



# Coaching Convention

Syllabus of minimum content:  
UEFA Elite Youth A diploma

2020 edition

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# COACH PROFILE

A UEFA Elite Youth A licence holder must have a clear understanding of how to develop and coach future professional players transitioning from elite to professional football during their period from adolescence to adulthood, and must demonstrate competence in the following four areas:

## Development coach

- » Working as the head coach with elite youth teams
- » Working with elite youth players to prepare them for professional football
- » Working closely with coaching staff and support staff, including the academy director
- » Being involved in a club's talent development plan
- » Working with players from different cultural backgrounds, of different ages and experience
- » Dealing with all other factors affecting the team's performance: media, parents, players' agents, fans/supporters, scouts, sports ethics, etc.
- » Understanding and planning a development player pathway (especially in the 17-23 age range) where opportunities to get into first team football might be limited

## Player and team

- » Preparing talented players individually and the team as a whole for the demands of the professional game and according to the club's talent development plan
- » Involving the players in the learning process and enabling them to take self-responsibility
- » Managing all aspects of the team's performance
- » Creating a winning mentality and a high-performance culture

## Training environment

- » Improving and focusing on individual and team training sessions
- » Understanding all aspects of high-performance training
- » Working with the individual players and the team as a whole and understanding how training session design can affect performance
- » Designing game-oriented training sessions (opponent, pressure, intensity)
- » Preparing, conducting and reviewing training sessions in accordance with the club's coaching philosophy

## Match

- » Preparing for and coaching a team during the matches at elite youth level
- » Using the game to develop each player and the team, but also to create a winning team mentality
- » Preparing the match plan in accordance with the club's playing philosophy, taking the opponent team into account
- » Analysing the matches as an evaluation and learning tool for individual players and the team as a whole

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Development coach		
Competences	Modules	Hours of education <sup>1</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the role of a development coach in elite youth football</li> <li>• Remaining positive in all aspects of behaviour on and off the pitch</li> <li>• Creating a positive learning environment and a clear understanding of what constitutes a high-level performance for the individual players and the team</li> <li>• Demonstrating leadership, management and quality coaching at elite youth level</li> </ul>	Philosophy, values and beliefs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applying the club's vision of football, teaching football and player development at elite youth level</li> <li>• Applying the various teaching and learning styles (coaching models)</li> <li>• Coaching the team/players in a manner appropriate to their ages and stages of development from adolescence to adulthood</li> <li>• Promoting a high-performance development approach, including the importance of winning</li> </ul>	Teaching methodology: art of coaching	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborating effectively with coaching staff and (multi-disciplinary) support staff within the development process</li> <li>• Following and applying the club's talent development plan and recruitment policy</li> <li>• Communicating with people influencing players' long-term development, e.g. parents, agents, etc.</li> </ul>	Collaboration	
The development coach section of the course requires at least 20 hours of reality-based education		

<sup>1</sup> Exact number of education hours in course modules to be defined by each convention party

Player and team		
Competences	Modules	Hours of education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the characteristics of a talented player in order to meet the demands of the modern professional game</li> <li>Setting and constantly reviewing goals for individual players and the team, according to technical/tactical/physical ability and biological, calendar and training age as well as psychological demands in preparation for professional football</li> <li>Using the different evaluation methods to effectively guide players through their individual development process</li> <li>Providing a pathway and opportunity for individual players to perform at a level that will challenge them, e.g. by moving players to an older age category</li> </ul>	Knowing the players	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building a successful team and developing the right team dynamics at elite youth level and involving players in the following aspects:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Knowing and clarifying different social roles within the group</li> <li>» Setting standards on the pitch and in the dressing room</li> <li>» Defining team goals</li> <li>» Motivating and inspiring others</li> <li>» Managing disappointments and conflicts</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Team building	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing all physical aspects based on the players' levels</li> <li>Applying training work loads, recovery and fitness testing in order to produce a safe, balanced physical programme</li> <li>Understanding the specificities of fitness preparation for elite players</li> <li>Exploring the integration of load monitoring and management, warm-up and prehab exercises into daily routines</li> <li>Understanding the principles of rehabilitation, return to exercise, return to training, return to play and performance</li> </ul>	Physical development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helping players with issues linked to their teenage lives</li> <li>Helping players with the following topics linked to their future professional football career:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Dealing with pressure and handling stress</li> <li>» Coping with adversity</li> <li>» Coping with little game time</li> <li>» Dealing with success</li> <li>» Using relaxation techniques, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Developing players' growth mindset and its elements of learning, commitment, effort, resilience and self-regulation</li> </ul>	Psychological development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building a strong team ethic and winning mentality through positive behaviour, action and communication</li> <li>Communicating effectively in various challenging situations within the team environment, involving different players or players and coaching/support staff</li> <li>Understanding the complexities of the media and dealing with the media in professional football</li> <li>Understanding the implications of using social media and its possible impact on the individual players and the team</li> </ul>	Social development	
The player section of the course requires at least 20 hours of reality-based education		

Training environment		
Competences	Modules	Hours of education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the technical, tactical and physical requirements for developing and improving high performance</li> <li>Regularly integrating decision-making and problem-solving within the training sessions</li> </ul>	Training session design and content	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding individual and team periodisation</li> <li>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</li> <li>Planning, delivering and reviewing integrated fitness training sessions, taking account of the physical goal of the session, expected physical load, appropriate content, exercises and methodological steps</li> <li>Planning, delivering and monitoring individualised gym and field strength and conditioning programmes specifically adapted to the players' level and stage of development</li> </ul>	Planning, delivering and reviewing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a positive high-performance learning environment, both on and off the pitch, e.g. video analysis and team tactical sessions</li> <li>Using different leadership and teaching styles appropriate to players' ages, abilities and also the context of the situation, e.g. training session, team talk, pre- and post-match discussions, etc.</li> <li>Coaching the team/players during sessions in an appropriate manner</li> <li>Constantly reviewing and reflecting in order to enhance high performance of the individual and the team</li> </ul>	Learning climate	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring player welfare</li> <li>Applying methods to promote the health and performance benefits of good lifestyle habits, e.g. nutrition, hydration and sleep</li> <li>Applying recovery strategies</li> <li>Knowing the child safeguarding guidelines and legislation<sup>2</sup></li> <li>Knowing the club's or organisation's code of conduct and acting accordingly</li> </ul>	Care and welfare	
The training environment section of the course requires at least 20 hours of reality-based education		

<sup>2</sup> If you require more information on child safeguarding, please consult the Child Safeguarding Toolkit for UEFA member associations.

Match		
Competences	Modules	Hours of education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading and analysing the game at elite youth level based on players' and team tasks, including analysing the opposing teams</li> <li>• Analysing the players' individual performances in relation to their learning progress</li> <li>• Helping the players to evaluate their own game and guiding them to self-regulation</li> </ul>	Match and performance analysis	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively applying different formations and styles of play in a high-performance environment</li> <li>• Understanding various players' positions and tasks in different playing systems</li> <li>• Effectively applying the technical, tactical and fitness trends of elite football during the matches</li> </ul>	Playing styles	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Coaching the team effectively and positively during matches in order for players to fulfil their potential</li> <li>• Supporting players' autonomy with regard to decision-making and problem-solving</li> </ul>	Match environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The match section of the course requires at least 20 hours of reality-based education</li> </ul>		

Guided interactive content, not including self-study		At least 95 hours
Work experience		At least 25 hours
Minimum hours of reality-based education		<b>120<sup>3</sup> hours</b>
Study visits <sup>4</sup>		

<sup>3</sup> Minimum hours of theory and practical units off the pitch: 60  
Minimum hours of practical units on the pitch, including work experience: 60

<sup>4</sup> Study visits are recommended in the elite youth football environment, such as to youth academies run by (foreign) professional clubs and to UEFA European Championship U-17, WU-17, U-19, WU-19, UEFA Youth League matches. The number of study visit hours are in addition to the minimum 120 hours of education.

# ASSESSMENTS

Formative and summative assessments	
Theory: The coach must be able to understand and explain the following:	Practice: The coach must demonstrate an ability to apply the following principles:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Development coach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Demonstrating own football philosophy at elite youth level: age-related learning, age-specific characteristics</li> <li>» Using the appropriate leadership styles and coaching methodology for specific adolescent age groups</li> <li>» Collaborating with coaching staff and other support staff</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Player and team</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Recognising the characteristics of a talented player meeting the demands of the modern professional game</li> <li>» Building a successful team and developing the right team dynamics at elite youth level</li> <li>» Understanding the specificities of fitness preparation for young players</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Training environment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Planning, delivering and reviewing training sessions derived from the weekly plan within the learning climate</li> <li>» Applying methods to promote the health and performance benefits of good lifestyle habits, e.g. nutrition, hydration, sleep</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Match</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Preparing the team prior to the match</li> <li>» Coaching the team effectively and positively during matches so that players can fulfil their potential</li> <li>» Analysing the performance of both the individual and the team at elite youth level</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Personal coaching logbook</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing a detailed periodisation plan of selected season periods, e.g. pre-season, start of season, mid-season, etc., for an elite youth team as part of the overall seasonal plan</li> <li>• Analysing and reviewing training sessions and matches at elite youth level</li> <li>• Self-evaluation, reflections and the ability to adapt future planning and coaching activities at elite youth level</li> <li>• Ability to work consistently with individual players on all aspects of their development in a high-performance environment</li> </ul>	