

Institution: Leeds Metropolitan University
Unit of Assessment: Unit 26 – Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism
Title of case study: Professionalising sport coaching
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Our research has transformed UK and international thinking, policy and practice in sport coaching. The result is an emerging international consensus on sport coaching as a blended profession encompassing a segmented workforce with defined coaching roles. We have had a significant impact on UK and international sport coaching systems, coach development, education and qualifications. Our research work has impacted on more than 30 countries, and directly on the work of at least 26 international agencies and sporting bodies, directly enhancing the lived experiences of many thousands of coaches, participants and performers.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Our research has been driven by a collaborative team of sport coaching academics, policy and programme developers, and practitioners (Abraham, Duffy, Lara-Bercial, Lyle, Morgan, Muir, Norman, North, amongst others) dating back to 2005.</p> <p>This research has focused on five key areas:</p> <p>Sport coaching as a blended professional area: Our research has highlighted the contribution of sport coaching to a range of sporting and societal outcomes, including those related to sporting performance, participation, and health and well-being [3]. Our work has conceptualised sport coaching as a blended professional area and created a conceptual basis for policy development. Situated within a broader agenda of professionalising practice, this approach recognises the extant structural and resource conditions impacting on and influencing change in sport coaching. This is with particular reference to the extensive and valued contribution of community volunteers in addition to that of the more visible full-time paid high-performance coach [2].</p> <p>Sport coaching as a segmented workforce: Historically, sport coaching has been treated as homogeneous or synonymous with high-performance coaching. Our research has critically challenged and redefined sport coaching as a segmented workforce with four main roles identified - children's coaches, adult recreational coaches, performance development coaches, and high performance coaches - closely aligned to the specific wants and needs of identified participant and performer groups [3]. Further, this segmentation has been augmented by work on expertise development and existing staged educational approaches, which has led to the development of the internationally recognised 4x4 Coach Development Model [3].</p> <p>Sport coaching workforce development, education and qualifications: Our research has examined the implications of a blended and segmented workforce for coach development, education and qualifications. Thus, we have produced cutting edge role definitions, curricula and development methodologies; for example, for children's coaches and performance development coaches. Particular attention has been given to the higher levels of the development and qualifications continuum (known as Level 4) [4]. This work has established the roles, attributes, capabilities and professional competences of coaches, broadly aligned at a post-graduate level, which has provided the basis for recent qualification submissions.</p> <p>The mechanisms of sport coach development and education: We have established mechanisms and tools to facilitate coach development and education. Our work has conceptualised coaching practice as a multi-layered relational phenomenon [5] which focuses attention on the cognitive, behavioural and social dimensions of practice, and with it a range of learning philosophies and developmental approaches. Aligned with this, our research has provided thinking tools for coach developers and coaches to reflect on the knowledge bases, problem solving and decision making repertoires used within complex, dynamic and politicised coaching environments [1].</p> <p>Sport coaching in context: Our research has developed an understanding of, and given a voice to, the contexts, conditions and constraints of less well represented coaching populations within the professionalisation agenda, and the implications for coach development and education. This</p>

includes studies on unpaid and community coaches, women coaches, coaches of women and girls, and coaches of disabled athletes [6].

3. References to the research (bold names indicate current Leeds Met staff):

[1] **Abraham, A.**, & Collins, D. (2011). Taking the next step: Ways forward for coaching science. *Quest*, 63(4), 366-384. DOI: 10.1080/00336297.2011.10483687 /

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/00336297.2011.10483687>

[2] **Duffy, P.**, **Hartley, H.**, Bales, J., Crespo, M., Dick, F., Vardhan, D., Curado, J. (2011). Sport coaching as a 'profession': Challenges and future directions. *International Journal of Coaching Science*, 5(2). The output is listed in the RA2 or can be supplied by Leeds Metropolitan University.

[3] **Duffy, P.**, **North, J.**, & **Muir, B.** (2013). Understanding the impact of sport coaching on legacy. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 5(2), 165-182. DOI:10.1080/19406940.2012.665380 / The output is listed in the RA2, can be supplied by Leeds Metropolitan University, or abstract at:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/19406940.2012.665380>

[4] Lyle, J., **Abraham, A.**, **Morgan, G.**, & **Muir, B.** (2010). Technical Report for the UKCCE: United Kingdom Coaching Certificate Level 4 Guidance Document. Sports Coach UK, Leeds.

<http://www.sportscoachuk.org/sites/default/files/Level-4-Guidance-Document.pdf>

[5] **North, J.** (2013). A critical realist approach to theorising coaching practice. In P. Potrac, W. D. Gilbert & J. Dennison (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Sports Coaching* (pp. 133-144). London: Routledge. The output is listed in the RA2 or can be supplied by Leeds Metropolitan University.

[6] **Norman, L.** (2010) Feeling Second Best: Elite Women Coaches' Experiences.

Society of Sport Journal, 27 (1) March, pp.89-104. The output is listed in the RA2 or can be supplied by Leeds Metropolitan University, or abstract at:

[http://journals.humankinetics.com/ssj-back-](http://journals.humankinetics.com/ssj-back-issues/ssjvolume27issue1march/feelingsecondbestelitewomencoachesexperiences)

[issues/ssjvolume27issue1march/feelingsecondbestelitewomencoachesexperiences](http://journals.humankinetics.com/ssj-back-issues/ssjvolume27issue1march/feelingsecondbestelitewomencoachesexperiences)

4. Details of the impact

Our research has transformed UK and international thinking, policy and practice in the areas identified above:

Sport coaching as a blended professional area: We have led the international sport coaching policy community, including leadership positions in the International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE) and the European Coaching Council (ECC). We host the ICCE Global Coaches Office, and hosted the London 2012 Global Coaches House with 50+ speakers and 500+ participants. We also led on a successful bid to the European Commission to rethink and redesign the institutional infrastructure for coaching representation and service provision across Europe [A].

Our research has been used to inform national and international sport coaching policy and practice. For example, our work on professionalisation has informed system building work in Ireland, the UK [B], South Africa [C], and the Philippines [D]. A partnership with the ICCE and Association of Summer Olympic International Federations has led to the development of the International Sport Coaching Framework [E]. This provides a global framework and benchmark for the development and delivery of coaching systems, and the development and deployment of coaches, with impact already identified in Switzerland and the United States [E]. We have recently worked with the Football Association to benchmark its coaching system against UK and

Impact case study (REF3b)

international good practice both within and outside sport.

Sport coaching as a segmented workforce: Our segmentation proposals have had a significant influence on sports policy in the UK [F] and South Africa [C]. They have also impacted on three of the top five participation sports (swimming, football and golf) and many other mainstream sports in the UK: archery, canoeing, cricket, gymnastics, rugby league, rugby union, squash and triathlon [F]. This segmentation/modelling approach assists governing bodies of sport to review and reorganise their sport coaching systems. For example, British Gymnastics has based its Sport England funding submission, *Participation 'Gymnastics for All' Strategy*, and revised coaching structures on segmentation work developed at Leeds Metropolitan University [G].

Sport coaching workforce development, education and qualifications: Our research has underpinned coach development systems thinking in the UK (the Coach Development Model) [H]. In particular, this research work has helped to define the children and performer development coaching roles and the Level 4 expertise associated with these roles [4]. The national lead agency for coaching, Sports Coach UK, has based its Level 4 provision on this work, and Level 4 programmes have been developed in basketball, cricket, hockey, rowing, rugby league, rugby union, squash, and table tennis, with development work currently taking place in canoeing, equestrian sport, and judo.

The mechanisms of sport coach development and education: Our research on coach development has led to professional development programmes for the Football Association's Youth Coach Educators and High Performing Coaches Academy [I]. Similar programmes have been put in place for UK Sport and the Royal Yachting Association. We have also undertaken research work to examine and inform the Football Association's player development pathway. Research work in gymnastics and rugby league has led to a redesign of their United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC) Levels 1-3. We have undertaken ground breaking and highly regarded 1:1 coach development work using audio-video capture and a reflective framework in hockey, rugby league and sailing.

Coaching in context: Our research work on women and girl's, disability, and black and minority ethnic sport has led directly to a number of coach development resources utilised by Sports Coach UK and the Women's Sport Foundation [J]. These are now being accessed through Sports Coach UK workshops and resources by thousands of practising coaches.

Overall

- Our central and very visible place in the UK and international sport coaching policy environment and our very active research programme situate us as very strong contenders for the world's leading university in sport coaching policy, practice and development.
- We estimate our research ideas, tools and resources have had a policy and practice impact in over 30 countries, and directly on the work of at least 26 international agencies and sporting bodies. This will have impacted on many thousands of coaches in terms of improved systems and on sports participants and performers in terms of improved sporting experiences.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[A] Duffy, P., North, J., & Curado, J. (in draft) The Further Development of a Co-ordinated Network for Sport Coaching in Europe – CoachNet, EAC-2011-0452: Final Technical Report and Financial Statement. See also: http://ec.europa.eu/sport/preparatory_actions/results-eac-18-2011_en.htm

[B] Sports Coach UK. (2008). The UK Coaching Framework: A 3-7-11 year action plan. Leeds: Coachwise; Sports Coach UK. (2012). The UK coaching framework: Embedding excellent coaching practice. Leeds: Sports Coach UK. See also: <http://www.sportscoachuk.org/uk-coaching-framework-overview>

Impact case study (REF3b)

[C] South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) (2012) South African Coaching Framework, Johannesburg: SASCOC. See also: <http://hp.sascoc.co.za/the-south-african-coaching-framework/>. South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) (2012) Long Term Coach Development, Johannesburg: SASCOC. See also: hp.sascoc.co.za/files/2013/02/LTCD.pdf

[D] Lara-Bercial, S., & Duffy, P. (2013) Philippine Academy of Sport: Full scoping report, Department of Education in the Philippines, the British Council and Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds. See also: <http://www.philstar.com/sports/2013/09/09/1189161/poc-supports-sports-academy-plan>

[E] ICCE, ASOIF, & LMU. (2013). International Sport Coaching Framework v1.2. Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics. See also: <http://www.icce.ws/projects/international-sport-coaching-framework.html>. See also: 'For Coach Education Switzerland, the ISCF is a very important reference document to benchmark and refine our coach education and development programs. This excellent work developed by Leeds Metropolitan University and its partners ASOIF and ICCE has a very high significance in the development of quality sport coaching systems around the world'. **Head Coach Education Switzerland, Federal Institute of Sport Magglingen/Switzerland.**

The LMU-ICCE Framework has been very instrumental in how our Coaching Education Department is working to re-frame how coaching education and coaching development are viewed in the United States. It is great to have such organizations working to build resources that can make an impact in every corner of the world in the area of coaching and sport' **Director of Coaching Education, United States Olympic Committee**

[F] North, J. (2009). The coaching workforce 2009-2016. Leeds: Sports Coach UK. See also: <http://www.sportscoachuk.org/resource/coaching-workforce-2009-16-0>

[G] North, J. (2012). Further development of the gymnastics participant model Commissioned report for British Gymnastics. Leeds: Sport Coaching Innovations, Leeds Metropolitan University. See also: "The research provided within the 'Further development of the participant model' has enabled us to better understand the motivation of our participants and therefore strongly evidence and shape our 'Gymnastics for All' mass participation and retention strategy for the next four years" **Gymnastics For All Manager, British Gymnastics**

[H] Sports Coach UK. (2009). The coach development model user guide. Leeds: Sports Coach UK. See also: <http://www.sportscoachuk.org/resource/coach-development-model-user-guide>

[I] "We asked the Sport Coaching Innovations team at Leeds Metropolitan University to research a series of concepts surrounding the coaching of the game. The information and materials that were supplied were comprehensive, thoroughly-researched and clearly amplified during discussions surrounding the findings. I would have no hesitation whatsoever in engaging the services of Leeds Metropolitan University for further projects in the future" **(former) Elite Coaching Director, The Football Association.**

[J] Fitzgerald, H. (2013) Disabled Performers Reflections of Sports Coaching. Sports coach UK: Leeds. See also: http://sportscoachuk.org/sites/default/files/Reflections%20of%20disabled%20athletes_0.pdf