

The Coaching Association of Canada has compiled a series of Frequently Asked Questions and their responses. The FAQs have been divided into a number of categories including: evaluation, minimum standards, delivery, and resource development.

Category: Evaluation

How many elements or criteria are required for each stream?

There will be generic criteria for some of the outcomes, however beyond that the criteria will be based upon what was identified in the job task analysis as being important for coaches to be able to do to meet the needs of the participants they work with.

I hear I don't have to go through the training anymore to become certified, I just have to be successfully evaluated. Is that correct?

As a fundamental principle in a competency/outcomes-based program coaches have the opportunity to demonstrate prior knowledge and experience to enable them to access the evaluation component without having completed the NCCP training. If an individual can demonstrate that they possess the competencies required, then it is possible to be successful in the evaluation process without participating in the training. Typically, that occurs when a coach has extensive prior knowledge and experience. For example, a coach with 10 years experience in one sport may be able to coach a new sport in which he or she has previously played by transferring many of the skills learned. Another example is if an individual was a high performance athlete who was a veteran leader and informally acted as an assistant coach, they may feel as though they have the ability to go directly to the evaluation process for some of the outcomes. Coaches will be trained during the NCCP training to be able to meet the evaluation standards and requirements. Coaches who have a limited background in the sport or who have not been involved in the sport for a long period of time are strongly recommended to participate in the training options available. While it is true that, theoretically, the training can be skipped, a number of sports will have the prerogative to institute a screening/application process for individuals with prior learning and experience OR require all coaches to participate in the training process to ensure that the people who are accessing that option truly do have the knowledge and experience required to successfully complete the evaluation requirements. The feedback from coaches who have gone through the evaluation process in the pilot format is that this process was the single most valuable and influential element in their development as a coach that they have experienced up until that point because someone actually measured them against a standard and gave them very specific and direct feedback.

What does an evaluation look like and how much time will be devoted to it?

There are a variety of options for evaluation. The key will be to determine which options work best for which context, outcome, criteria, etc. Potential evaluation options currently include one-on-one interviews, on-site observations, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, videotape submissions, written submissions, and presentations. The evaluation should be designed as an opportunity to identify what coaches are currently able to do given the standards and what, if anything, requires additional work before they are able to meet the standards. Once coaches are confident that they have improved upon remaining outcomes/criteria they could be re-evaluated just for those outcomes/criteria.

What does an evaluation look like and how much time will be devoted to it?

The time devoted to evaluation will be dependant upon the type of evaluation options that are decided upon by each sport. It is critical to shift some of the current thinking and views of evaluation away from being the mechanism used as a last resort to “get rid of a coach” and towards the role of evaluation in assisting coaches in their development and progress.

What are the criteria?

Generic criteria for each generic outcome have been developed for each context and are published on the CAC Web site. Each sport will add sport-specific outcomes where necessary and for all outcomes will provide sport-specific criteria based upon the job task analysis done for each context as part of the PDM process.

How often will evaluation take place?

Evaluation will take place when coaches are confident that they are able to demonstrate the required outcomes/criteria for the context. They will participate in evaluations until they are able to demonstrate all required outcomes/criteria and are officially entered into the NCCP Database as “certified”. Coaches that allow their certification to lapse beyond the 5-year standard due to inactivity or a lack of ongoing professional development will likely be required to access a re-evaluation situation.

Who evaluates me?

Evaluators are recruited and trained for a particular context by national sport organizations (NSOs) since evaluation occurs within the sport-specific environment. The exception to this is the online Make Ethical Decisions evaluation which is common to all sports and is completed by individuals electronically.

Where will I be evaluated?

When NSOs develop their evaluation process, they focus on ensuring feasibility, affordability, and accessibility while still recognizing the need for a valid evaluation process. Where the evaluation takes place depends on the specific outcome that is being evaluated, Coaches will complete some of the evaluation activities or requirements independently and submit them for evaluation. An example of this is the online Make Ethical Decisions evaluation. Other evaluation activities are more complex. For example, in the Competition – Introduction context some outcomes must be evaluated by observation.

In this case there are two evaluation methods available:

- An Evaluator attends a workout, lesson, or practice the coach is leading and evaluates him or her in their normal coaching environment.
- The coach may submit a videotape of the activity that demonstrates his or her competence in a particular outcome. The videotape is then evaluated off-site.

In the case of some of the Instruction contexts, for example, Instruction – Beginners, the coaches have the opportunity to be evaluated for certain criteria onsite immediately following their training.

When do I have to complete the evaluation?

For coaches who do not have prior knowledge or experience, the evaluation process can begin anytime after the coach has initiated training. In most cases, once a coach has been trained in a particular outcome they can initiate the evaluation of those pieces. For example, once a coach goes through the Make Ethical Decisions module he or she can complete the online evaluation without having completed the other pieces of the training.

Why do I have to be evaluated?

You don't have to be evaluated unless you want to become certified. The only external motivation that could influence a coach's need to be evaluated would be if he or she is required to have certification because of legislative requirements of their specific sport. The internal motivation for completing the evaluation for certification components will be significant in that "Certified" will formally signify that a coach has demonstrated his or her relevant knowledge, skills, and attitudes and has been identified as a "competent" coach in a particular context. Coaches generally view certification as favourable given that to become certified they have had to have their skills validated by demonstrating their abilities and competencies. Coaches who complete all of the training requirements for a particular context and are not evaluated or do not complete all of the evaluation requirements will have a "Trained" status.

What do I have to do to be evaluated?

The evaluation process varies from context to context and there are different minimum standards for each context. One context that currently has a well defined evaluation is the Competition – Introduction context. There can be some variation depending on the sport-specific requirements but the core requirements are for the coach to complete: the online evaluation for Make Ethical Decisions; a practice plan; an emergency action plan; and, depending on the sport-specific requirements that are core or essential, he or she would be required to have an onsite or videotaped evaluation of their coaching during a workout, practice, or lesson. Many NSOs are in the process of developing their sport-specific evaluation requirements. Coaches will access the evaluation requirements of their specific context from their NSOs, as their sport completes the development and implementation of each context.

I hear my sport does not plan on having an evaluation component, is that possible?

It is possible. In the Community Sport stream evaluation is not required as a national minimum standard. Some sports will conduct evaluations in the Community Sport stream but it is not mandatory from a national perspective. Mass participation sports face a unique challenge with the volume of coaches they train every year who do not coach for long periods of time. The potential workload of evaluating such a large number of coaches every year would be impractical. Evaluation is a required component of programs for the Competition stream and the Instruction stream.

If I am certified in the old NCCP (Levels 1–5) will I automatically be granted certification in the new NCCP?

There is a clear effort from the NCCP to recognize the prior certification of coaches. A process is currently underway to develop some national guidelines around the transferability of certification from the old NCCP to the new NCCP. There will be a core of national standards which the NSOs will use as a starting point in developing their own policies regarding transferability. CAC hopes to have had the various proposals and options debated by the NCCP partnership with a decision made by March 2007. CAC is committed to making quality decisions and therefore will not rush the decision-making process regarding transferability. It is anticipated that for many years to come certification from the old NCCP will still be recognized by sports and by many organizations.

How does a sport ensure objectivity in evaluation?

The best way to ensure objectivity in evaluation is for the sport to have extremely clear, concise, and observable criteria for each outcome. Additionally, the training of Evaluators will be crucial to ensure that their role is clearly understood, to increase consistency among Evaluators, and to decrease opportunities for abuse of power.

I want to be evaluated, how do I start?

A coach will register for the evaluation component through their provincial or territorial sport organization (P/TSO) or their NSO; the formal process will be determined by the sport and MUST be published on their website. Each sport will have a designated process for evaluation. Some sports will have an application process which can be accessed online or they could manage it in a way that is very similar to how coaches now access the training.

I live in a remote region and speak the minority official language here. Will it be harder to be evaluated?

The availability and accessibility to evaluations are determined by the NSOs. In order to ensure feasibility, affordability, and accessibility, the national minimum standards for evaluation allow for more than one method of evaluation for each outcome. This flexibility should make it less complicated for NSOs to evaluate coaches in any geographic region and ensure availability in either of the official languages regardless of the location of residence.

How much time do I have to complete the evaluation?

You can take as much time as you need to take. Some sports may institute a timeframe policy so that they don't have someone complete one element of the evaluation and then not hear from them for three years. This is particularly important if there has been a big change in content or significant rule changes that impact the coach training and therefore coach certification qualifications. Coaches should note that the evaluation standards that a coach will be held to are the ones that are applicable at the time they are going through the evaluation not the standards that were in place when they went through their training. The onus is on the coach to upgrade and update himself or herself and prepare appropriately for the standards of evaluation at that time should there be significant delays between their training and evaluation.

How much time will I have to devote to completing my evaluation?

The time devoted to evaluation will be dependent upon the type of evaluation options that are decided upon by each sport. The evaluation of each outcome will use a different method. The time required to complete an evaluation component will vary depending on the complexity of the outcome and criteria.

When will the online evaluation for the Make Ethical Decisions module be available?

The final pilot phase was completed in October 2005. The final modifications are expected to be implemented in November 2005 with a public launch anticipated before the end of 2005. This evaluation will be FREE to all coaches with an NCCP number for at least the first six months. After that period there will be a small fee to complete the online evaluation.

What does the evaluation cost?

The fee for an evaluation within a sport-specific environment is set by the NSOs. The proposed cost is one of the elements considered during every program's approval process. In general, sports know or research what is reasonable for their coaches. Fees are based on what the Evaluators have to be paid to complete the evaluation and the extent to which there are additional charges whether they are travel-related or administration costs. The sports know their own culture and tend to set appropriate fees that encourage participation.

Are there different requirements for coaches of athletes with a disability?

Fundamentally no, the requirements are not different, however coaches of athletes with a disability will be encouraged or expected to demonstrate/prove their competence in the context of working with athletes with a disability during the evaluation process. The new NCCP is based upon developing coaches that are capable of meeting the needs of their athletes. Sports will address any specific requirements for coaches of athletes with a disability within the NCCP evaluation standards. In addition, CAC has developed a resource for coaches of athletes with a disability to assist them to better understand the specific needs of athletes with a disability and to identify and develop strategies to effectively support these athletes in a way that promotes integration. The manual Coaching Athletes with a Disability can be downloaded from the NCCP Database section.

Do I need to be reevaluated after a certain time period or is the certification forever?

Certification is valid for up to five years. Some sports have a shorter expiry date for certification. Whatever the timeframe allowed, coaches must participate in the professional development activities identified by their NSO and aligned with NCCP minimum standards to maintain their certification. If coaches keep their professional development up to date, reevaluation is not required. If a coach allows his or her certification to lapse, there will be additional requirements – these are yet to be determined.

How does a sport track learning/training/coaching experiences and certification?

The NCCP Database is currently programmed to track all learning and evaluation experiences and identifies the “In training”, “Trained”, and “Certified” status indicators. The option of tracking professional development experiences is also available on the Database, but national standards and protocols must be finalized before such tracking will begin. In other countries and other professions there are examples that require the individual to take responsibility for some degree of tracking and these options are also being investigated.

What are the requirements for professional development and who decides that?

The national standards for professional development are currently in development. Your sport will identify additional activities that qualify as ongoing professional development for each context.

If I don't agree with my evaluation what do I do?

The evaluation process is intended to inform and educate coaches on how their knowledge, skills, and abilities measure against the minimum standards so that coaches who aren't yet able to meet the standards are provided with strategies for developing and improving the skills required to meet the standard. NSOs are required, as part of the development of a context, to identify a formal appeals process for coaches who are not satisfied with the result of the evaluation for certification attempt.

How can I show that I'm better than the minimum standards in my coaching environment?

In each context, coaches have the opportunity for horizontal development. By demonstrating context-specific competency that surpasses the scope and depth of the certification standard, the coach will be able to achieve recognition as an Advanced Coach or Master Coach in their given context.

How will prior education and learning be recognized?

Individuals with prior education, learning, or experience will be provided with opportunities to directly access the evaluation for certification process. Training equivalencies are not currently available, but are under discussion.

Once I'm certified, how long does it take before I receive my card?

Once a coach has completed a training or evaluation event, the Learning Facilitator or Evaluator must complete the necessary paperwork and submit it to the agency or association in charge of managing the workshop/event. That agency must then approve the paperwork and submit it to the NCCP Database c/o of the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC). When the paperwork is received at CAC it is generally processed within a four-week timeframe. At peak times of the year, it is possible for the processing to take up to eight weeks.

What are the NCCP Minimum Standards for evaluation requirements in Community Sport?

Evaluation is recommended but the final decision is at the discretion of the NSO.

Certification requires:

- Production of an Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
- Participation in the Make Ethical Decisions module

The evaluation of Community Sport – Initiation coaches will include the completion of an EAP and at least one assignment designed to evaluate the coach's ability to modify a practice/lesson based upon the needs of specific participants. Certification in the Community Sport stream requires the evaluation of the Make Ethical Decisions outcome that includes the evaluation of all required criteria using the CAC online evaluation software or a CAC-developed alternative method of evaluation.

What are the NCCP Minimum Standards for evaluation requirements in Competition – Introduction?

Evaluation for certification is required. Four of seven generic outcomes must be evaluated for certification. There are two compulsory outcomes:

- Make Ethical Decisions
- Provide Support to Athletes in Training

Two other generic NCCP outcomes are selected at the discretion of the NSO.

Certification in the Competition – Introduction context requires the evaluation of:

- Make Ethical Decisions outcome that includes the evaluation of all required criteria using the CAC online evaluation software.
- Support to Athletes in Training that includes the evaluation of required criteria during an onsite or video observation of a practice/session by an external Evaluator utilizing context-specific athletes/participants.

A minimum of two of the following:

- Plan a Practice outcome that includes the evaluation of required criteria found in one practice plan and an EAP completed by the coach.
- Analyze Performance outcome that includes the evaluation of required criteria while utilizing context-specific athletes/participants during an onsite or video observation of a practice/session OR an alternative as approved by CAC. The NSO must identify the pool of athlete skills/tactics that align with their Long-term Athlete Development Model (LTADM). This pool will form the basis of the requirements for certification, and the NSO must select a subset of these skills/tactics that are identified as critical.

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Design a Sport Program including the evaluation of required criteria in a Season Plan completed by the coach OR an alternative as approved by CAC.

Support the Competitive Experience outcome that includes the evaluation of required criteria during an onsite or video observation of a competitive experience.

Manage a Program outcome that includes the evaluation of no less than two athlete/team progress reports (of the same athlete or team) completed by the coach OR an evaluation of essential criteria utilizing a 360° evaluation process involving key stakeholders such as club president, head coach, parents, peer coaches, and athletes OR an alternative as approved by CAC.

What are the NCCP Minimum Standards for evaluation requirements in Competition – Development?

Evaluation for certification is required. Certification requires evaluation of all seven generic outcomes. Certification in the Competition – Development context requires the evaluation of the Make Ethical Decisions outcome that includes the evaluation of all required criteria using the CAC online evaluation software.

What are the NCCP Minimum Standards for evaluation requirements in Competition – High Performance?

Evaluation for certification is required. Certification requires evaluation of all seven generic outcomes. Certification in the Competition – High Performance context requires the evaluation of the Make Ethical Decisions outcome that includes the evaluation of all required criteria using the CAC online evaluation software.

What are the NCCP Minimum Standards for evaluation requirements in Instruction – Beginners?

Evaluation for certification is required. Certification requires evaluation of the following three outcomes:

- Make Ethical Decisions
- Analyze Performance
- Provide Support to Athletes in Training

Certification in the Instruction – Beginners context requires the evaluation of:

- Make Ethical Decisions outcome that includes the evaluation of all required criteria using the CAC online evaluation software.
- Analyze Performance outcome that includes the evaluation of required criteria during an observation that can be integrated into the training workshop or conducted external to the training.
- Provide Support to Athletes in Training outcome that includes the evaluation of an EAP and an assignment as approved by CAC.

The evaluations of the required outcomes/criteria must be summarized in a formal debrief session conducted by the lead Evaluator of the coach following the coach's completion and submission of all requirements.

What are the NCCP Minimum Standards for evaluation requirements in Instruction – Intermediate performers?

Evaluation for certification is required. Certification requires evaluation in the following four generic outcomes:

- Analyze Performance
- Make Ethical Decisions
- Provide Support to Athletes in Training
- Plan a Practice/Lesson Certification in the Instruction – Intermediate performers context requires the evaluation of the Make Ethical Decisions outcome that includes the evaluation of all required criteria using the CAC online evaluation software.

What are the NCCP Minimum Standards for evaluation requirements in Instruction – Advanced performers?

Evaluation for certification is required. Certification requires evaluation in the following five generic outcomes:

- Analyze Performance
- Make Ethical Decisions
- Provide Support to Athletes in Training
- Manage a Program
- Plan a Practice/Lesson Certification in the Instruction – Advanced performers context requires the evaluation of the Make Ethical Decisions outcome that includes the evaluation of all required criteria using the CAC online evaluation software.

For more FAQs go to the Resources section of the CAC website (www.coach.ca), under NCCP for Coaches, NCCP for Partners or NCCP for LFs and Evaluators.