



# National Unit Specification

## General information

**Unit title:** Sports Coaching: Knowing Yourself and Knowing Others  
(SCQF level 6)

**Unit code:** J8M0 46

**Superclass:** MA

**Publication date:** March 2025

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

## Unit purpose

The purpose of this unit is to develop the learner's knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of a coach. This unit will develop an understanding of what underpins a coaching philosophy and how it can influence coaching practice. Learners will develop self-awareness of personal coaching practice, and the importance of identifying strengths and areas for development. This unit will also enhance the learner's knowledge of participant needs.

This unit is suitable for candidates who are already, or wish to be, involved in sports coaching and are looking to develop their knowledge and skills further.

Learners must be at least 16 years old on completion of this unit.

## **Outcomes**

On successful completion of the unit the learner will be able to:

1. Explain the roles and responsibilities of a coach.
2. Explain what underpins a coaching philosophy and how this influences coaching practice.
3. Develop self-awareness of personal coaching practice.
4. Explain why a coach is required to understand the needs of participants.

## **Credit points and level**

1 National Unit credit at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 6: (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6).

## **Recommended entry to the unit**

Entry is at the discretion of the centre; however it would be anticipated that learners have a broad interest in sport and sports coaching and are keen to embark on a career in sports coaching. It is recommended that learners undertaking this unit possess communication skills to a level equivalent to at least SCQF level 5.

## **Core skills**

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are signposted within this unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this unit.

## **Context for delivery**

If this unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

This unit is designed to be delivered as a stand-alone unit or in conjunction with the following unit: J8LY 46 Sports Coaching: Knowing Coaching (SCQF level 6) as part of the Sports Coaching: National Progression Award (NPA) (SCQF level 6).

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website: [Internal Assessment Support Materials](http://www.sqa.org.uk/internal-assessment-support-materials) (www.sqa.org.uk/internal-assessment-support-materials).

## **Equality and inclusion**

This unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website:

[SQA Assessment Arrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements) (www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

# National Unit Specification: Statement of standards

**Unit title:** Sports Coaching: Knowing Yourself and Knowing Others  
(SCQF level 6)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

## Outcome 1

Explain the roles and responsibilities of a coach.

### Performance criteria

- (a) Explain the roles and responsibilities of a coach and coaching assistant.
- (b) Describe a coach's role in the duty of care of participants and the coaching assistant.
- (c) Identify other stakeholders who a coach may interact with.
- (d) Explain the relationship between a coach's personal wellbeing and their role.
- (e) Describe the impact of coaching on participants.
- (f) Describe the appropriate attitude, behaviour, and values expected within a coaching environment.

## Outcome 2

Explain what underpins a coaching philosophy and how this influences coaching practice.

### Performance criteria

- (a) Explain why a coaching philosophy is important.
- (b) Explain what influences a coaching philosophy.
- (c) Describe ways a coaching philosophy might influence a coaching session.

## **Outcome 3**

Develop self-awareness of personal coaching practice.

### **Performance criteria**

- (a) Explain why it is important to identify areas of strength and areas of development within personal coaching practice.
- (b) Explain why feedback from a variety of different sources would be used to inform a coaching action plan.
- (c) Describe actions taken to improve coaching practice.
- (d) Identify further opportunities to develop coaching practice.

## **Outcome 4**

Explain why a coach is required to understand the needs of participants.

### **Performance criteria**

- (a) Identify what a coach should know about participants.
- (b) Describe a participant journey in the coaching environment.
- (c) Explain the barriers to participation which affect participant retention.
- (d) Describe participant's potential expectations and aspirations.

### **Evidence requirements for this unit**

Evidence is required to demonstrate that learners have achieved all outcomes and performance criteria.

Whilst the evidence requirements set out what the learner must do in order to meet the criteria of the unit it is recognised that evidence should be commensurate with the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) at level 6.

There are no restrictions on the instruments of assessment that can be used within this unit, centres are encouraged to be creative in the methods of assessment they use to generate evidence.

## **Outcome 1: Explain the roles and responsibilities of a coach.**

Learners must be able to explain a minimum of:

- two roles and the associated responsibilities of a coach.
- two roles and the associated responsibilities of a coaching assistant.

The learner must describe a minimum of three aspects of the coach's role in the duty of care of the participants and coaching assistant, relating to the relevant codes of practice for their own context, of which information on the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme must be included.

The learner must identify a minimum of two stakeholders who a coach may interact with.

The learner must be able to explain a minimum of three key factors of the relationship between personal wellbeing and the role of the coach.

The learner must also describe a minimum of one impact coaching can have on participants.

The learner must also be able to describe the appropriate attitude, behaviour, and values that would be expected within the coaching environment.

## **Outcome 2: Explain what underpins a coaching philosophy and how this influences coaching practice.**

The learner must be able to explain a minimum of:

- two reasons why a coaching philosophy is important.
- two factors that influence a coaching philosophy.

Learners must describe a minimum of:

- one way a coaching philosophy might influence a coaching session.

### **Outcome 3: Develop self-awareness of personal coaching practice.**

Learners must explain a minimum of:

- two reasons why it is important to identify areas of strength within personal coaching practice.
- two reasons why it is important to identify areas of development within personal coaching practice.
- two reasons why feedback gathered from different sources would be used to inform a coaching action plan.

Learners must describe a minimum of one action a coach could then take to improve coaching practice.

Recording this information will demonstrate the learner understands what actions are to be taken to improve coaching practice. This must be supported by the identification of the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) coaching pathway to identify further opportunities to develop coaching practice.

### **Outcome 4: Explain why a coach is required to understand the needs of participants.**

The learner must:

- Identify a minimum of four pieces of information in relation to participants that the coach should know.
- Describe a minimum of three considerations which relate to participants' journeys.
- Explain a minimum of two barriers to participation and how these can impact participant retention.
- Describe a minimum of two expectations participants might have.
- Describe a minimum of two aspirations participants might have.



## National Unit Support Notes

**Unit title:** Sports Coaching: Knowing Yourself and Knowing Others  
(SCQF level 6)

Unit support notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

### Guidance on the content and context for this unit

The purpose of this unit is to enable the learner to develop knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of a coach and coaching assistant. The unit will explore what underpins a coaching philosophy and how it can influence coaching practice.

Learners may be able to reflect on their own coaching practice, identifying strengths and areas for development, illustrating how National Governing Bodies (NGBs) can create a pathway for progression. This unit will also enhance the learner's knowledge of participant needs.

### Outcome 1: Explain the roles and responsibilities of a coach.

By increasing knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of a coach and the coaching assistant it will allow the individual to fully understand what is required to be effective in a coaching context. The learner should be able to explain two roles a coach undertakes and associated responsibilities that relate to these roles. They should then repeat the process for two roles the coaching assistant could undertake with the associated responsibilities for each role. As there may be overlap in the roles the coach or coaching assistant may undertake, depending on the context, the learner should be able to understand the different responsibilities relating to each role. The learner should be able to understand that if the coaching assistant role was 'recording attendance', then the responsibilities of this could be to make sure it is



completed as participants arrive, that they mark participants against the register for accuracy. The role of the coach might be to contact the guardians of participants who were expected to be there but were not present as a wellbeing concern.

Typical roles could range from:

- leading the planning stage
- undertaking health and safety tasks
- preparing the equipment and setting up areas
- meeting participants
- recording attendances
- delivery of the session
- clearing and concluding sessions appropriately

Other appropriate roles out with those mentioned could also be undertaken.

The learner should have an awareness of the relevant codes of practice for the context and be able to describe a coach's role in the Duty of Care of the coaching assistant and of the participants, of which information on the Protection of Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG) must be included. The key stakeholders that a coach may interact with should be relevant to the context of their coaching, this could be parents / carers at an introductory stage of participation or senior coaching figures if in a more advanced setting.

The learner should be able to explain the relationship between personal wellbeing and the role of a coach. Personal wellbeing of the coach is vitally important to ensure the coach can fulfil the role. Mental health could be a focus, consideration could be given to burnout or even the enthusiasm a coach brings to the session, ultimately explaining how wellbeing can impact on coaching. The learner should also be able to describe the impact of coaching on participants and describe the appropriate attitude, behaviour, and values that would be expected within the coaching environment.

## **Outcome 2: Explain what underpins a coaching philosophy and how this influences coaching practice.**

Investigating coaching philosophy and how a coaching philosophy influences coaching practice will create a more curious coach as the learner finds out why a coach coaches in a particular way and how a coaching philosophy can impact practice. The learner should be able to explain why a coaching philosophy is important and be able to make the connection between a coaching philosophy and why people coach in the way they do. Coaching philosophies could be influenced by personal values and beliefs as well as previous teachers, lecturers, role models or coaches. Any relevant influencing factors should be considered where appropriate. The learner should be able to then describe ways coaching philosophies can influence a coaching session and the ways that would then influence coaching practice.

## **Outcome 3: Develop self-awareness of personal coaching practice.**

Being able to develop self-awareness of personal coaching practice will allow the learner to explain why it is important to identify strengths, areas for development and then what actions can be taken to improve coaching practice, in line with NGB coaching pathways. Explaining why feedback should be gathered from various sources will allow for a wider perspective to be taken, enhancing self-awareness of coaching practice and development of a coaching action plan. This should encourage the learner to identify opportunities to enhance coaching practice by referring to relevant NGB coaching pathway information.

## **Outcome 4: Explain why a coach is required to understand the needs of participants.**

Understanding the needs of participants, their motivations, personal background, health considerations, what barriers to participation they may have and then being able to meet expectations will ensure participants engage well.

Identifying what a coach should consider about participants will allow the learner to start to understand the importance of knowing who they have in front of them when coaching. Being able to describe a participant journey will allow the learner to understand the context, experience or background of the individuals they will be coaching. The journey could be around how the participant joined the club because of the influence of their peers, they may have participated through the age groups as they developed their ability and have progressed to the current level working with their current coach. The journey should give a picture of who the participant is, where they have been and the pathway this journey is taking them on.

Understanding the wide range of barriers to participation that a participant may face such as cost, facility location, transportation, equipment, socio-cultural factors, access or even support to attend will allow the learner to then understand how these factors can impact on retention rates. Using this underpinning knowledge about the participants should then allow the learner to describe potential expectations and aspirations of participants.

This unit will develop knowledge of what is required to be a coach as well as enhancing understanding of the role of the coaching assistant. It will improve the learner's session planning for specific groups if they understand who the participants are, their needs and how to meet their expectations.

Successful completion of this unit will allow progression onto SCQF level 7 units in relation to sports coaching.

## **Guidance on approaches to delivery of this unit**

This unit is designed to be delivered as a stand-alone unit or in conjunction with the following unit: J8LY 46 Sports Coaching: Knowing Coaching (SCQF level 6) as part of the Sports Coaching: National Progression Award (NPA) SCQF level 6).

The unit could be delivered in sequential order ensuring all underpinning knowledge is in place to pass the various assessments.

Identifying who participants are, should assist the learner in gathering the required evidence to meet the unit requirements. Setting out a timeline of when assessment will be undertaken will allow the centre and learner to plan effectively ensuring they are prepared fully to develop their knowledge.

### **Outcome 1: Explain the roles and responsibilities of a coach.**

Group tasks could be set to identify roles and responsibilities of the coach. Being able to determine the various roles within the coaching environment and then the responsibilities that are aligned to these roles, will ensure the coach is fully aware of what they will be required to do when coaching in a live context. The group tasks could cover various roles, subsequent responsibilities and identification of possible stakeholder engagement to be reported back to the wider group.

Learners will require to understand what is meant by Duty of Care as well as knowing what health and safety and safeguarding responsibilities they have, to keep themselves and participants safe. The learner should also be able to understand wellbeing in relation to the role of a coach and what the relevant codes of conduct are in their sport along with the requirements of the PVG scheme. This could be delivered through group discussions and case studies.

### **Outcome 2: Explain what underpins a coaching philosophy and how this influences coaching practice.**

Research tasks into coaches and their philosophies could be set out in small groups to assist in understanding what a coaching philosophy is and how this will then impact on the coach and the delivery of sessions. Group discussions could be held to debate the coaches and the range of philosophies the task has highlighted. The learner could then attempt to plan sessions that would reflect the philosophy of the coach they investigated, bringing their findings to life.

### **Outcome 3: Develop self-awareness of personal coaching practice.**

The learner may be coaching at present, or coached in the past, this will allow context to be added to their explanations of why it is important to identify strengths and areas for development within personal coaching practice. Group discussions about the variety of sources of feedback available to a coach will enable learners to explain the importance of using the information gathered to inform a coaching action plan which would detail the actions to be taken to improve coaching practice.

Exploring NGB information for coaching pathways will also allow learners to make the connection between practice and ways to develop.

### **Outcome 4: Explain why a coach is required to understand the needs of participants.**

Exploring each aspect of what a coach needs to know about a participant and then the reasons behind this would be a good way to set the scene in this outcome.

Discussing what a participant journey could look like will allow the learner to get a picture of why individuals participate and what their motivations are. Setting tasks to identify what potential barriers could be, whilst identifying possible solutions, could be a way to investigate why participants may no longer attend coaching sessions.

### **Guidance on approaches to assessment of this unit**

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

There are no restrictions on the instruments of assessment that can be used within this unit, centres are encouraged to be creative in the methods of assessment they use to generate evidence.

### **Outcome 1: Explain the roles and responsibilities of a coach.**

This could be assessed by a short answer question paper.

Or

The learner could choose to create a case study on a coach (past or present) aligning this coach's practice to each performance criteria.

### **Outcome 2: Explain what underpins a coaching philosophy and how this influences coaching practice.**

This could be assessed by a research task where the learners investigate coaches and their philosophies to then illustrate how this influenced their practice.

Or

The learner could produce a presentation to illustrate what coaching philosophies are and describe the ways they influence coaching practice.

### **Outcome 3: Develop self-awareness of personal coaching practice**

This could be assessed by short answer questions relating to each piece of evidence required for performance criteria (a), (b) and (c) and for performance criterion (d) the production of a diagram of the relevant NGB coaching pathway for the learner.

Or

A project could be used where the learner addresses the performance criteria.

### **Outcome 4: Explain why a coach is required to understand the needs of participants.**

This could be assessed by a presentation of evidence gathered by the use of a case study about why a coach is required to understand the needs of participants.

Or

A short answer question paper could be used in relation to why a coach needs to understand the needs of the participants in a coaching group.

Or

A presentation that illustrates the reasons why a coach must understand the needs of participants.

### **Authentication of evidence**

All work should contain a declaration of validity that the content is the learners own work unless cited otherwise. Submissions should be signed and dated by the learner. Digital submissions should be encouraged through centres' Learning Management System (LMS) platforms using anti plagiarism software.

### **Opportunities for e-assessment**

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the evidence requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at [SQA e-Assessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/Guide%20to%20best%20practice.pdf).  
([www.sqa.org.uk/Guide to best practice.pdf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/Guide%20to%20best%20practice.pdf)).

### **Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills**

The Core Skills listed below are signposted in this unit.

Communication skills will naturally be developed when discussing tasks set to gather evidence, along with Working with Others while participating in group work.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills will be enhanced via assessment work if delivering presentations or submitting tasks electronically.

Problem Solving skills can be developed if tasks are set in such a way that requires the learner to use their own initiative and find the required information.

## **Other essential skills**

Learners can develop aspects of employability through increasing knowledge and skills required for the coaching industry. Opportunities to work together with fellow learners provides situations where citizenship skills can be developed with regular teamwork tasks and communication. These citizenships skills will be enhanced as and when the coach has the opportunity to engage with various stakeholders being a curious coach to enhance their development.



## History of changes to unit

Version	Description of change	Date

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2025

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Unit template: February 2025

# General information for learners

**Unit title:** Sports Coaching: Knowing Yourself and Knowing Others  
(SCQF level 6)

This information will help you decide whether this is the unit for you by explaining what the unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

You must be at least 16 years old on completion of this unit.

This unit is designed to be delivered as a stand-alone unit or in conjunction with the following unit: J8LY 46 Sports Coaching: Knowing Coaching (SCQF level 6) as part of the Sports Coaching: National Progression Award (NPA) (SCQF level 6). The unit will enable you to develop knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the coach and coaching assistant. It will explore what underpins a coaching philosophy and how it can influence coaching practice. You will develop self-awareness of personal coaching practice, knowing why it is important to identify strengths and areas for development and how the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) can create a personal pathway for your own progression as a coach.

This unit will also enhance your knowledge of participant needs. You will learn about wellbeing, Duty of Care, the participants you are planning for and how to meet their expectations and aspirations.

Each assessment for the unit will be in a context that allows you to reflect, collaborate and use various sources that support you to generate evidence for assessments.

Due to the different aspects of the roles of the coach there may also be different styles of assessment used, such as individual research tasks, question and answer tests, case studies or projects.

Encouraging reflective practice and creating more curious coaches will hopefully be part of the overall experience as you understand how to plan for continual improvement.

There are opportunities to develop Core Skills throughout this unit although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components in this unit. You will develop communication skills when discussing tasks, problem solving skills when undertaking research tasks, ICT skills if you utilise any software to present assessment work and working with others when participating in group work.