

Minimum Coach Education Requirements for Special Olympics Ireland Clubs



This document outlines the minimum qualifications assistant coaches, coaches and head coaches should have when coaching in our Special Olympics clubs. These updated minimum standards will bring Special Olympics clubs in closer alignment to Coaching Ireland recommendations for all National Governing Bodies. Each Special Olympics club must have an assigned Head Coach with the appropriate qualification.

It is obviously desirable that Special Olympics coaches are as well trained as possible. This means that coaches should regularly up skill and should strive to increase their qualification levels. In addition:

- No unqualified volunteer should be assigned as an assistant coach, coach or head coach, without the relevant qualification.
- In Special Olympics clubs with team sports, it is recommended that a suitably qualified head coach is assigned per team.
- Every assistant coach, coach and head coach should have at a minimum Sport Ireland - Safeguarding 1 - Child Welfare & Protection Basic Awareness Course or Sports NI - Safeguarding Children & Young People in Sport (basic awareness raising) prior to receiving their coaching awards or being assigned to these positions.
- All assistant coaches and coaches should only be coaching under the guidance of a head coach who is qualified to the appropriate level.
- All assistant coaches, coaches and head coaches should only be coaching within the parameters that their qualifications allow e.g. a person with a level 1 Swim Teachers qualification should not be coaching without a Level 2 coach being present; Athletics coaches should have a level 2 coaching qualification to coach high jump.
- Assistant coaches are any volunteer/s assisting with the delivery of the sports programme in the club, in any manner. They may be required to assist the coach or head coach. Examples of tasks may include providing 1 to 1 assistance for an athlete, setting up cones or equipment, handing out bibs, supervising a small number of athletes for a particular skill/game or taking athletes for a warm up/cool down activity under the guidance of the Head coach.

All new Clubs will require the minimum requirements before starting for all assistant coaches, coaches and head coaches.

Existing clubs will have until December 2020 to implement the minimum requirements for all assistant coaches, coaches and head coaches.

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Sport	General Sports Volunteers	Assistant Coach Minimum	Coach Minimum	Head Coach Minimum	Ideal Head Coach in line with Coaching Ireland (if different from recommended)
Alpine Skiing *	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	Irish Association of Snowsports Instructors Level 1	Irish Association of Snowsports Instructors Level 1	Irish Association of Snowsports Instructors Level 2
Aquatics	Introduction to Coaching	Swim Ireland Helpers Certificate Certified only when working under an ASA Level 1/2 qualified teacher/coach IWS Level 1 – Aquatics Assistant for People with Disabilities Certified only when working under a qualified teacher/coach	ASA Level 1 Teacher of Disabilities* ASA Level 1 Swim Teacher* ASA Level 1 Coaching* *Certified only when working under an ASA Level 2 qualified teacher/coach (same qualification) IWS assistant Swim teachers* certified only when coaching under a fully qualified swim teacher IWS Level 2 – Aquatics Teacher for People with Disabilities (one to one coaching only) ASA Level 2 Teacher of Disabilities	ASA Level 2 Swim Teacher ASA Level 2 Coaching IWS Swim teachers IWS Level 3 - Aquatics Leader for People with Disabilities	
Athletics	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	Leading Athletics or Assisting Coaching, (UKA) Athletics Leader or Assistant Coach (AI)	Athletics Coach Level 1(AI) Athletics Coach (UKA)	Athletics Ireland Level 2, 3 Athletics NI Athletics Coach
Badminton	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	Badminton Ireland Introductory Coaching Course or Instructor's Course	Badminton Ireland Level 1	Badminton Ireland Level 2
Basketball	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	Basketball Ireland Introduction to Basketball Coaching	Basketball Ireland Level 1	Basketball Ireland Level 2
Bocce	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	Introduction to Coaching Bocce	Special Olympics Ireland Bocce Level 1	
Bowling	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	ITBA Introductory Course, BTBA FUNDamentals	ITBA Level 1, BTBA Level 1 Foundation Coach	ITBA Level 2 BTBA 2- Developmental coach

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Equestrian	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	Horse Sport Ireland Introduction to Coaching	Horse Sport Ireland level 1 and RDAI Group Instructor level 1 BHS Preliminary teachers	Horse Sport Ireland Level 2 and RDAI Group Instructor level 2
Floorball*	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	IFF floorball seminar, Special Olympics Ireland workshop	IFF floorball seminar, SOI workshop	
Football	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices/ IFA grassroots Introductory/ IFA Level 1 Coaching Disabled Footballers	FAI Kick Start 1 and 2 plus 3 workshops/Senior Intro plus 2 workshops IFA level 1 award	FAI Youth Cert (this qualification is required by a minimum of 1 head coach per club)	
Golf	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	SO Golf Leader Course	SO Golf Leader Course	PGA Level 1
Gymnastics	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	Gym Start, Gym Edge, Introductory/Introductory MAG/WAG British Gymnastics – Awards Scheme Coach	Irish Gymnastics - Level 1 Coaching Award in relevant Gymnastics Discipline British Gymnastics – Level 1 Coach in relevant discipline	Irish Gymnastics – Level 2+ Coaching Award in relevant Gymnastics discipline British Gymnastics – Level 2 in relevant Gymnastics discipline
Kayaking	Introduction to Coaching	“Learn to Paddle” Level 1 Coaching Award	Level 1 Kayak Instructor Award	Level 2 Kayak Instructor Award	Level 3 Kayak Instructor award
Table Tennis	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	ITTA Introduction to coaching Table Tennis	ITTA Level 1 Coaching Award	ITTA Level 2 Coaching Award
Pitch and Putt	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	Introductory Pitch and Putt Coaching Award	Level 1 Pitch and Putt Coaching Award	
Motor Activities Training Programme	Introduction to Coaching	Introduction to Coaching Practices	MATP Workshop (delivered on a regional basis)	MATP Workshop	MATP Workshop