

Special Olympics Ireland

‘Introduction to the Motor Activity Training Program’

Coach Education Course - Pre-Course Information

What is ‘Introduction to the Motor Activity Training Program’?

The Introduction to the Motor Activity Training Program course is designed to equip coaches, volunteers, and professionals with the knowledge and skills to deliver the Motor Activity Training Program (MATP). MATP is a specialised programme for people with severe to profound intellectual disabilities and complex support needs, focusing on foundational motor skills and inclusive sport participation.

This course introduces the philosophy and structure of MATP, explores the role of the MATP athlete and coach, and provides practical tools for planning and delivering individualised training sessions. Participants will also learn how to assess athletes, set goals, and adapt activities to meet diverse needs.

Who can undertake the course?

This course is suitable for:

- First-time coaches and volunteers
- Professionals and support staff working with individuals with PMID
- Anyone interested in inclusive sport and athlete development

No prior coaching experience is required. Special Olympics Ireland encourages anyone passionate about inclusion and sport to take part.

After undertaking the course, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the aims and objectives of the MATP and its place within Special Olympics.
2. Identify who the MATP is designed for and why it is important.
3. Recognise the benefits of the MATP for athletes with profound intellectual disabilities and complex support needs, including physical, social, and personal development.
4. Understand the role of the MATP coach and apply inclusive coaching strategies.
5. Assess athletes, set goals, and structure individualised MATP programmes.
6. Deliver practical MATP sessions across mobility, dexterity, kicking, striking and stability (balance).

What are the requirements to undertake this course?

- Sport Ireland or Sport Northern Ireland approved Safeguarding qualification
- Be a registered volunteer with Special Olympics Ireland
- Be age 18 years or over
- Complete the pre-course, self-learning online module which provides an introduction to Special Olympics and the MATP programme.

Course Duration

1 Day (Approx. 7-8 hours)

Includes:

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Theory Sessions (MATP philosophy, athlete profile, coaching role)
3. Practical Sessions (mobility, dexterity, kicking, striking, stability/balance)
4. Group Discussions and Goal-Setting Exercises

The course may also be delivered in a hybrid fashion, with an online theory session followed by an in-person practical session.

