

Since 2002 Sport Wales has worked collaboratively with the other Home Country Sports Councils, UK Sport, UK Coaching (previously sportscoach UK) and National Governing Bodies (NGB) for sport to agree an approach to coach education aligned to a UK framework (and occupational standards), namely the UKCC which is both a development framework, and a programme of endorsement.

Not all sports adopted the UKCC endorsed qualifications and several Welsh NGBs fell under the qualification frameworks of their UK/GB body.

The UKCC was a development framework intended to support the:

- development of governing body of sport coach-education programmes
- endorsement of governing body of sport coach-education programmes
- continuous improvement of governing body sport coach-education programmes

The UKCC was an endorsement of governing bodies of sport coach qualification programmes. The endorsement was gained by meeting a set of criteria that were built on research and best practice.

It was not a qualification in itself. The qualifications remained with the governing bodies (often in partnership with a recognised awarding organisation). The first programmes were endorsed in 2006.

The endorsement criteria process was set against:

- The development of appropriate high-quality learning experiences for the coaches.
- Appropriate resources to deliver effective and high-quality coach-education programmes.
- Training provision for coach educators and other personnel.
- Quality assured administration and management structure of coach education provision provided by sports.

Over a period of years there were a number of reviews of the UKCC concept, value, perception and process. Some of these were internal reviews and some external, leading to a number of iterations of the criteria. The main UKCC endorsement changes were:

- A shift from a compliance to a development model
- In line with this shift a review of criteria to include development and rationale criteria as well as compliance criteria
- The replacement of a number of quality assurance criteria with the requirement to be a regulated qualification (as only regulated qualifications were being submitted)
- A broader interpretation of the 'UK' criteria to support effective implementation in each Home Country

Sport England and Sport Scotland commissioned separate reviews of UKCC in 2017/18 which although recognised that UKCC had driven forward the quality of coach education, it highlighted that:

- It was conceived and implemented around NGB's

- There are high levels of support for UKCC amongst ‘traditional’ coaches and those ‘within’ the system
- It is becoming less relevant to the sector
- The sector had changed its delivery outputs to include LA’s, Regional Sport Partnerships, sport for development charities, commercial providers and others.
- The framework hadn’t evolved with sector focus of tackling inactivity and inequality

They recommended that a revised framework was required that:

- Is flexible to align to individual country strategies but consistent enough to allow British portability
- Is non- linear to reflect individuals “career paths”
- Has greater emphasis on soft skills / behaviours
- Has complimentary areas such mental health, healthy lifestyles and wellbeing, population and community specific skills
- Include informal, flexible, online learning

The independent Review of the Development of Coaching in Wales which was undertaken in 2016 (and published in 2019) also identified the need for;

- Wider recognition of the impact and importance of coaching and coaches in environments outside of more traditional competitive, club-based sport
- An increasing, system-wide recognition of the power of developing people
- A need to shift away, or a progressive development, from formal coach education towards more individualised, lifelong development which:
 - Focuses more on the behaviours and people/social skills which coaches need, in addition to their technical and tactical knowledge
 - Is mapped against different coaching circumstances (those being coached) and individual need (the skills of the coach)
 - Seeks to recognise and accredit the different learning experiences which coaches have,
 - Is more accessible to a wider range of people

As a result of these review’s it was agreement across the Home Country Sports Councils, UK Coaching and Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) to phase out the UKCC endorsement and shift organisations towards a new endorsement process led by CIMSPA. This endorsement process would align to the Professional Standards for the sport and physical activity sector which have replaced the National Occupational Standards (NOSs), which formed the basis of UKCC standards.

This would allow the option to include whatever was appropriate for the specific role in coaching including regulated qualifications, apprenticeships and regulated and non-regulated bite sized learning and CPD.

For the organisations in the coaching sector, that have programmes that are UKCC endorsed, these are no longer have endorsement and you are encouraged to engage with CIMSPA and Sport Wales, with support from UK Coaching to help ascertain:

- how appropriate your current coach education provision is to the new standards
- how appropriate your systems and coach developer workforces (tutors, assessors, coach developers) still are
- is there help needed with modernising your learning and assessment for coaching roles.

For the coach, that hold a UKCC coaching qualification at any level, you will continue to hold this. The retirement of the UKCC endorsement does not invalidate your qualification. They should liaise with your governing body on whether this qualification is still relevant for the role(s) they play. In many cases it will and they should be encouraged to keep up to date through committing to ongoing learning and development.