

# Level 4 Coaching Certificate

Professional Practice in Sport Coaching



BRITISHROWING



1st Edition  
July 2021

From time-to-time  
revisions will be made  
to this course overview  
and there will be further  
editions published to  
keep it up-to-date.

Copyright  
© 2021  
British Rowing Limited

All rights reserved.  
No part of this  
publication may be  
reproduced, stored in a  
retrieval system, or  
transmitted, in any form  
or by any means,  
electronic, mechanical,  
photocopying, recording  
or otherwise, without  
the prior permission of  
the British Rowing Ltd.

British Rowing are  
registered trademarks  
of British Rowing  
Limited.

# Introduction

In today's busy and competitive coaching marketplace, coaches are expected to provide cutting edge practice that's informed by current research. The Level 4 Coaching Certificate learning programme enables coaches to explore and evaluate contemporary thinking with colleagues from across rowing, equestrian disciplines and other sports. A key strength of the programme is the informal networks that are developed through the process, which help coaches to bring diverse and creative approaches to problem-solving and everyday decision-making. This makes for a rich learning mix and provides a unique environment to inspire coaches in their quest to excel.

## Background

British Rowing and British Equestrian have partnered with the University of Gloucestershire to deliver the Level 4 Coaching Certificate qualification, including a Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) in Professional Practice in Sports Coaching. This partnership allows us to offer both components at a lower price than a standalone Postgraduate Diploma.

The course consists of a bespoke programme that's been developed specifically for both sports. The syllabus of professional education is intended for high-performing coaches who have already completed the UKCC Level 3 Senior Club Coach, or an equivalent qualification which can be discussed on application.

Enrolment takes place annually.

## Key people

### **Paul Garner – Academic Course Leader**

As the Academic Course Leader for the MSc and PGDip Professional Practice in Sports Coaching, I'll be your principal contact at The University of Gloucestershire. I oversee the running of the course, ensure the content remains current and relevant, that University quality assurance processes are adhered to, and that students receive the appropriate support.



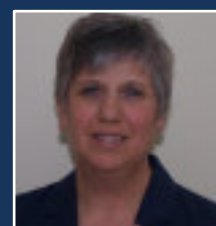
### **Loretta Williams - Programme Manager**

As Programme Manager, I oversee the application and recruitment process for the qualification. I support coaches through the Level 4 aspects of the course, providing reports and reflective discussions following the 360 reports as well as supporting coaches through observations and feedback. I act as a panel member on Rowing and Equestrian VIVAs.



### **Sarah Harris - Head of Education & Training, British Rowing**

I lead on coach learning, education and development at British Rowing. I work closely with Loretta to ensure the Level 4 programme runs smoothly. I also sit on the interview panel and support the coaches through the programme as another point of contact.



# The Level 4 Coach

Level 4 coaches are visionary and knowledgeable decision-makers who display exceptional skills, behaviours and the highest professional and ethical standards. They advance the development of themselves and others, lead cutting-edge programmes or a specialist part of an existing programme, and make a positive impact on sport performance and behaviour.

## Performance capabilities of a Level 4 coach

There are eight capabilities and behaviours we look for in a Level 4 coach, and these are the measures we will assess at your final panel presentation and professional discussion. The final panel is explained later in this guide.



A Level 4 coach should be able to ...

1. Build and maintain effective long-term working relationships
2. Create and sustain a supportive learning environment that's aligned to the needs of participants and the coaching context
3. Empower and challenge participants and themselves to exceed in what they believe they can achieve
4. Use an integrated approach to synthesise information, solve problems and manage change
5. Generate strategies and make effective decisions in a dynamic and uncertain environment
6. Demonstrate exceptional communication skills and adapt these to the needs of the participants and the context
7. Be self-aware, self-reflective and drive for continued self-improvement
8. Demonstrate a positive impact on the behaviour and performance of participants

## Who is the Level 4 Coaching Certificate for?

For coaches to be successful at this level, they need to...

- Develop as highly motivated, active learners
- Be able to work autonomously and manage their own learning process
- Take responsibility for identifying their own learning needs and aspirations

When we refer to 'rowers' in this guide, we are including indoor, river and coastal rowing.

You do not have to be working in a high-performance environment to be considered a high-performing coach or to be eligible for the Level 4 programme. For example, you might be primarily working with adults in a participation environment, or with children or young athletes.

## Entry requirements

To apply to study for the Level 4 Coaching Certificate, you will be required to...

- Hold a Level 3 Coaching Certificate or recognised equivalent qualification, such as World Rowing / other federation coaching qualifications or suitable postgraduate diploma.
- Demonstrate that you've been a high-performing coach in a specific environment for a minimum of five years and display high-performing characteristics aligned to the Level 4 criteria
- Provide two references who are able and prepared to verify your expertise and experience

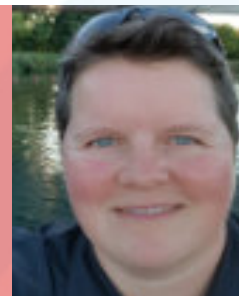
As part of the application process, it will be necessary to demonstrate that you can...

- Provide a range of evidence of on-going professional development and of your current high-performing coaching practice
- Employ an athlete-centred approach to your coaching
- Hold an ambassadorial role in rowing

You are encouraged to identify a mentor to support you with specialist, sport-based, technical development.

### LEVEL 4 ALUMNI

*"The course raised my awareness of the underpinning theory of how I wanted to coach. It reaffirmed belief that the way I want to approach my coaching is evidenced in research and provided support for pro socio behaviours and sport for change." ~ Hannah Vines*



## Coaching environments

Your high performing coaching activities can take place in one or more coaching contexts or environments. For example fixed or sliding seat, river or coastal, indoor or on-water rowing, participation programmes or High Performance.

Of course any of these contexts can be within able-bodied or para-rowing programmes. The aim of the Level 4 programme is to help you enhance the environment within which you coach to enable your athletes to develop and strive, whatever context and whatever level or ability of your rowers.

## The qualification and course

The British Rowing Level 4 Coaching Certificate qualification includes the opportunity for coaches to gain a Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) in Professional Practice in Sports Coaching, and is designed to support and credit learning within the workplace.

Forming an integral part of the Level 4 Coaching Certificate qualification for high performing coaches, the PGDip element has been created around work-based learning (WBL) modules that are focused on the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to develop professional practice, as well as the ability to manage academic learning.



### LEVEL 4 ALUMNI

*“The course really helped me to recognise what my strengths were as a coach and really recognise a true sense of self – what my values were and what things were really important to me and how that impacted on how I coached my athletes. This helped me to change some behaviours but also to build on things that I hadn’t previously recognised as strengths. Challenges were faced within my coaching environment to make changes but the network of coaches on the programme both within and outside the sport was a real benefit of the course and provided great support. Really positive experience and 100% believe it made me a better coach.” ~ Rachel Hooper*

Using a range of work-based learning situations, the PGDip course will enhance your knowledge, understanding, and critical thinking skills that are of importance to professional practitioners in sports coaching. You will have regular interaction with subject experts who facilitate learning opportunities via lectures, seminars, tutorials, subject-specific forums and student conferences. You will operate in a learning and assessment environment that emphasises how theory and empirical research is applied to stimulate a solution-focused approach to the real issues relevant to sports coaching.

This approach enables you to explore coaching practice through the rigour of academic learning, blended with the experience of coaching. The structure of the programme provides the opportunity to develop critical thinking about coaching and to impact on personal coaching behaviours.

★ You can choose to add on a third year of study in order to gain a Masters qualification with the University of Gloucestershire. This would be at an additional cost by separate arrangement between you and the University.

## Awarding bodies

British Rowing will be the awarding body for the Level 4 Coaching Certificate qualification, while the PGDip element of the course will be awarded by the University of Gloucestershire. You must complete the PGDip component before you can be awarded the Level 4.

## Course outline and commitment

The programme runs over two years, with the course commencing in September and concluding with a final panel presentation in November.

The University of Gloucestershire Postgraduate Diploma component consists of eight taught days (plus induction) per year (COVID-dependant), arranged in a combination of one- and two-day blocks. These are scheduled to take place in October, November, January, February, March and April.

In addition to these days, the programme will include online webinars, one-to-one tutor support, project work and field-based visits in your coaching environment from both the University and your mentors.

## Learning support from the University of Gloucestershire

The University of Gloucestershire (UoG) has a history of guiding students, from a variety of backgrounds, through postgraduate study. As such, there is genuine recognition that many learners undertaking the Professional Practice in Sports Coaching PGDip don't come from traditional academic backgrounds, and the course has been designed to support students in transitioning to an unfamiliar learning context. Furthermore, with applied backgrounds in coaching and coach development, the core teaching staff understand the need for course content to feel relevant and accessible.

A full induction day, held immediately prior to the first day of live teaching, will help to prepare you to engage with the University environment, access the library resources, manage online learning and interact with fellow students. Throughout the course, learning is highly collaborative, drawing upon students' experiential expertise in order to drive discussion, while engaging with theoretical work and contemporary research to underpin future development.

In addition to this cooperative environment, students have access to the wider study support services at the University and will also benefit from a number of practical sessions built into the teaching provision. As an example, during induction and the first taught module, there are study skills sessions including how to think critically, how to reference academic work and how to draw upon research to support a presentation. Finally, there is a strong personal tutor system at UoG, to which every student has access. This provides foundations for the wrap-around care and guidance that sets the UoG apart.



## Postgraduate Diploma modules

The following modules are covered during the PGDip programme:

### Personal and professional development in sport

This module requires coaches to develop an appropriate programme of professional development for their own practice and to consider how to develop the practice of others in their professional environment. Coaches will be expected to undertake and involve themselves in a range of learning environments relevant to sport coaching, in order to attend to the learning outcomes.

Scheduled contact hours

30

Independent learning hours

270

#### ASSESSMENTS

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 40%<br>Presentation | 60%<br>Assignment |
|---------------------|-------------------|

|                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Individual:<br>20 minutes | Individual:<br>3,000 words |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|

### Coaching pedagogy

Throughout the module, coaches will be involved in critiquing theoretical and practical concepts that pertain to coaching pedagogy. Particular focus is given to pedagogic models and to the interpersonal knowledge requisite of an effective coach, to better understand how to facilitate excellent learning environments. Coaches will explore both the theoretical and practical issues underpinning coach education and coach development, focusing on the knowledge required to operate effectively in professional sport coaching.

Scheduled contact hours

30

Independent learning hours

270

#### ASSESSMENTS

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 40%<br>Presentation | 60%<br>Assignment |
|---------------------|-------------------|

|   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| Individual:<br>Equivalent to 20 min/<br>2,000 words | Individual:<br>3,000 words |
|---|----------------------------|

### Work-based project

This module aims to develop a critical understanding of a broad range of research methodologies particularly relevant in sport-related professional practice. The coach's understanding of the nature and purpose of research will be challenged, and discussions will allow them to explore and develop well-considered approaches to research within their chosen field. Through the identification of a contemporary issue relevant to their professional context, they will undertake a work-based pilot project with a view to informing future research.

Scheduled contact hours

30

Independent learning hours

270

#### ASSESSMENTS

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 30%<br>Presentation | 70%<br>Assignment |
|---------------------|-------------------|

|                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Individual:<br>15 minutes | Individual:<br>3,500 words |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|



### The expert coach in context

This module aims to equip coaches with a greater understanding of the skills, knowledge and principles involved in positive youth development, talent development and identification, and transitions for sports participants/athletes. Effective planning and practice within the coaching process will be discussed, alongside an understanding of professional knowledge (coaching science) that impacts on coaches at all levels, providing the opportunity to generate, direct and manage the implementation of cutting-edge coaching solutions and training programmes.

Scheduled  
contact  
hours

30

Independent  
learning  
hours

270

### ASSESSMENTS

40%

Presentation

60%

Assignment

Individual:  
20 minutes

Individual:  
3,000 words



### LEVEL 4 ALUMNI

*“For someone who left school with just a handful of GCSEs then 40 years later jumping onto a Masters level academic program, the Level 4 is tough but it is also very rewarding. The exposure to some contemporary coaching practises challenged most of the core beliefs that as a traditional rowing coach I might have held dear and subsequently has reshaped my thinking and behaviour around how I coach. So much so that whereas two years ago I thought I knew it all, now I realise I don’t and every session and every interaction teaches me something. I will not gain financially from taking the Level 4 but I have gained as a coach and more importantly as a person.” ~ Tim Morris*

## Level 4 Coaching Certificate

The British Rowing Level 4 Coaching Certificate includes the following elements:

### A reflective log

You will be expected to keep a reflective log over the period of the programme. Its purpose is to record the impact of personal development on your coaching practice. The log will combine your reflections on how the PGDip learning has helped your personal development, feedback from the two 360 reviews and two field-based visits, and input from your technical mentor. This can take a form that is suitable and relevant to your own coaching practices such as a summary written log or audio recording.

### 360 reviews

You will be provided with a unique link to an online questionnaire, which you will be able to share with athletes, peers and support staff. You are given the opportunity to complete the 360 feedback review twice in any one year (but must complete a minimum of two) and the feedback will be

discussed collaboratively with your Level 4 Mentor.

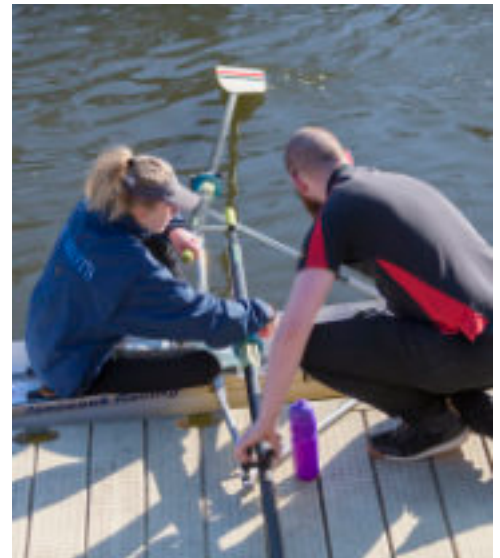
### Field-based visits

You will receive field-based visits from an expert coach developer appointed by British Rowing. They will observe you during a coaching session, which will then be followed by a one-to-one discussion to review and reflect on your coaching. This is not a technical knowledge or skills review, but instead it is to review and enhance your coaching practice.

### Final panel

This is the opportunity to share your personal learning over the course of the programme with a panel of experts. You will be asked to present on your learnings

from the Level 4 programme including the PGDip, drawing upon your reflective log. A PowerPoint template is provided as a guide but you can choose how to present his information. We ask you to present for a maximum of 30 minutes. This will be followed by a professional discussion with the panel based on what you've spoken about, and information from the 360 reviews and field-based visit reports. The panel will consist of the Level 4 British Rowing Programme Manager and an independent coaching expert.



### **Mentoring**

Mentors have proven to be extremely valuable to Level 4 alumni in previous years, so you will be encouraged and supported to identify at least one mentor to work with through your Level 4 journey. Your mentor could be someone from your own coaching context to provide technical sport guidance, or someone who you could discuss coaching and share ideas, thoughts and challenges with, or could be someone to support your academic learning. You could even work with a mentor for each of those areas if that's what you feel you need.

If you have mentors in mind when you apply, you can identify them in your application form, but this will also be discussed and explored in more detail during the British Rowing Level 4 induction day in September.

## **Application process and costs**

### **How to apply**

Application forms will be shared with coaches who express an interest following the course information days.

The closing date for applications is the end of June for a September start. Where appropriate a telephone interview will be held.

For more information regarding this programme, please contact British Rowing:

Loretta Williams  
Programme Manager (or the LEAD team)  
[loretta.williams@britishrowing.org](mailto:loretta.williams@britishrowing.org)

### **Course costs**

Course fees for the Level 4 Coaching Certificate qualification, including the Postgraduate Diploma, total £4,500 – this will be split into two annual fees.

You may be eligible for support from your Active Partnership or other grant-aiding organisations – for further information about this, please contact Sarah Harris at British Rowing ([sarah.harris@britishrowing.org](mailto:sarah.harris@britishrowing.org)). Previous Level 4 alumni have been successful in achieving grant contributions towards their course fees.

If you commit to completing a Masters degree, you can apply for a student loan for the full three years of study. Please contact the student finance department at the University of Gloucestershire for more information about this.

## Programme

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| April                 | Pre-recorded British Rowing Level 4 information released                 |
| May                   | British Rowing and University of Gloucestershire Level 4 information day |
| June                  | Application deadline   |
| Week beginning 5 July | Telephone Interviews with applicants                                     |
| August                | Formal admission to Level 4  |
| September             | British Rowing Level 4 induction day / First payment due                 |
| September             | University of Gloucestershire induction day                              |
| September to December | Module 1: Personal and professional development in sport                 |
| December              | First 360 review   |
| April                 | Second 360 opportunity   |
| February to May       | Module 2: Coaching pedagogy / Observation Opportunity                    |
| September             | Second payment issued  |
| October to May        | Module 3: Work-based project   |
| December              | Third 360 Opportunity  |
| February to May       | Module 4: Expert coach in context  |
| May - September       | Observation Opportunity  |
| November              | Final panel  |
| November              | University of Gloucestershire graduation                                 |

## Level 4 recommended reading list:

*Nonlinear Pedagogy in Skill Acquisition: An Introduction* by Jia Yi Chow (Author), Keith Davids (Contributor), Chris Button (Contributor), Ian Renshaw

*Sports Coaching: A Reference Guide for Students, Coaches and Competitors* by Anita Navin

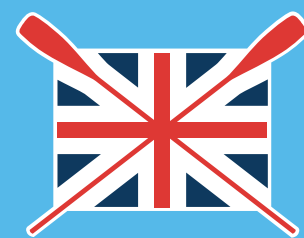
*Leadership: Theory and Practice* by Peter G Northouse

*The Constraints-Led Approach: Principles for Sports Coaching and Practice Design* by Ian Renshaw

**Copyright © British Rowing Limited 2021**

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior written permission of British Rowing.

Thank you to all those who provided photos and illustrations to support the Level 4 Coaching Certificate: British Equestrian, Nick Middleton, Richard Stock, Tom Hurley, Simon Way, James Andrews, Hannah Vines, Tim Morris, Rachel Hooper, Loretta Williams, Sarah Harris, Shelley McKay



**BRITISHROWING**