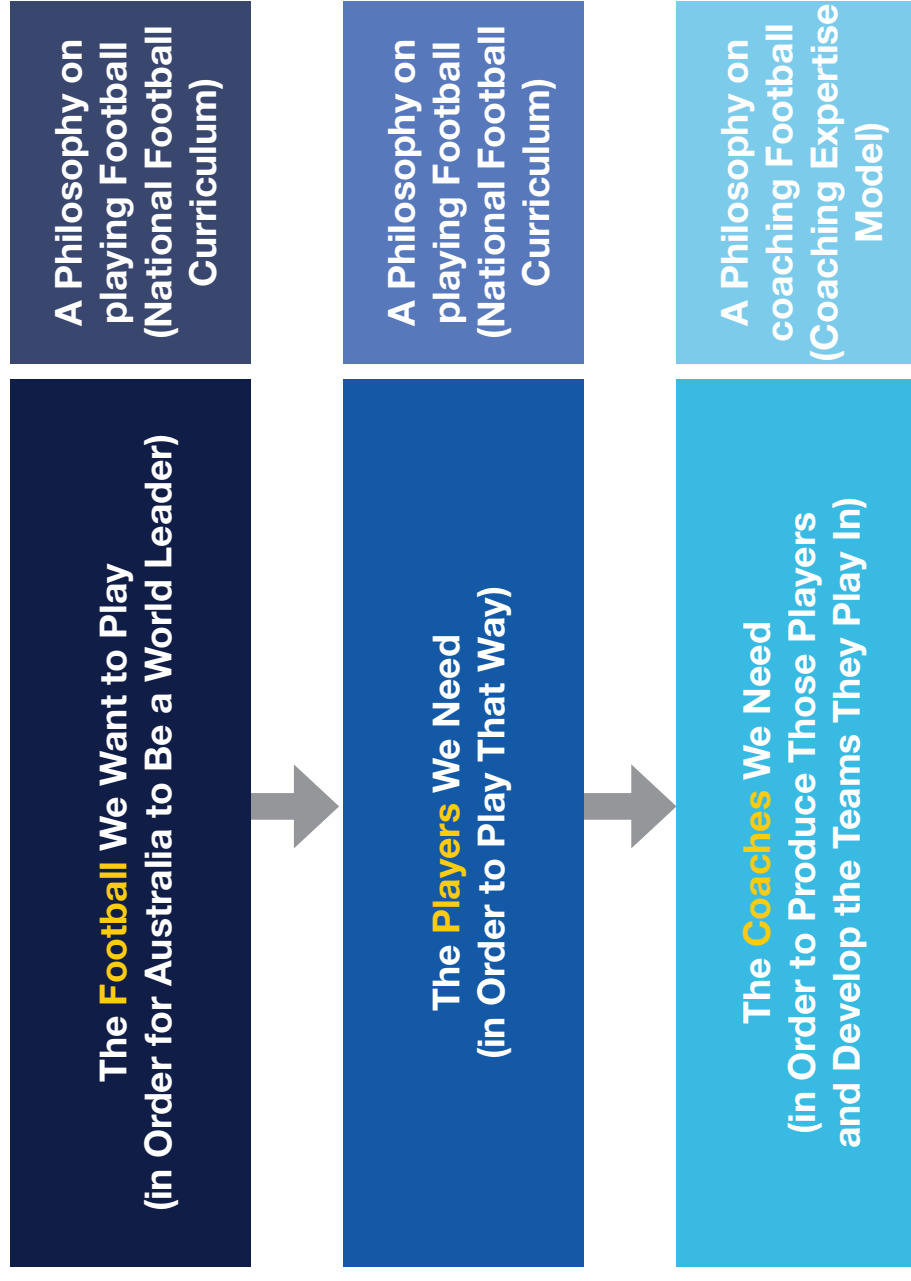


Coach Education

For too long, there was no clear direction for football in Australia and the result was an obvious lack of progress towards a defined objective. This applied equally to both **Youth Development** and **Coach Education**, which have now been identified as the two strategic spearheads to drive this country to its long-term goal.

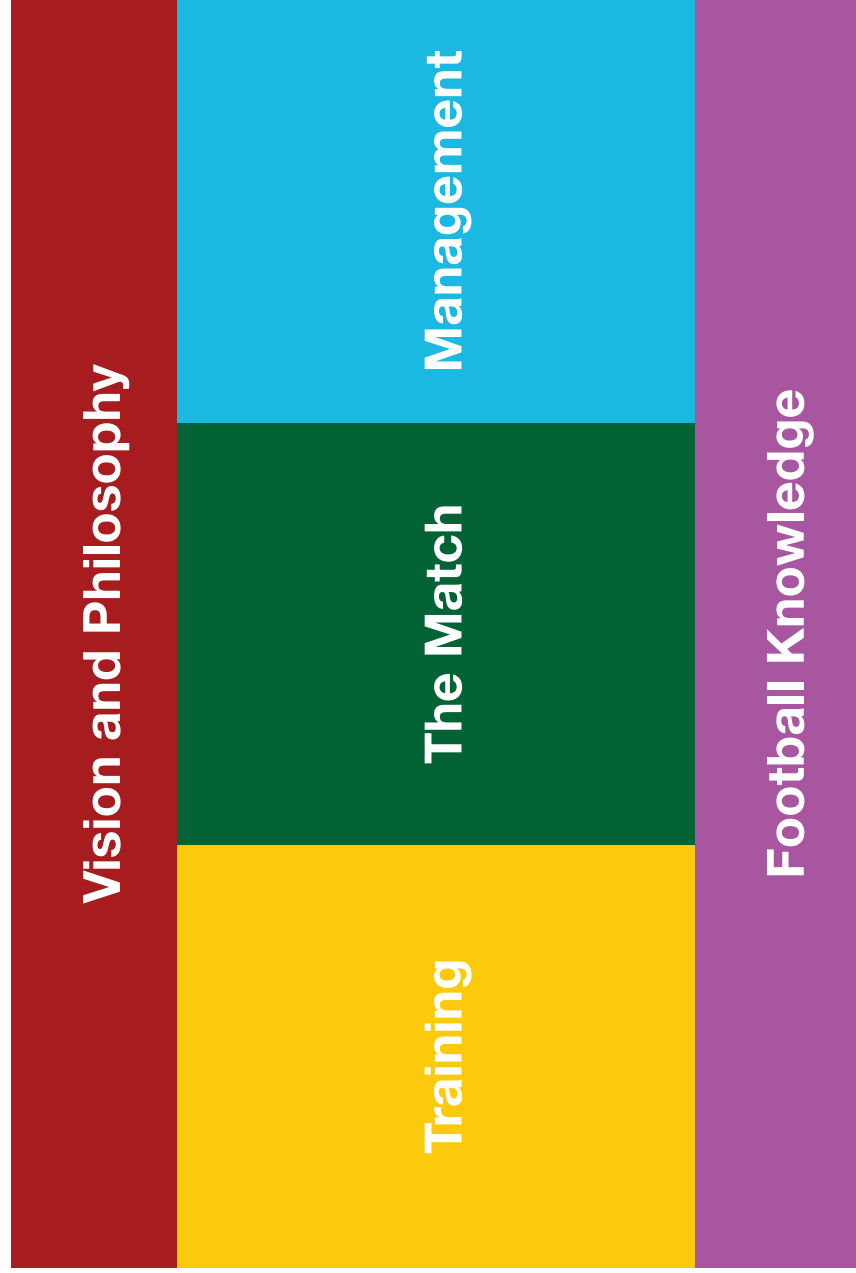
The National Football Curriculum has set the road map and one of the major benefits of the Curriculum and its philosophy is that we now have clarity on the way forward. We have realised that football isn't 'just football'; there are many styles and brands of football but we now know how **we** want to play. We can now talk about 'our football', which can be defined and visualized, and not settle for 'any football'. We are now able to say 'any old football isn't good enough'.

That provides a solid platform for **Youth Development**, because we can logically define the types of players required to play the way we want to play. It has also provided the platform for **Coach Education** because, since we now know the football we want to play and we know the players required, we can logically define the kind of coaches we need to produce these players and playing style. As a consequence, we can now define 'The Australian way of Coaching'. We are able to say 'any old coaching isn't good enough'; there are many methods of coaching football, but we now know how we need to coach.



The FFA Coaching Expertise Model

This has been developed, as is outlined in the diagram, to fill the final step in the logical process of developing football teams and football players. The National Football Curriculum answers the questions 'What is Football?' and 'What should Football in Australia look like? The Coaching Expertise Model answers the questions 'What is Football Coaching?' and 'What should Football Coaching in Australia look like?'



Coach Education

The Construction of the FFA Coaching Expertise Model:



In the middle are the three main areas of competency (the 'pillars') the coach must develop. 'The Match' is at the centre of the whole model in line with FFA's philosophical direction, as it is the focus of everything a coach does: it all begins and ends with the game of football. That also explains why the central pillar is green and looks like a football field. Match-day competencies are a vital part of the coach's 'toolbox'.

To the left is 'Training'. There are specific competencies required to be an effective coach on the training field, and they all relate to the whole context of the model. Put simply, the coach's work on the training field is only effective if it leads to improved performance on the field when The Match is played.

At the right-hand side of the model is 'Management'. Since the coach, regardless of the level at which he/she works, is constantly interacting with others (communicating, leading, etc), he/she needs to develop competencies which will improve the success of these processes.

Football Knowledge

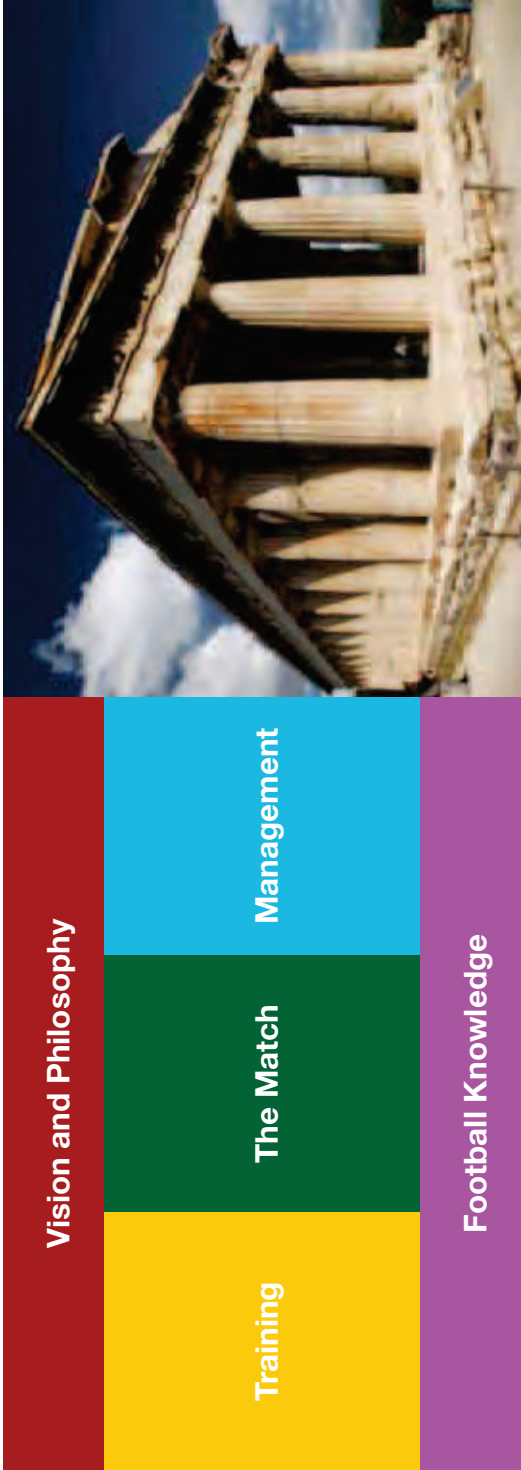
The bottom of the model contains the foundation supporting the three pillars:

A broad knowledge of the game of football is absolutely essential for the professional coach and, of course, desirable for those working at community level. Football Knowledge can be developed in many ways, including playing, coaching, analysing and discussing football. The process of gaining Football Knowledge is never-ending.

Vision and Philosophy

At the top is the overarching 'compass' that guides the coach. The almost infinite breadth of football knowledge available can lead to a lack of clear direction; there are so many different ways of playing football, such a huge variety of training exercises and so many examples of coaching methods. That is why 'Vision and Philosophy' overarches the whole model; the coach is aware of all the football that is 'out there', but based on their own experience and preference, must develop a strong personal Philosophy on Football and a clear Vision on how they want their team to play.

As a solid Vision and Philosophy is best developed after many years of experience, FFA's C and B Licence courses are conducted with FFA's Vision and Philosophy as the cornerstone.



We believe that the model is a strong one as it has sturdy pillars supported by a firm base, and is securely held together at the top.

These qualities are also intended to give the model a timeless structure that, we believe, might only ever need adjustments in the details that define the elements: we firmly believe that the elements themselves are constants.

‘It is a good model if it is elegant and there are few arbitrary or adjustable elements.’

Stephen Hawking

Coach Education

Overview of the five elements

FOOTBALL KNOWLEDGE	
COURSE-DRIVEN	1. WHAT IS FOOTBALL?
SELF-DRIVEN	1. FOOTBALL EXPERIENCE
	2. FOOTBALL STUDY

VISION AND PHILOSOPHY	
PHILOSOPHY	1. OPINIONS ON FOOTBALL
	2. BELIEFS ON FOOTBALL
VISION	1. TEAM MODEL (VERBAL)
	2. TEAM MODEL (VISUAL)
	3. TEAMBUILDING

THE MATCH	
FOCUS	1. POST-TRAINING
	2. PRE-MATCH
PERFORMANCE	1. FIRST HALF
	2. HALF-TIME
	3. SECOND HALF
REFOCUS	1. POST-MATCH
	2. PRE-TRAINING

RETURN TO NATIONAL CURRICULUM CONTENTS PAGE

TRAINING		
PLAN	1. DEFINE	
	2. DESIGN	
PREPARE	1. PEOPLE	
	2. EQUIPMENT	
	3. ENVIRONMENT	
CONDUCT	1. FOUNDATION	
	2. ANIMATION	
	3. CONCLUSION	
EVALUATE	1. OBJECTIVE ACHIEVED?	
	2. PROBLEM SOLVED?	
	3. NEXT STEPS	

MANAGEMENT		
MANAGE SELF	1. KNOW YOURSELF	
	2. DEVELOP YOURSELF	
MANAGE OTHERS	1. KNOW OTHERS	
	2. DEVELOP OTHERS	

Coach Education

As outlined on the previous pages, the Coaching Expertise Model provides a framework for visualising the role of the coach and therefore provides an answer to our first question:

‘What is Football Coaching?’

We now need to answer the second question:

‘What should Football Coaching in Australia look like?’

In other words, how is the National Football Curriculum implemented via the Coaching Expertise Model? How will we address the identified weaknesses of coaching in Australia (planning sessions properly, conducting sessions effectively)?

The Curriculum clearly states our philosophy: that we believe a ‘Holistic’ approach to coaching football is the best choice. Our belief is supported by analysis and scientific research.

Analysis of Football leads to the following conclusions:

- Football is a team game in which two teams try to win the game by scoring one more goal than the other
- Therefore, scoring and preventing goals are the main objectives for the team

- The team has a number of main Team Tasks in attacking, defending and transitioning to achieve these objectives

- The player has a range of general and position-specific tasks to perform in order to assist the team in the accomplishment of the team tasks

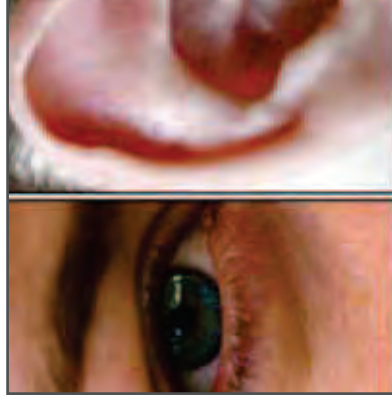
- The player executes a range of individual ‘Player Actions’ to successfully perform his/her tasks

Therefore, at its most basic level, football is all about ‘Player Actions’ – the things a player does. A player’s actions are easy to see (and hear, in the case of communication) and analyse, but we must also look at what makes a player do what he/she does. The answer lies in the brain.

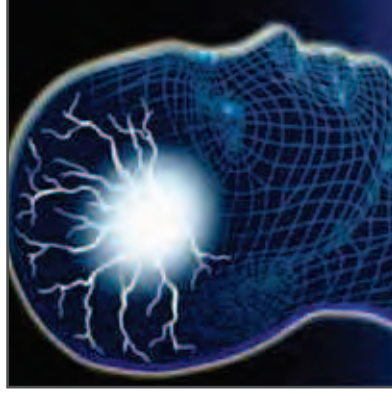
Perception – Decision – Execution

Based on the Objectives and Tasks of football outlined above, the player **Perceives** what is happening in the game, processes the information, **Decides** what should be done, and then **Executes** the action.

The three stages of Perception, Decision and Execution can be quite clearly distinguished, but are so closely inter-dependent that they cannot be separated.



Perception



Decision



Execution

The 'Holistic' v 'Isolated' debate

Just like there are many different philosophies on how to play football, there are also different philosophies on what is the most effective way to coach football. Many coaches, and indeed countries, still hold the belief that football must be broken down into its many small components and that these components should then be practised in isolation until the techniques are deeply ingrained: we call this the '**Isolated**' approach.

Supporters of the isolated approach believe that the best way of improving a player's ability in, for example, 'passing with the inside of the foot' is to take 'passing with the inside of the foot' out of its natural game context and practice it in pairs or in lines; their reasoning is that this isolated training provides the opportunity for 'repetition'. However, this type of practice removes the realism required for proper learning, as there are no longer 'game-specific resistances' such as opponents: it may look a bit like football, but it isn't really football. In terms of Perception-Decision-Execution, isolated training only touches on the Execution; by removing the Perception and Decision, it is Execution without relevance.

Research has shown that this type of 'drills-based' practice (i.e. repetition without decision-making) is not the most educationally effective way to teach football. Players may learn to 'perform' the techniques, but do not learn how to 'apply' them in the game.

This makes sense if you think about this a little longer:

A player who looks great performing a prescribed technique on the training pitch but does not recognise when to use it during the game has the same problem as the player who sees the right moment to use it but lacks the technique to execute it.

In order to reach a level of excellence in football, one needs thousands of hours of purposeful practice.

Purposeful practice for football is practice that develops the players' technical and perception/decision-making skills, as well as the required football fitness, in conjunction with each other instead of developing the individual components in isolation.

We call this the **Holistic approach** to coaching.

The isolated approach is successful, and perhaps necessary, for specific sports, such as golf and gymnastics. However football demands the holistic approach as by its very nature, it is an incredibly complex game, with unpredictable situations where the player is regularly required to rapidly select from a wide range of possible options and execute them under pressure.

Daniel Coyle, in his much-acclaimed book 'The Talent Code', explains the difference in the brain processes involved in, on the one hand, activities like golf and violin-playing, compared to activities like football.

'Skills like football are flexible-circuit skills, meaning they require us to grow vast ivy-vine circuits that we can flick through to navigate an ever-changing set of obstacles. Playing violin, golf, gymnastics and figure-skating, on the other hand, are consistent-circuit skills, depending utterly on a solid foundation of technique that enables us to reliably re-create the fundamentals of an ideal performance.'

Example - Two ways of teaching a child to solve a 60-piece jigsaw puzzle

Method One (Isolated Approach):

Lesson 1: Take one piece out of the box, close the lid, and then take that piece to the child. Ask her to keep looking at the piece until she is totally familiar with it. Then take that piece away and put it back in the box.

Lesson 2: Take another jigsaw piece out, close the lid, and take the second piece to the child. Again, ask her to keep looking at the piece until she is totally familiar with it.

Lessons 3-60: Repeat the process until she is familiar with all the separate jigsaw pieces.

Lesson 61: Finally, empty the whole box of pieces on the child's desk, and take the box away. Ask the child to arrange all the pieces into a rectangular picture.

Method Two (Holistic Approach):

Lesson 1: Put the jigsaw pieces together according to the picture on the front of the box. Take the complete jigsaw to the child's desk and ask her to familiarize herself with the whole picture.

Lesson 2: Take the complete jigsaw to the child's desk and ask her to familiarize herself with the whole picture, focusing mainly on one quarter of it.

Lesson 3: Take the complete jigsaw to the child's desk and ask her to familiarize herself with the whole picture, focusing mainly on a second quarter of it.

Lesson 4: Take the complete jigsaw to the child's desk and ask her to familiarize herself with the whole picture, focusing mainly on a third quarter of it.

Lesson 5: Take the complete jigsaw to the child's desk and ask her to familiarize herself with the whole picture, focusing mainly on the final quarter of it.

Lesson 6: Take the jigsaw apart, put the pieces on the child's desk and ask her to put it back together.

Which child do you think would finish the jigsaw quickest? It is feasible that the 6 lessons of the 'holistic' approach would be more successful than 60 lessons of 'isolated' because the child has always been presented with the 'big picture'. Therefore the child can see the links and make the connections between the pieces much more quickly and efficiently.

Here lies another problem with the 'isolated' approach: there are so many elements to the game of football, that the coach can end up with a list of, say, 60 separate elements to work on. If the coach then proceeds to address them all individually in an isolated way, the whole training program becomes totally removed from the real context of football. To compound the problem, by the time you work on the 60th 'jigsaw piece', the players have forgotten what the first piece looks like!

Repetition is of course important in developing players, but we must strive for:

repetition of football-specific situations with a focus on a particular aspect.

The players must always be playing football by **'perceiving-deciding-executing'**, and the relevance to the 'big picture' must always be apparent. The coach makes this happen by designing training exercises with game-specific resistances, by manipulating things like:

- The number of opponents
- The number of team-mates
- The size and position of the goals/targets
- The size of the space to work in
- The objective of the exercise

These are all usually absent in isolated training.

However, this is not to say that there is absolutely no place for isolated training. In specific circumstances, for a specific player, when the coach has exhausted all holistic means to improve the player, the only remaining solution is to work individually on 'technique'. Isolated exercises should be the last resort for certain players, when necessary, not the fundamental basis of training for all players.

It is FFA's belief that this kind of isolated, remedial work is best utilised as 'homework': in fact, all players should clock up a large number of hours mastering the ball at home, for example, using a wall to help develop passing and receiving technique, or trying out 1 v 1 moves in the back yard.

So, how is the National Football Curriculum's 'holistic' approach implemented via the Coaching Expertise Model? In short, we holistically teach coaches to holistically teach players.

In the same way that some countries prefer to break football up into little pieces and teach the isolated way, many countries choose to do the same with coach education. The Coach's role is broken up into a large number of distinct elements and these are covered in isolation. The same problem occurs: the true context is lost and the relevance is not always apparent. Teaching separate, isolated parts of the coach's role may look a bit like Coach Education, but it isn't really Coach Education.

Every element and module of FFA's Advanced Pathway courses is put into context, in relation to the Coaching Expertise Model. The Model itself is a holistic representation of the competencies and knowledge required to become an expert coach. We adopt the same approach to teaching coaches as we do to teaching players – they both need to see the whole picture, giving everything a clear context and relevance.

In terms of teaching players, there are two main ways in which the holistic approach is implemented:

1. Training Session Content: Clear guidelines are provided to assist coaches to design game-related and football-specific exercises which maximize learning and lead to the development of the kind of players we need
2. Coach Intervention: FFA has developed a clear process by which the coach can plan and conduct training sessions that use a task-based approach to give players real learning opportunities; fundamentally, we believe that if the players are challenged to solve problems at training, there is a greater likelihood that they will be able to solve problems in the game.

Our approach also aims to drastically reduce the amount of time players have traditionally spent standing still in training, while coaches give one long-winded speech after another. When conducting training sessions, it is important for the coach to remember 'it's all about the players'. The focus should be on helping the players to improve. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, the most common method employed by coaches in Australia is to constantly stop the training session to give long-winded speeches to the players. We have even observed this happening in the warm-up stage and in the 'training game' at the end of a training session.

Coach Education

All coaches are well-meaning, keen to help their players, but the fact is that this approach is misguided and simply doesn't work. Players learn by 'doing' and the coach must guide and facilitate this learning process. Coaches have to learn when to stop the players, how long for and how often. They must also learn what to say and how to say it in order to achieve the best possible outcome. Stopping the players too often, and talking for too long are not only non-educational, but they also frustrate the players and take away their enjoyment of training. Perhaps more worryingly, they take away valuable training time, compounding the problems caused by too much isolated training.

In terms of educating coaches, the Coaching Expertise Model provides the framework, which is clearly visualised and easily articulated

'The Coach uses the competencies of TRAINING, MATCH and MANAGEMENT to develop players and teams according to a clear VISION AND PHILOSOPHY, and the whole process is supported by a broad FOOTBALL KNOWLEDGE'

So, we have defined what coaches need to learn and how best to educate them.



Coaching Courses

One of the identified weaknesses of Coach Education in the past was that there was only one stream of courses available, whether you were coaching a social team of amateurs once a week or Head Coach of a State Premier League team. The courses were also far too short to deliver enough long-term learning or produce enough elite Australian coaches.

It was clear that two pathways were required, especially when one accepts that players can generally be divided into two streams: those that play for **Participation**, and those considered **Performance** players.

Therefore, the Two Pathway system was introduced in 2007:

1. The Community Pathway
2. The Advanced Pathway

Community Pathway courses are specifically designed for the coaches who look after **Participation** players: the courses are short, easily-accessible and low-cost. Because of the nature of the coach and the player in the Community context, these courses focus almost exclusively on the 'Training' pillar of the Coaching Expertise Model.

Advanced Pathway courses are specifically designed for the coaches who work with **Performance** players: the courses are longer and much more intensive. The course fees reflect the length and quality of the training program delivered. Because of the nature of the coach and the player in the Advanced context, these courses progressively develop all the elements of the Coaching Expertise Model. Graduates from the Advanced Pathway are the pool of coaches that are to be considered for full and part-time employment as football coaches.

A key culture shift has had to occur as the Advanced Pathway has been introduced: we have had to accept that, in the same way that it takes a long time and a lot of effort to become a professional football player, it also takes a long time and a lot of effort to become a professional football coach.

The Two Pathways and their relationship to the Building Blocks:

Community Courses	Building Block	Advanced Courses
SENIOR CERTIFICATE	PERFORMANCE PHASE	SENIOR C, B, A AND PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA
GAME TRAINING CERTIFICATE	GAME TRAINING PHASE	YOUTH C LICENCE
SKILL TRAINING CERTIFICATE	SKILL ACQUISITION PHASE	
GRASSROOTS CERTIFICATE	DISCOVERY PHASE	N/A

Note:

- The Youth C Licence was introduced in 2013
- The Community Pathway is being revised as above and will also be rolled out in early 2014.

Coach Education

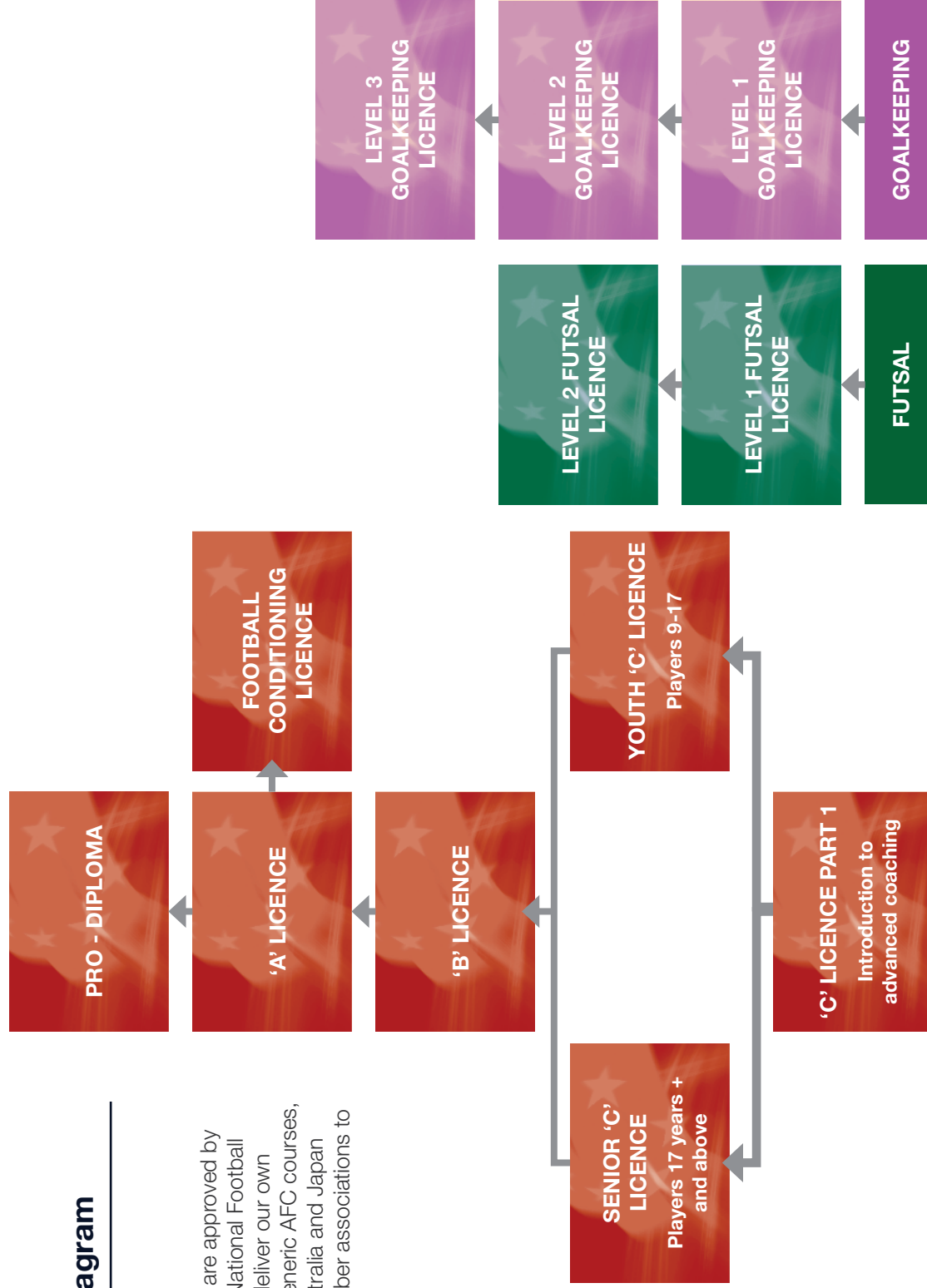
Community Pathway Diagram



Advanced Pathway Diagram

AFC and FFA

FFA's Advanced Pathway courses are approved by AFC. Since Australia has its own National Football Curriculum, we naturally need to deliver our own specific courses rather than the generic AFC courses, and AFC has recognised this (Australia and Japan are the only two of AFC's 46 member associations to have this right).



Coach Education

Minimum Coach Accreditation Requirements

FFA has established a set of guidelines outlining the preferred level of accreditation required to hold certain coaching positions. This is necessary to ensure quality control and to reinforce the key messages that must continue to be delivered if we are to achieve our long-term goals.

The A-League, W-League, National Teams and key coaching positions in the state federations have been our major concern to date.

Team / Program	Position	Minimum Accreditation
SOCCEROOS	Head Coach	Professional Diploma
	Assistant Coach	Professional Diploma
	GK Coach	Level 2 GK Licence (Level 3 by January 1, 2015)
OLYROOS U23	Head Coach	Professional Diploma
	Assistant Coach	A Licence
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence (Level 2 by January 1, 2015)
YOUNG SOCCEROOS U20	Head Coach	Professional Diploma
	Assistant Coach	A Licence
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence (Level 2 by January 1, 2015)
JOEYS U17	Head Coach	Professional Diploma
	Assistant Coach	A Licence
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence (Level 2 by January 1, 2015)
MATILDAS	Head Coach	Professional Diploma
	Assistant Coach	A Licence
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence (Level 2 by January 1, 2015)

Team / Program	Position	Minimum Accreditation
YOUNG MATILDAS	Head Coach	A Licence
	Assistant Coach	Male coaches: A Licence. Female coaches: B Licence
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence (Level 2 by January 1, 2015)
WOMEN'S U17	Head Coach	A Licence
	Assistant Coach	Male coaches: B Licence. Female coaches: C Licence
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence (Level 2 by January 1, 2015)
A-LEAGUE	Head Coach	A Licence (Professional Diploma by start of 2015/16 season)
	Assistant Coach	A Licence
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence (Level 2 by start of 2014/15 season; Level 3 by start of 2015/16 season)
	Conditioning Coach	FFA Football Conditioning Licence by start of 2015/16 season
W-LEAGUE	Head Coach	Male coaches: A Licence. Female coaches: B Licence (A Licence by start of 2015/16 season)
	Assistant Coach	Male coaches: B Licence. Female coaches: C Licence (B Licence by start of 2015/16 season)
	GK Coach	Must hold at least a Community GK accreditation (Level 1 GK Licence by 2014/15 season)
NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE	Head Coach	A Licence
	Assistant Coach	B Licence
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence (Level 2 by start of 2014/15 season)
AIS PROGRAM	Head Coach	Professional Diploma
	Assistant Coach	B Licence (A Licence by January 1, 2014)
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence (Level 2 by January 1, 2015; Level 3 by January 1, 2017)

Coach Education

Team / Program	Position	Minimum Accreditation
NTC PROGRAM (MALE)	Head Coach	A Licence
	Assistant Coach	B Licence
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence by January 1, 2015 (Level 2 by January 1, 2017)
NTC PROGRAM (FEMALE)	Head Coach	Male coaches: A Licence. Female coaches: B Licence (A Licence by January 1, 2016)
	Assistant Coach	Male coaches: B Licence. Female coaches: C Licence (B Licence by January 1, 2016)
	GK Coach	Level 1 GK Licence by January 1, 2015 (Level 2 by January 1, 2017)
STATE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR		A Licence
STATE TEAMS (U13/14 NATIONALS)		B Licence or Youth C Licence (Youth C Licence only from January 1, 2015)
AFC FUTSAL COMPETITIONS	Head Coach	Level 1 Futsal Licence
	Assistant Coach	Level 1 Futsal Licence

(NB: FFA Accreditation is preferred to equivalent accreditation from other National associations for all the above positions)

Overseas Coaches (those who do not hold Australian citizenship or residency)

ALL NATIONAL TEAM HEAD COACH POSITIONS (MALE AND FEMALE TEAMS)	Professional Diploma
ALL NATIONAL TEAM ASSISTANT COACH POSITIONS (MALE TEAMS)	Professional Diploma
A-LEAGUE HEAD COACH AND ASSISTANT COACHES	Professional Diploma
W-LEAGUE HEAD COACH	Professional Diploma (male), A Licence (female)
ALL AIS POSITIONS	Professional Diploma
NYL HEAD COACH	Professional Diploma
NTC HEAD COACH (MALE AND FEMALE PROGRAMS)	Professional Diploma (male), A Licence (female)
GOALKEEPER COACH POSITIONS	Equivalent accreditation to that outlined above for Australian coaches
CONDITIONING COACH POSITIONS	CV and proof of accreditation must be submitted to FFA for prior approval
ALL OTHER POSITIONS	A Licence

Coach Education

NPL Coach Accreditation

All NPL clubs are expected to work towards the following guidelines to further spread the effect of the National Football Curriculum message and bring quality control several steps further.

All references are to Advanced Pathway Accreditation unless prefixed with 'Community'. 'New' Licences are those commenced in 2010 or later.

Requirement	Mandatory / Flexible	2013	2014	2015	2016
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR	Mandatory	B Licence AND must have attended a State Coaching Conference during the previous 12 months.		'New' A Licence (or an 'old' A Licence and an FFA Curriculum Refresher Certificate) AND must have attended a Youth C Licence	
FIRST TEAM HEAD COACH	Mandatory	B Licence AND must have attended a State Coaching Conference during the previous 12 months.		'New' A Licence (or an 'old' A-Licence and an FFA Curriculum Refresher Certificate)	
FIRST TEAM ASSISTANT COACH	Mandatory	C Licence AND must have attended a State Coaching Conference during the previous 12 months.		'New' B Licence (or an 'old' B Licence and an FFA Curriculum Refresher Certificate)	
U20, U19 COACH	Mandatory	C Licence		'New' B Licence (or an 'old' B Licence and an FFA Curriculum Refresher Certificate)	
U20, U19 ASSISTANT COACH	Mandatory	Community Senior Certificate		Senior C Licence (or an 'old' C Licence and an FFA Curriculum Refresher Certificate)	
U18, U17 COACH	Mandatory	Community Senior Certificate		Senior C Licence (or an 'old' C Licence and an FFA Curriculum Refresher Certificate)	
U18, U17 ASSISTANT COACH	Flexible	Community Youth Certificate or Community Senior Certificate		Community Senior Certificate	
U16, U15, U14 COACH	Mandatory	Community Youth Certificate		Youth C Licence	

NPL Coach Accreditation

Requirement	Mandatory / Flexible	2013	2014	2015	2016
U16, U15, U14 ASSISTANT COACH	Flexible	Community Youth Certificate		Community Game Training Certificate	
U13, U12 COACH	Mandatory	Community Youth Certificate		Youth C Licence	
U13, U12 ASSISTANT COACH	Flexible	Community Youth Certificate		Community Skill Training Certificate	
FIRST TEAM GK COACH	Mandatory	Community Goalkeeper Certificate	Community Goalkeeper Licence	Community Goalkeeper Diploma	Level 1 Goalkeeping Licence
ALL OTHER GK COACHES	Flexible	Community Goalkeeper Certificate		Community Goalkeeper License	Community Goalkeeper Diploma