



BRITISH
ATHLETICS

Athletics Coach Assessment Guidance



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Introduction

This document has been produced to provide guidance on how to prepare for and complete the assessment elements of the Athletics Coach qualification. It is intended to be used as a tool to provide further detail on the requirements of the assessment and to support you as you complete the written and practical elements of the qualification. There is an assessment preparation online module in your My Learning which guides you step by step in your development towards the assessed stages of this coaching award.

The assessment process comprises of 3 elements:

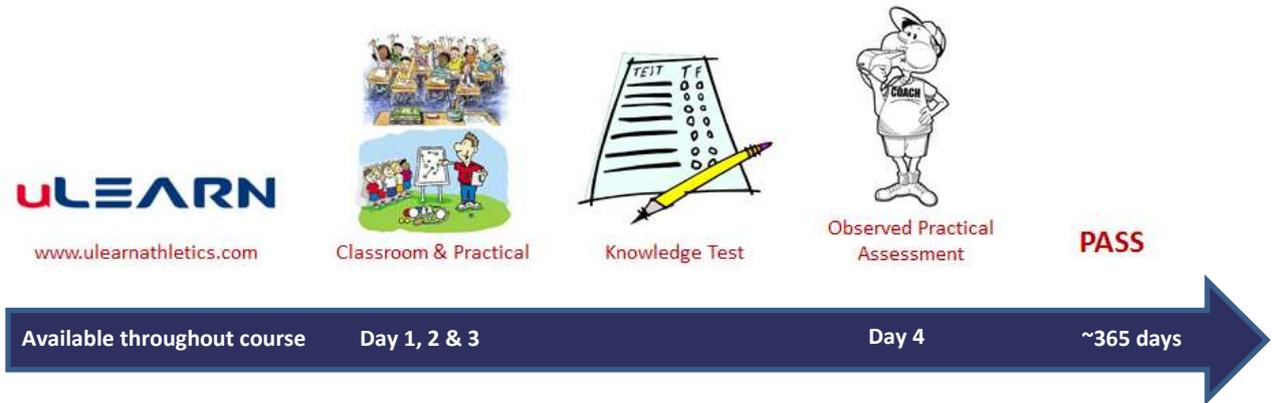
1. Online Knowledge Test assessing knowledge of safety and technique
2. Observed Practical Assessment assessing coaching skills (Day 4)
3. Short (session plan) and medium term (mesocycle) plans assessing planning for athletic development (Day 4)

The competencies of being a qualified coach are shown overleaf. You will need to demonstrate that each of these competencies is met.

This process is very robust, it is the only time British Athletics will have the opportunity of ensuring that you meet the standards required of being a licensed Coach. The assessment criteria reflects the baseline-minimum standard of competence required, to be awarded the qualification.

Programme Information

The delivery of the Athletics Coach Programme is as follows:



It is important to note that all aspects of the qualification must be completed within 12 months of attending Day 1. The Knowledge Test should be undertaken after Day 3 and before attending Day 4. All four days of the qualification have been set and you should attend all 4 associated with the course you are booked onto. If you have any issues with attending the four days, please contact the relevant Home Country as soon as possible.

Competencies

Competencies to be met	Where assessed	Content
Deliver organised, safe and outcome focussed sessions in a variety of changing environments that enable athletes to experience a broad range of athletic activities	Session Plan and Mesocycle Plan Observed Practical Assessment Knowledge Test	Late specialisation Appropriate activities across all movement areas included on course (Run, Jump and Throw) Health and Safety Welfare
Accurately observe and identify technical aspects of running, jumping and throwing	Knowledge Test Observed Practical Assessment	Technical models of running (to include wheelchair racing), jumping, throwing and the fundamental movements that underpin these as delivered on Day 1 and Day 2 of the course. Identify matches and mismatches when asked by an assessor Differentiate between correct and incorrect technical statements
Accurately observe and identify technical aspects of the events in chosen event group option (Day 3 of the course) and correctly select an appropriate intervention	Knowledge Test Observed Practical Assessment	Technical models of one of the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long jump, high jump, pole vault, triple jump • Shot, javelin, discus, hammer, seated throws, club • Max velocity running, hurdles, starts, acceleration, relays • Endurance running, race walking, steeple chase Identify matches and mismatches when asked by an assessor Differentiate between correct and incorrect technical statements
Plan, deliver, evaluate and document a series of outcome focussed sessions that improve the participants physical and technical performance in an athlete-centred way over the course of an 8-week period	Session Plan Mesocycle Plan Observed Practical Assessment	Accurately profile an athlete Set a goal for Session Plan and Mesocycle Plan Plan to achieve goal, relate to process of training principles, skill learning and integrate physical preparation/literacy Show a series of linked sessions for the constructive development of athletes
Identify and display all coaching process skills (How-2s) and selecting an appropriate style of coaching	Observed Practical Assessment	How-2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation • Safety • Instruction & Explanation • Demonstration • Observation & Analysis • Decision Making & Interventions • Feedback Use a variety of coaching process skills, selecting the most appropriate to the athlete's stage of development and the activity being coached Use appropriate intervention strategies to help athlete's skills progressions Can identify what skills to develop
Accurately evaluate and review own coaching performance	Observed Practical Assessment	Honestly reflects on own performance and the impact it has on the athlete's development

Knowledge Test

This is an online multiple choice Knowledge test accessed via your assessment preparation module within My Learning.

The Knowledge test comprises of up to 12 sections with 4 questions per section, a total of 48 questions. There are questions across all technical matters that have been covered on course from both Coaching Assistant and Athletic Coach courses.

The 12 sections are:

1. Movements Fundamental to Athletics
2. Running
3. Jumping
4. Throwing
5. Physical Preparation
6. Athlete Development Pathway and late specialisation
7. Your chosen event group
8. Your chosen event group
9. Your chosen event group
10. Your chosen event group
11. Health & Safety Generic days 1 and 2
12. Health & Safety Event Group day (throws and jumps)

Example Questions:

Movement fundamental to athletics

1) The “range of motion about a joint” is a definition for?

- a) agility
- b) balance
- c) co-ordination
- d) flexibility

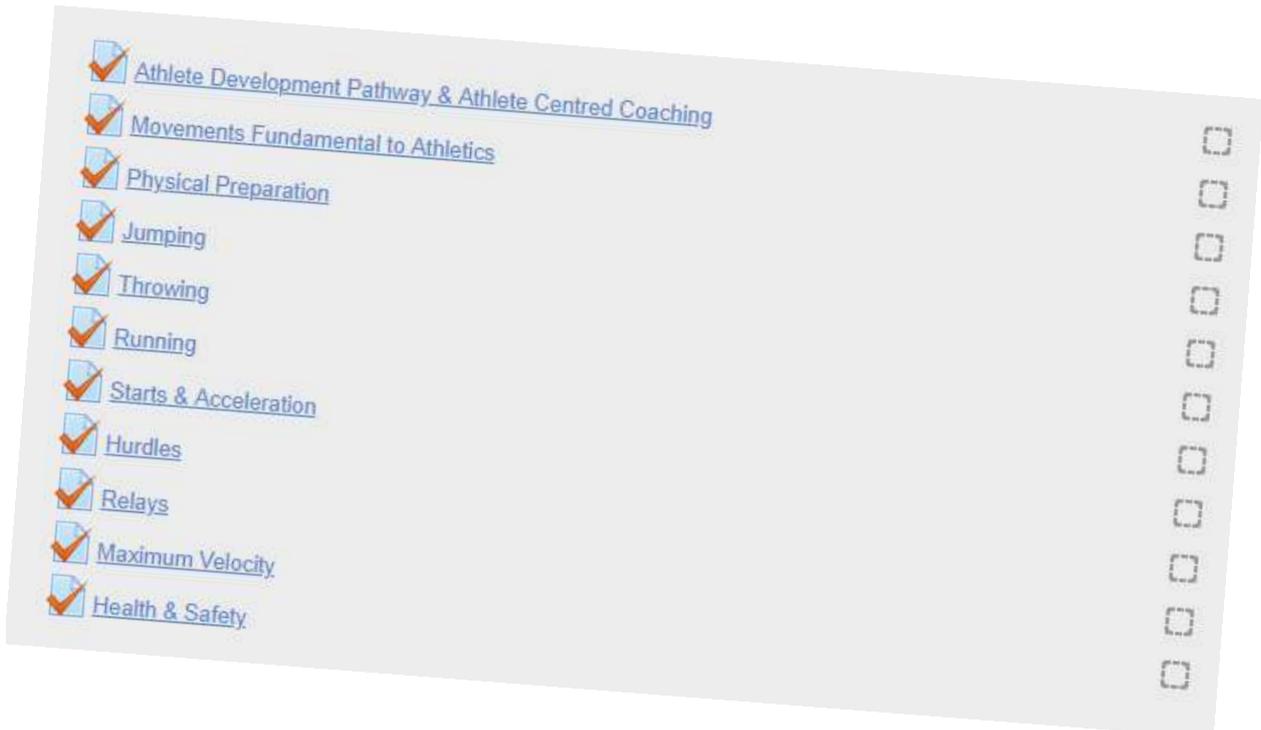
Running

2) The arms should

- a) always cross the centre line of the body when observed from the front
- b) be kept as close to the body as possible in small quick movements,
- c) drive the elbows powerfully backwards
- d) move powerfully driving them forwards

To pass the Knowledge Test, you will need to attain a mark of 80%. You will need to get a least two questions correct in every section.

The test can be taken online via your MyLearning assessment preparation module after attendance on day 3 of the course. It should be completed prior to attending the Assessment day (day 4).



Day 4 Observed Practical Assessment and Mesocycle Planning

In preparation for your practical, you should develop an 8-week Mesocycle Plan for athletes in the FUNdamental, Foundation or Event Group development stages of development.

If you are planning for FUNdamental or Foundation stage athletes, your plan should have goals related to key deficiencies identified from profiling your athlete and include planning for run, jump, throw and physical literacy/movement skills. This planning should relate to the goals set and provide evidence of planning for skill development and physical preparation (incorporating training principles).

If you are planning for the Event Group stage, your plan should have goals related to key deficiencies from profiling your athletes and include planning for your chosen event group plus physical prep (including multi-jumps and throws). This planning should relate to the goals set and provide evidence of planning for skill development, physical preparation (incorporating physical literacy/movement skills and training principles).

You should come to the assessment day prepared to answer questions on your athlete profile;

- How you determined your mesocycle goals for the athlete
- How your plan integrates the performance factors, components of fitness and develops skill
- How you applied training principles.

You should have delivered this plan to your athlete and be able to discuss how you monitored/reviewed progress against the mesocycle goals and what your planning strengths and developmental areas are.

Session Plan

The session plan content should relate to your mesocycle plan, the athletes stage of development (FUNdamentals, Foundation or Event Group) and include:

- a) Warm-up (10-15 minutes). *This should have planning to show understanding of warm up principles and physical literacy/movement skills and how that relates to athletic movement.*
- b) Technical 1 (Run, jump or throw) 15-20 mins*
- c) Technical 2 (Run, jump or throw) 15-20 mins
- d) Technical 3 (Run, jump or throw) 15-20 mins
Physical preparation considerations can be included within the technical units (e.g. throws technical unit could be a pull throw using medicine balls rather than javelins)
- e) Cool down (5-10 minutes). *This should have planning to show understanding of cool down principles.*

*NB: At least one technical unit must relate to your chosen event group

Please note that although you will only be expected to deliver two of these planned units, all units should be prepared. The Assessor on the day will discuss with you which units are to be delivered.

The Session Plan must:

- a) Be documented on a session plan with sufficient detail that another coach could use it to deliver from
- b) Have an athlete session goal (What-2) that relates to your mesocycle and is a process goal
- c) Have a coach session goal (How-2) that relates to an area that you want to work on for your continued professional development
- d) Include technical points you plan to work on and underpinning physical competencies required
- e) Include coaching points and cues
- f) Include progression/regression considerations
- g) Include safety, organisational and equipment considerations

Your fellow coaches will be acting as your athletes for the assessment. It is highly likely that there will be a broad range of levels and abilities. You may need to adapt your plans to what you see the athletes do - just like any normal session, so prior planning of differentiation will help you be prepared for this. You will be asked to set up your activity and will be given about 10 minutes to do so.

You should come to the practical assessment prepared. You should revise the technical information and key points for the 7 events covered on the programme, physical preparation, physical literacy/movement skill and your chosen event group.

Practice coaching using the How-2 coach cards as these should be implemented in your coaching and form part of the assessment criteria.

You should have a copy of your Session Plan to work from and another for the assessor to view, plus a copy of your athlete profile and mesocycle plan. Arriving for the day 4 Observed Practical Assessment without these is unacceptable and will result in the assessor refusing to assess that element. Candidates will be expected to attend a further assessment day at an additional cost.



Day 4 On the day

One to One Briefing

Your practical assessment starts as soon as your one to one briefing commences. During this discussion with the assessor, they will ask about your session plan and how it links to the session goal, the content and how you are planning to deliver it. They will ask you about safety and how you are planning to manage it. This discussion will take approximately 5 minutes.

Practical Assessment - Part 1

Using your peer coaches, you will deliver the part of the session agreed with you assessor. You should:

- Build rapport and check athletes physical state
- Explain the session goal and its content
- Organise the group, set up a demonstration of the technical point and deliver your part of the session
- Make interventions, progressions, regressions, or differentiate when appropriate

During this time the assessor will be observing your actions and those of the athletes. They will be checking to see how athlete-centred the delivery is and whether or not the athletes are engaged or whether the coach is doing most of the talking. On occasions, the assessor may come and stand with you. They may ask what you are looking for and what you are seeing.

Sometimes, they may offer a suggestion to you about where you are standing or how you are giving feedback. This is not to trip you up, but to help you in what you are doing. The assessor will be taking notes about what they see you do and what they hear you say. This will help them provide evidence against the assessment criteria and give you feedback about your coaching.

Review 1 with the assessor

The purpose of this one to one discussion with the assessor is for them to tell you the aspects where you have met the competency requirements and those where further assessment is required. Potentially it will give you the opportunity of addressing those aspects that need a little work ready for the 2nd practical assessment in the afternoon.

In some instances, it may not be possible to address every aspect in time. For example, if technical knowledge is lacking in jumps, then it would mean that the coach may need to develop this area of their coaching away from the assessment. Their 2nd practical assessment would still go ahead as it would give them an opportunity to show what they are capable of in other technical areas.

Practical Assessment - Part 2

This will only last about 10-15 minutes and may be a continuation of your first practical, but in all likelihood, be a different unit from your session plan. The assessor will be focussing on the key areas for development identified during the first review and competencies not yet evidenced, as these are the areas to be addressed by the coach. The assessor will call a stop to this session at the appropriate time.

Review 2 with the assessor

The purpose of this review is to help the assessor reach their decision. The assessor will start by asking questions about the positive side of the session, what went well from your point of view. They will carry on along this line and ask you to identify where perhaps the session may not have gone to plan and why, or what you might do differently next time. The assessor will then move onto areas where the coach has not yet met the standards or where an area needs some development. They will ask questions of the coach to check their understanding. The coach should give this information succinctly, as it can be used to provide evidence against competencies not yet met.

Review 2 is also where the assessor considers whether the mesocycle plan shows planning to meet the competencies required. Some competencies will be evidenced here by answering questions about your plan.

Example:

Assessor	One of the goals for your athlete was to develop a high elbow in the push throw. Can you tell me how you introduced and progressed this skill throughout the 8 weeks?
Coach	In the first week I showed them what they should be doing with their elbow and we practiced this with a two-handed standing push throw with footballs in pairs. When they could do this, we progressed to a single-handed push throw with a tennis ball. By the end of the 8 weeks we had increased the weight of the ball and added an offset start position and a step to the push.
Assessor	How did you monitor the athlete's progress?
Coach	I used a rating scale and observation for the technical goals to compare start and end points. I used the sit and reach test for the flexibility goal again at the start and end of the 8 weeks.
Assessor	What are the next steps in planning for your athlete?
Coach	Now that they can push every time with a high elbow, I want to develop this within the pull throw and progress the push throw by setting a goal for Centre of Mass over the throwing leg in the power position.
Assessor	What fitness goal will help develop this?
Coach	I will set a fitness goal to develop their balance.
Assessor	Can you describe to me in your own words the planning process?
Coach	It starts with profiling the athlete.....
Assessor	Thank you for answering those questions.

If during session delivery, a coach meets the majority, but not all of the competencies, but in the review shows they can reflect and identify how they would do something differently and to the competency standard required, then the assessor can make the decision to record this and accept this as evidence of competence.

Depending on how many topics need to be discussed, the assessor is there to “pull” coaches through and not to trip up or fail coaches. With this said, there is only 15 minutes for this review and decision. On completion of the review, the assessor will make their decision as to whether the coach has met the requirements set by British Athletics.

Mesocycle Plan

The purpose of the professional discussion with the 2nd review is to explore the Mesocycle Plan. The Assessor will discuss the goals set and achieved during this period, ascertain whether the balance of activities are suitable for athletes in the stage of development profiled and explore the plans for future focus. There will also be discussions around the role that the coach played within achieving or not achieving these goals.

Conclusion

The review is concluded with next steps being planned by the coach. These next steps should reflect learning from supported practice and the assessment day. At this point, the assessor will be able to give a complete picture of the work that is required to further develop coaching, or meet the standards set. Should there be a need for re-assessment then the coach will clearly be told this.

There will be some coaches that meet the standards quickly and others that will take longer.

Regardless of the decision, the coach needs to continue being involved as an athlete to be fair to the other coaches still to complete their practical delivery part of the day.



Re-assessment

The initial course fee paid covers the programme (to include the first assessment, day 4). Any subsequent re-assessments will incur additional costs levied by the Home Country Athletics Association. Assessment days will occur several times per year, please liaise with your Home Country Education contact to ascertain dates and availability.

To avoid the additional expense of re-assessment we strongly advise you to ensure all work is fully completed prior to the assessment day (please ask for help and clarification if you are unsure). This Assessment Guidance document has been devised to help you with this process. Please utilise this and the online module to ensure your work has the best chance of meeting the assessment criteria without incurring additional costs.

British Athletics Standards

British Athletics maintains high standards in granting coaching licenses. As a qualified and licensed Athletic Coach you will be in a position of great responsibility; supporting the development of athletes to reach their potential and ensuring a safe, fun and inclusive environment. Devising sessions and plans that meet the athlete's needs and are suitable to their stage of development is a vital part of this process. British Athletics needs to ensure that a minimum standard is achieved in the awarding of this qualification and the assessors will uphold these standards through the assessment process.

Appeals

In the event of appeals regarding assessment decisions, please contact the relevant Home Country Education Contact within 10 days of being informed of the assessment decision.

British Athletics wishes you well in your assessment and urge you to use the resources within this pack, the preparation for assessment module and course resources to support you in the successful completion of all the assessment elements.