



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

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Award overview, training, assessment and licencing

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## 1) Award summary

The Snowsport England (SE) Level 4 coach 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.

A Level 4 coach has to demonstrate a sophisticated level of understanding of all aspects of the sport. They are also expected to be able to fulfil a responsible and positive role within their 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 explain both complete techniques and individual aspects of each technique.

## 2) Remit

This award qualifies coaches to work on snow and on roller skis with skiers at all levels to elite, including those seeking further specialisation, such as aspirant Level 2 instructors and Level 3 coaches themselves.

A SE qualification authorises coaches to work in a club or equivalent setting. If you wish to work in other settings, you need to contact SE to clarify whether it is within the terms of your licence.

## 3) Training

The Level 4 award is gained on successful completion of a SE approved on-snow and roller ski, roughly equally split between the two, course of at least 6 days or 36 hours training and assessment, on a continuous or modular basis, led by a SE Senior Tutor. This could include a period shadowing a Senior Tutor in their training and assessment work, where the candidate Level 4 would take the role of the Senior Tutor.

When you apply to SE to become a Level 4 coach, the SE XC Coaching Panel will contact you to agree on the most appropriate way to undertake the training, and to progress towards and conduct your assessment.

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

The course will cover:

- your own skiing performance,
- details of working with beginner to elite 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.

## 4) Prerequisites

It is a prerequisite that you satisfy minimum requirements as specified below:

- be at least 18 years old,
- be a qualified SE Level 3 coach for both roller skiing and on-snow,
- be registered with SE,
- have a minimum of 40 hours cross-country skiing instructional experience as a Level 3 coach recorded in your logbook (or equivalent), 20 hours of which must be on snow and 20 on roller skis,
- complete a coaching portfolio which shows your work with skiers over a reasonable period of time,
- be able to demonstrate an appropriate level in both classic and skate skiing, and on snow and roller skis: ideally SE 6\* on-snow and roller ski proficiency; however on an exceptional basis, a candidate coach who does not fully meet all the technical requirements of an elite skier / 6\* proficiency may still be awarded a L4 Coach award provided that the candidate coach:
  - can identify the attributes of skiing at elite level (e.g. SE 6\*)
  - demonstrates excellent technical analysis of elite skiers
  - provides constructive input to elite skiers
  - and if these criteria are met, the assessing Senior Tutor recommends the L4 Coach Award, which should also be agreed by the Cross Country Coaching Panel.

## 5) Required skiing technique

You must be able to show a high level of adaptability on all terrains in all conditions, demonstrating appropriate techniques and excellent posture and balance throughout at SE 6\* proficiency level (or exceptionally at 5\* proficiency as described in section 4). You 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, and you must also be capable of identifying and explaining the attributes needed of elite level (SE 6\* proficiency) skiing. In addition to this, you must have the skills to recognise a skier's limitations, whether these be physical, physiological or mental. You will be expected to manage a group of mixed ability skiers, providing individual demonstrations and exercises and/or work with a single skier or small group of skiers at all levels up to elite level.

You have to show excellence and adaptability in all techniques, including:

- 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.

You have to perform all ski techniques described in the SE 6\* on-snow and roller ski proficiency scheme (or exceptionally at 5\* proficiency as described in section 4), see [SE-Nordic-Proficiency-Awards-2022.pdf \(snowsportengland.org.uk\)](https://www.snowsportengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/SE-Nordic-Proficiency-Awards-2022.pdf).

## 6) Teaching requirements

You have to demonstrate a wide range of understanding of the principles and practices of cross-country skiing on snow and on roller skis. You need to have sufficient experience and skill necessary to be an effective coach for skiers ranging in ability from beginner to elite, and for skiers wishing to specialize, including those wishing to become instructors and coaches. You have to be able to synthesize knowledge from a wide variety of sources and apply it to your coaching. You need to be able to think creatively, developing new ideas and concepts and taking the sport and your skiers forward.

An extensive understanding of how to manage the learning environment and safety aspects of groups of different sizes, ages and fitness levels is needed. You need also to understand the issues of working long-term with individual skiers and groups, and the specific aspects of working with children.

You will be assessed by a Senior Tutor on delivering at least one each practical on-snow and roller ski coaching sessions, on topics given to you well in advance, allowing you time to prepare. These will, in principle, include the use of video, where you have to film one or more skiers carrying out a technique, and provide feedback to individuals and/or to the group. During the sessions, you have to display the following teaching and knowledge skills:

### *Movement analysis*

- identify the components of excellent skiing,
- understand detailed skiing movements involving posture, balance, and weight transfer,
- critically observe and analyse general movement patterns found among skiers from beginner to elite,
- recognise general movement patterns found among all skiers to elite level,
- identify desired outcomes of all types of skiing situations within the remit of the Level 4 award,
- use exercises and tasks to meet skiers' needs, the equipment being used, terrain options, etc.,
- discuss posture, appropriate movement and balance,
- identify effective movements for all individuals and/or groups of skiers,
- create an activity/task list appropriate to the needs of these skiers,
- coach an appropriate blend of these movements suited to the needs of intermediate and elite skiers,
- plan a series of sessions to develop your skiers in relation to short, medium and long-term goals.

### *Session delivery*

- teach skiers from beginner to elite and provide solid foundations for further learning,
- show ability to give appropriate feedback, encouragement and motivation, including the use of audio-visual equipment,
- demonstrate ability to develop a relationship of trust between coach and skiers, 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 individuals and/or a group based on individual/group energy levels, conditions, safety and lesson content,
- understand how to create an appropriate learning environment, and how to incorporate this knowledge into sessions maximising opportunities for safety, enjoyment and further learning,
- identify the components of good skiing up to and including elite level,
- understand the needs of individuals and/or specific groups of skiers,
- be self-critical, open to constructive feedback, and modify sessions based on skiers' needs,
- be able to self-assess the effectiveness of your session,
- demonstrate the ability to assess proficiency awards up to Level 6\*, where applicable.

## 7) Underpinning knowledge

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. Your knowledge will be assessed in part through the coaching sessions and in part through discussion with and questioning from your Senior Tutor throughout the course/assessment.

You have to be able to think creatively, responding to the needs of your skiers, modifying not only the session in hand but also future sessions you have planned and:

- understand how to select and assess suitable skiing venues for different levels of skiers up to elite,
- show awareness of different surfaces and gradients appropriate to safe skiing,
- demonstrate ability to perform venue risk assessment,
- identify equipment needs for different levels of skiers and common equipment safety issues,
- categorise the benefits of ski and roller ski type and design and advise skiers on how their equipment choices might influence their performance,
- show knowledge of full equipment maintenance,
- discuss clothing choice and related safety issues,
- demonstrate ability in and understanding of advanced base preparation, glide waxing, grip waxing and other grip systems,
- show ability to plan and present an audio-visual session up to elite level,
- show knowledge and understanding of the principals involved in training, fitness and warming up suitable for skiers up to advanced,
- demonstrate understanding of navigation, prevention and treatment of hypothermia and frost nip, survival and coping with weather and weather information.

## 8) Assessment

The assessment part of the course takes place after the training phase of each 5-day programme (one on snow and one on roller skis). The process will include the following:

- personal skiing assessment; demonstrations of all techniques at 6\* proficiency level (or exceptionally at 5\* proficiency as described in section 4),
- coaching assignment; you will be asked to coach one or more skiers of intermediate to elite level, including identifying what would be needed for them to obtain 6\* proficiency,
- written or other assessment of your understanding of SE coaching and proficiency schemes.

## 9) Licencing

Once the assessment is successfully completed, you need to provide a completed logbook (or equivalent), showing Level 3 coach experience, a current First Aid certificate, an Enhanced DBS check certificate and proof that you have attended a suitable Child Protection/Safeguarding course. You also need to submit a coaching portfolio to receive your licence.

Your licence provides you with third party liability insurance. To check the extent of your insurance cover, visit <https://www.snowsportengland.org.uk/membership-insurance/>.

## 10) Revalidation

All Level 4 coaches are required to undergo an approved SE refresher assessment at least once every three years (this may be completed on snow or roller skis). Assessment may be by attending a course or, for one revalidation in two, by attending a SE cross country coaching workshop. Revalidation is to keep you abreast of the latest developments in both skiing and coaching techniques.

A revalidation course will normally be one day (6 hours), but some elements may be done on a modular/remote basis (e.g. you may be invited to send videos of your skiing technique to the Senior Tutor).

Revalidation will comprise:

- provision by the Senior Tutor of any updates on coaching methods and skiing techniques, if relevant,
- your demonstration of appropriate ski techniques and up-to-date coaching methods.

When you are due for revalidation, the SE XC Coaching Panel will contact you to agree on the most appropriate way to conduct this.

## 11) Further information and contact

If you have any comments or questions related to these Course Notes, please address them to SE's XC Coaching Panel, [Nordic@snowsportengland.org.uk](mailto:Nordic@snowsportengland.org.uk).