

SNOWSPORT ENGLAND CROSS COUNTRY COACHING AWARD SCHEME: LEVEL 4 ON-SNOW CROSS-COUNTRY COACH

Award Summary

The Level 4 Coaching Award is gained on successful completion of an approved Level 4 training and assessment course, led by an appointed Level 4 Coach who has qualified as a Senior Tutor. This award qualifies coaches to work on snow and on roller skis with skiers at all levels to advanced/expert, including those seeking further specialisation, such as aspirant Level 2 Instructors and Level 3 Coaches themselves.

A Level 4 Coach will demonstrate a sophisticated level of understanding of all aspects of the sport. He/she is also expected to be able to fulfil a responsible and positive role within his or her club or organisation. Level 4 Coaches will have an advanced knowledge of both skiing and coaching skills, and significant coaching experience on both snow and roller skis. They will have the ability to play a role in the long-term development of their skiers, and to undertake, if desired, the necessary training to become a Tutor or Senior Tutor with responsibility for instructing and assessing other coaches.

A Level 4 Coach is able to synthesize knowledge from a wide variety of sources and apply it to their coaching, enabling them to vary session plans, and modifying them to respond to any challenge.

The Level 4 Coach will have an outstanding presence on skis providing a model example of all techniques. They will have exceptional ability to demonstrate both complete techniques and individual aspects of each technique.

Level 4 Training and Assessment Course

The Level 4 Award is gained on successful completion of an SSE approved on-snow programme of 6 days or 42 hours training and assessment on a continuous or modular basis, led by an SSE Senior Tutor. This COULD include a period shadowing a Senior Tutor in his/her training and assessment work.

It is a prerequisite for participating aspirants for this award that they hold a Level 3 Coach Award, or are deemed to be of equivalent standard, and have gained a 5[☆] in the SSE Proficiency Award scheme or its equivalent on both snow and roller skis. They must have logged 40 hours of cross-country instructional/coaching experience as a Level 3 Coach, including a minimum of 20 hours on snow and 10 on roller skis. Holders of equivalent awards may apply to the SSE for accreditation of a qualification.

The training course covers the fundamentals and more detailed aspects of coaching and further learning, working with advanced/expert skiers including those seeking to work towards a role in coaching.

The course will cover:

- The candidate's own skiing performance
- Details of working with novice to advanced skiers, including planning and delivering safe and enjoyable sessions which provide the basis for further progress
- Planning and delivering long-term development plans Planning and delivering weekend and week-long courses.

Prerequisites for accreditation

- Be at least 18 years old

E: info@snowsportengland.org.uk

T: 01509 232323

W: snowsportengland.org.uk

Snowsport England, SportPark, Loughborough University,
3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3QF
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- Be a qualified On-Snow Level 3 Cross-country Coach Be registered with SSE
- Have a minimum of 40 hours` cross-country skiing instructional experience as a Level 3 coach recorded in their logbook, 20 hours of which must be on snow and 10 on roller skis
- Complete a coaching portfolio which shows the candidate`s work with skiers over a period of several months
- Attainment of an appropriate level in a relevant Proficiency Award Scheme, e.g. 5 Star in the Snowsport England Scheme, on both snow and roller skis.

Assessment for Level 4 accreditation

The assessment part of the course takes place after the training phase of the 6-day programme.

The process will include the following:

- Coaching assignment: coaching of peers and groups of mixed ability
- Personal skiing assignment: assessment of demonstrations of all techniques
- A completed logbook, showing Level 3 Coach qualification, the required hours of skiing
- instruction, a current First Aid certificate and current CRB cover and completion of a Safeguarding and Protecting Children course
- Completion of a coaching portfolio

Skiing Level 4: Advanced skiing techniques

Level 4 Coaches must show a high level of adaptability on all terrains in all conditions, demonstrating appropriate techniques and excellent posture and balance throughout. The Level 4 Coach must be able to emphasize individual aspects of technique, have the ability to demonstrate right and wrong techniques, and the capability to exaggerate where necessary. In addition to this, the Level 4 Coach will have the skills to recognise a student`s limitations, whether it be physical, physiological, or mental. A Level 4 Coach will be expected to manage a group of mixed ability providing individual demonstrations and exercises.

The candidate will show excellence and adaptability in all techniques:

- Confident, relaxed, correct posture
- A high level of static balance
- The ability to ski at high speed in a state of dynamic balance where appropriate smooth and complete weight transfer
- Smooth and efficient rhythm
- A high level of adaptability and agility

Skiing tasks – Level 4 Coach

Excellent performance of classic techniques, skating techniques and downhill skills appropriate to cross-country skiing, and ability to make transitions between techniques within each style is required. The Level 4 Coach will have mastered all techniques with the ability to demonstrate asymmetric skills on both sides and at varied speeds. He/she will demonstrate complete knowledge and understanding of the variations and current thinking on each technique, together with the technical adaptability to demonstrate variations within each technique. The ability to isolate and demonstrate all aspects of each technique will be required. There must be an exceptional level of agility, confidence and balance on all terrains and at Level 4, the coach will be able to ski with confidence in a state of dynamic balance.

Candidates must ski at 5 star proficiency level (as for Level 3 Coach), and additionally must demonstrate the following to fulfil the Level 4 assessment:

Diagonal Stride

- Ability to execute slow motion demonstrations
- Ability to isolate and emphasize individual joint angulation, position and movement

Double pole

- Ability to commit to a state of dynamic balance prior to pole plant with no loss of rhythm or efficiency.

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- Ability to demonstrate a rapid transition in technique and tempo in varied terrain

Double pole kick

- Ability to commit to a state of dynamic balance prior to pole plant with no loss of rhythm or efficiency

For all skating techniques:

- Knowledge of and ability to demonstrate how variations of each individual technique can be used on different terrains.
- Ability to eliminate all passive phases of leg action when climbing or skiing at speed.
- Adaptable leg recovery for varied snow conditions and accurate foot placement of recovery ski facilitated by constant balance.

Skate 1

- Demonstrate broad variations on technique
- Show strength and balance to allow explosive technique on steep climbs
- Ability to climb steep hills with or without poles

Skate 2

- Dynamic technique to climb medium to steep hills without losing control of body posture Show extreme ankle angulation for power generation

Skate 3

- Ability to increase power with exaggerated ankle angulation

Free skate

- Demonstrate powerful technique with and without arm movement

Dynamic turns

- Demonstrate dynamic high-speed turns of varying radius with a high degree of inclination and with both skis edged aggressively

Downhill skills

- All downhill skills required for track skiing to be executed with balance and control on steep terrain in varied conditions.
- Correct techniques to be selected for the conditions.

Level 4 Coaching

Level 4 Coaches will demonstrate a wide range of understanding of the principles and practices of cross country skiing on snow and on roller skis. They will have sufficient experience and skill necessary to be an effective coach for skiers ranging in ability from novice to advanced and expert, and for skiers wishing to specialize, including those wishing to become instructors and coaches. A Level 4 coach is able to synthesize knowledge from a wide variety of sources and apply it to their coaching. He/she can think creatively, developing new ideas and concepts and taking their sport and their skiers forward.

The Level 4 Coach will be assessed by a Senior Tutor in delivering a practical coaching session with their peers at their own level of skiing and through discussion and questioning. This will include video analysis of a group and presentation/analysis to the group.

Level 4 Communication

The candidate will also deliver a structured presentation to a group, with or without visual aids (as determined by assessor). This will cover a ski related topic (eg equipment selection and sizing; ski care and waxing; basic physical requirements for cross country skiing (not racing); group management; incident management; dealing with snow conditions and weather)

Underpinning Knowledge

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Knowledge requirements for Level 4 Coaches reflect an in-depth understanding of specific terms and concepts from a wide variety of sources, and an ability to use these concepts in sessions and situations for all levels of skier. The Level 4 Coach will think creatively, responding to the needs of their skiers and modifying not only the session in hand but also future sessions they have planned.

A Level 4 Coach will be able to:

Background

- Define and explain skiing and coaching terminology Identify equipment needs for all skiers
- Advise skiers on how their equipment choices might influence their performance Discuss clothing choice and related safety issues
- Show awareness of weather considerations and navigation appropriate to advanced cross- country skiers
- Show knowledge and understanding of advanced fitness training
- Show ability in and understanding of equipment maintenance and waxing techniques for all level of skier from novice to advanced.

Movement Analysis

- Identify the components of good skiing
- Recognize general movement patterns found among all skiers to advanced level
- Identify desired outcomes of all types of skiing situations within the range of operations of the Level 4 award
- List exercises and tasks which address student needs, the equipment being used, terrain options etc
- Discuss posture, appropriate movement and balance Identify effective movements for all groups of skiers
- Understand detailed skiing movements involving posture, balance and weight transfer
- Coach an appropriate blend of these movements suited to the needs of all levels of skier from novice to advanced and expert
- Create an activity/task list appropriate to the needs of these skiers
- Plan a series of sessions to develop these skiers in relation to short, medium and long-term goals.

Session Delivery

When dealing with all levels of skiers:

- Teach the skiing public from novice to advanced and provide solid foundations for future learning
- Show ability to give appropriate feedback, encouragement and motivation, including the use of audio-visual equipment
- Demonstrate an ability to develop a relationship of trust between coach and students Identify learning styles and preferences and discuss examples of use in a lesson Understand the needs of individual skiers and develop a pathway for all levels Handle a group based on group energy levels, conditions, safety and lesson content
- Understand how to create an appropriate learning environment and how to incorporate this knowledge into sessions maximizing opportunities for safety, enjoyment and further learning
- Identify the components of good skiing
- Understand the needs of specific groups of skiers
- Be self-critical, open to constructive feedback, and modify sessions based on the needs of skiers
- Be able to self-assess the effectiveness of a session
- Demonstrate the ability to assess Proficiency Awards where available.

Revalidation

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All Level 4 coaches are required to attend an approved SSE refresher course at least once every three years (this may be completed on snow or roller skis). This is to keep them abreast of the latest developments in both skiing and coaching techniques.

Revalidation will comprise:

- Provision by a Senior Tutor of a refresher on coaching methodology
- Demonstration by Instructor of appropriate technical ability and awareness of up to date coaching methods