantly reviewing goals for individual players according to their technical/tactical/physical/psychological ability and biological, calendar and training age^{9σ} - Using the different evaluation methods to effectively guide players through their individual development processes - Providing a pathway and opportunities for individual players to perform at a level that will challenge them, e.g. by moving players to an older age category	Knowing the players
- Building a successful team and developing the right team dynamics by involving young players in: - Defining team goals - Clarifying the various social roles within the group - Setting standards on the pitch and in the dressing room - Creating a fun, respectful and enjoyable environment that motivates and inspires - Managing setbacks and conflicts proactively and positively^{9σ}	Team building
- Demonstrating and evaluating practical examples of an integrated versus isolated approach to young players' fitness training - Delivering safe and effective training sessions that are designed to develop different aspects of player fitness taking account of the physical goal of each session, the expected physical load, appropriate content, exercises and methodological steps - Implementing fitness tests appropriate to the age and development stage of young players and interpreting the results to inform the player fitness development strategy^{9σ} - Evaluating the integration of load monitoring and management, warm-up and prehabilitation exercises into daily routines^{9σ} - Applying the principles of rehabilitation after injury and the return to exercise, training, play and performance	Fitness development
- Helping players with the following topics linked to their future professional football career: - Dealing with pressure and stress - Coping with adversity - Preparing to cope with little game time after transitioning into a professional team - Dealing with success - Using relaxation techniques. - Developing the players' performance mindset, including a thirst for learning, commitment, effort, grit, resilience and self-regulation^{9σ}	Psychological development

• Building a solid team dynamic and work ethic and a competitive mentality through fun and positive yet demanding and accountable actions and communication style • Using a variety of coaching styles and methods effectively to foster interaction and a connection with the players • Communicating proactively and effectively within the team environment in challenging situations involving players, coaches and support staff • Being aware of outside influences such as parental pressure, agents and social drugs that can give rise to negative behaviour and have an impact on individual and team performance • Understanding traditional and social media and how both can affect team cohesion and performance if misused⁹⁸	Social development
The player and team section of the course requires at least 20 hours of reality-based education .	

Training environment	
Competence	Module
- Understanding the technical, tactical, physical and psychological requirements for developing and improving high performance^{9σ} - Designing an appropriately balanced menu of training activities using a variety of teaching methods to maximise technical and tactical learning - Creating sessions and activities that are interlinked and clearly relate to the team's game model, performance model and objectives for the season - Regularly integrating game-based decision-making and problem-solving within the training sessions	Training session design and content
- Evaluating and designing individual and team periodised training plans that focus on the needs and development of individual players and the team - Designing seasonal, monthly and weekly plans, focused on the development of the individual players in a high-performance environment, as part of the long-term player development - Reviewing and adjusting training activities during sessions to cater to the challenges and specific needs of the group - Designing a player and team profiling and assessment system to measure individual and team progress - Reviewing and reflecting on training sessions in order to constantly challenge individual and team performance standards	Planning, delivering and reviewing
- Motivating players by means of effective, appropriate and enjoyable training sessions^{9σ} - Inspiring the players and the team with positive and ethical behaviour - Fostering self-discovery in an environment where mistakes are allowed - Creating a positive high-performance learning environment both on and off the pitch, including e.g. video analysis and team tactical meetings - Using different leadership and teaching styles appropriate to players' ages, abilities and the context of the situation, e.g. training sessions, team talks, pre- and post-match discussions. - Creating an effective learning environment by means of proper planning and preparation to enhance the performance of the individual and the team	Motivational learning environment
- Safeguarding the health and welfare of players^{9σ} - Creating a safe and ethical working environment - Promoting the health and performance benefits of good lifestyle habits relating to nutrition, hydration and sleep - Using recovery strategies that are appropriate to the players' age and stage of development - Knowing the child and youth safeguarding guidelines and legislation¹	Health and welfare

¹ For more information on child and youth safeguarding, please visit the UEFA Safeguarding Platform: www.uefa-safeguarding.eu

• Knowing the team's or organisation's code of conduct and acting accordingly • Learning and maintaining the skills to apply first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) effectively • Understanding anti-doping responsibilities	
The training environment section of the course requires at least 20 hours of reality-based education .	

Matches	
Competence	Module
- Analysing the game at elite youth level based on players' and team tasks, including analysing the opposing teams^{9a} - Analysing player performance in relation to individual tasks and development plans - Helping the players evaluate their own performance and guiding them to self-regulation	Match and performance analysis
- Effectively applying different formations and styles of play in a high-performance environment - Teaching the roles and tasks relevant to various playing positions and playing systems - Teaching game management principles - Effectively applying the technical, tactical and fitness trends of elite football during matches	Playing styles
- Exhibiting consistent matchday behaviour in keeping with a learning environment - Preparing individual players and the team for high performance in matches, in cooperation with support staff, e.g. team selection, game plans, team talks, etc. - Coaching effectively and positively during matches so that players perform their roles to their full potential - Supporting player autonomy, involving players in decision-making and the problem-solving process - Communicating effectively and respectfully with the match officials - Understanding the rules and the Laws of the Game	Match coaching
The matches section of the course requires at least 20 hours of reality-based education .	

Reality-based education	Minimum hours
Guided interactive content delivered and monitored by coach educators	95 hours
Practical work experience ²	25 hours
Total minimum hours of reality-based education	120 hours
Minimum hours of theory and practice in the classroom (in person or online)	60 hours
Minimum hours of practice outside the classroom, including work experience	60 hours
Study visits ³	

² The course must include micro-group work overseen by the course educator in the participants' work environments.

³ Study visits to practical elite youth football environments (e.g. youth academies run by (foreign) professional clubs, UEFA Youth League matches and men's or women's UEFA European Championship matches at U17 or U19

level) can be included to enhance the participants' competence. The number of study-visit hours are in addition to the minimum hours of education.

Assessments

Please refer to Article 13 of the UEFA Coaching Convention for further details of the minimum requirements for assessments and what they must include.

Coaching role and context

Coaches awarded a UEFA Elite Youth A diploma must have a clear understanding of how to develop and coach future professional players transitioning from elite youth to professional football during their period from adolescence to adulthood.

They must be able to provide a positive developmental experience that enhances young players' enjoyment, knowledge and skill.

Theoretical: Understand and explain the theory that underpins the successful performance of the required functions.

Practical: Demonstrate an ability to perform the functions expected of them.

Coach

- Apply a player-centred coaching philosophy that reflects the needs of adolescent players transitioning to professional football
- Demonstrate positive, ethical and age-appropriate leadership and communication
- Collaborate effectively with coaching and multidisciplinary support staff to align with the team's long-term player development strategy
- Design and evaluate individual development plans and career pathways (e.g. transition to senior team, loan strategies)
- Manage external influences (e.g. parents, agents, media) that may impact the player and team environment

Player and team

- Identify and support the development of high-potential players in line with the demands of the modern professional game
- Build a cohesive team dynamic that fosters responsibility, resilience and a winning mentality
- Support players' psychological readiness for professional football, by helping them to cope with pressure, setbacks and limited game time
- Promote healthy lifestyle habits and social behaviours that enhance performance and well-being

Training environment

- Plan, deliver and review high-quality training sessions aligned with the team's game and performance models
- Integrate technical, tactical, physical and psychological components into a cohesive training programme
- Create a safe, ethical and motivational learning environment that encourages self-discovery and decision-making
- Carry out age-appropriate fitness tests and apply load management strategies to support long-term development
- Collaborate with support staff to implement interdisciplinary approaches to player preparation and recovery

Matches

- Prepare players and teams for matches using structured planning and alignment with the team's playing philosophy
- Coach effectively during matches, supporting player autonomy and in-game decision-making
- Analyse and evaluate individual and team performance in relation to development plans and match objectives
- Apply tactical flexibility, formations and game management strategies in a high-performance context
- Demonstrate consistent professional behaviour and communication with players and staff during the matches

Personal coaching logbook (including reflections relating to the men's and women's game)

- Prepare a detailed periodisation plan of selected season periods, e.g. pre-season, start of season, mid-season, for an elite youth team as part of the overall seasonal plan
- Develop and explain own game model and performance model
- Analyse and review training sessions and matches at elite youth level
- Engage in ongoing self-evaluation and reflection and adapt future planning and coaching activities accordingly
- Work consistently with individual players on all aspects of their long-term development in a high-performance environment, in cooperation with other coaching and support staff
- Collect and analyse anonymous 360-degree feedback from a variety of stakeholders
- Reflect on own coaching journey, including off-the-pitch challenges (e.g. dealing with management, player recruitment and the impact of coaching on personal life and family.)



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WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL
