



**BRITISH
ATHLETICS**

Coach in Running Fitness ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

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Introduction and Competencies

This document has been produced to provide guidance on how to complete the assessment element of the Coach in Running Fitness qualification. It is intended to be used firstly, as a tool to provide further detail of the assessment requirements and to support you as you complete the written and practical elements of the qualification. The assessment process comprise of 2 elements:

1. Technical Knowledge Test
2. Observed Practical Assessment

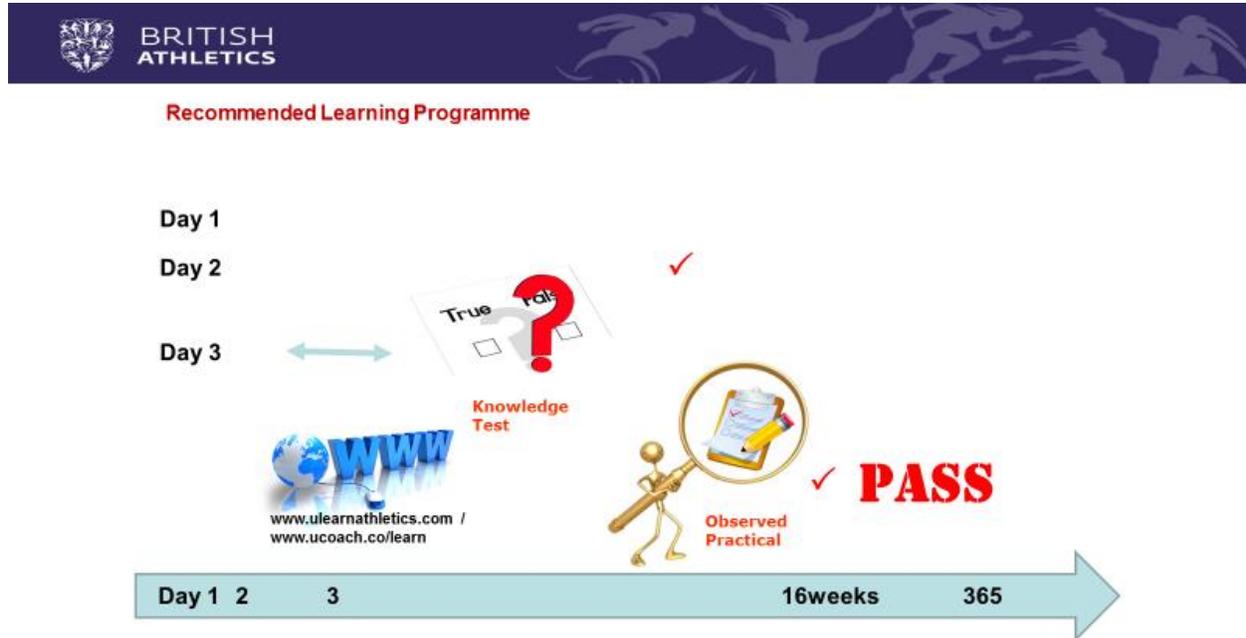
The competencies of being a qualified Coach are shown overleaf. You will need to demonstrate that each of these competencies is met. Similar to a driving test, until you meet all of these competencies, then a “provisional license” is retained – this would be your Leadership in Running Fitness or Coaching Assistant license. Therefore, there may be some “retests” needed on your journey to becoming a qualified and licensed Coach in Running Fitness.

This process is very robust – it is the only time British Athletics will have the opportunity of ensuring that you meet the standards required of being a licensed Coach. The assessment criteria reflects a baseline - minimum standard of competence to be awarded the qualification.

Competencies to be met	Where assessed	Content
Deliver organised, safe and outcome focused sessions in a variety of changing environments that enable athletes to experience a broad range of athletics activities	Session Plan and Mesocycle/Development Period Delivery Observed Practical	Late specialisation Appropriate activities across all movement areas included (Run, Jump AND Throw) Health & Safety
Accurately observe and identify technical aspects of running, jumping and throwing	Knowledge Test Observed Practical Assessment	Technical models of starting, running, jumping and throwing delivered on course Is able to identify matches and mismatches when asked by an assessor Is able to differentiate between correct and incorrect technical statements
Plan, deliver, evaluate and document a series of outcome focused sessions that improve the participant's physical and technical performance in an athlete-centred way for a period of time	Session Plan and Mesocycle/Development Period Observed Practical Assessment	Accurately profile an athlete and group Setting a goal – Session Plan and Mesocycle/Development Period planning – relate to process of training and learning of basic movements and physical preparation Shows a series of linked sessions for constructive development of the athletes
Identify and be capable of displaying all coaching process skills and selecting an appropriate style of coaching	Observed Practical Assessment	How -2: a) Organisation b) Safety c) Instruction and Explanation d) Demonstration e) Observation and Analysis f) Decision Making and Interventions g) Feedback Use a variety of coaching process skills, selecting the most appropriate to the athletes' stage of development and the activity being coached Use appropriate intervention strategies to help athlete's skill progressions Can identify what skills to develop
Accurately identify and evaluate own coaching performance	Observed Practical Assessment Coach Action Plan Review	Accurately differentiates between own and athlete performance Honestly reflects on own performance

Programme Information

The proposed delivery of the British Athletics CiRF programme is as follows:



It is important to note that all aspects of the qualification must be completed within 12 months of attending Day 1

The Knowledge Test should be undertaken prior to attending the Observed Practical Assessment Day, which is usually 16 weeks after the first day.

All 4 Days of the qualification have been set and you should attend all four associated with the course you are booked onto. If you have any issues with attending the four days, please contact the Education Co-ordinator, as soon as possible.

Technical Knowledge Test

This is a multiple choice questionnaire comprised of 11 sections with 4 questions per section, a total of 44 questions. There are questions across all technical matters that have been covered on course from both Leadership in Running Fitness and Coach in Running Fitness.

The 11 sections are:

1. Fundamental Movement Skills
2. Maximum Velocity Running
3. Running for Endurance
4. Uphill and Downhill Running
5. Energy Systems

6. Running Off Road

7. Nutrition
8. Injury Prevention
9. Components of Fitness

10. Skill and Coaching Styles
11. Health and Safety

Example Questions:

Which one of these statements is true?

- a) a simple skill is one that everyone does differently*
- b) a simple skill is one that the athlete finds difficult*
- c) a simple skill is one that the athlete finds easy to do having had a couple of attempts*
- d) a simple skill is one that the coach states is easy or simple*

During a standing start – when on your marks a runner should have:

- a) both arms alongside the body*
- b) both arms in front of leading leg*
- c) leading leg with opposite arm*
- d) leading leg with same arm and leg*

To pass this technical knowledge test, you will need to attain a mark of 75%. You will also need to get at least one question correct in each section.

The test can be taken on-line after day 3 of the course and should be completed prior to your observed practical assessment day.

Observed Practical Assessment

The reasons for the practical assessment are:

- For you to show British Athletics that you can coach to the standards set
- For you to apply your technical and coaching knowledge in a practical context
- To help you become a better Coach in Running Fitness

In preparation for your practical, you should develop a Mesocycle/Development Period which links to a 1 hour training session for 4-6 athletes in the Foundation or Event Group Development stage of development. Your plan should include a warm up and cool down.

The Plan contents should include:

- a) Warm Up (5-10mins)
- b) Technical1 (Drills or technical work—obstacles, uphill, downhill running) (20mins)
- c) Technical2(e.g. Run or physical preparation) (20mins)
- d) Cool Down (5mins)

This session plan **MUST**:

- Be documented on a Session Plan
- Have an Athlete Fitness and Technical Goal (What 2)
- Have a Personal Coaching Goal (How 2)
- An Energy System emphasis
- Include Coaching points relating to the technical area of development
- Include Safety, Organisational and Equipment considerations

Your fellow coaches will be acting as the athletes for the assessment. It is highly likely that there will be a broad range of levels and abilities. You may need to adapt your plans to what you see the athletes do - just like any normal session. You will be asked to set up your activity and will be given about 10 minutes to do so.

Arriving for the practical assessment day without a Session Plan or Mesocycle/Development Period is unacceptable and will result in the assessor refusing to assess the practical element. Candidates will be expected to attend a further assessment day at an additional cost.

On the day

One to One Briefing

Your practical assessment starts as soon as your one to one briefing commences. During this discussion with the assessor, they will ask about your Session Plan and how it links to the session goal, the content and how you are planning to deliver it. They will ask you about safety and how you are planning to manage it. This discussion will take approximately 5 minutes.

Practical Assessment – Part 1

Using your peers, you will deliver the part of the session selected by your assessor. You should:

- Build rapport and check athletes' physical state
- Explain the session goal and its content
- Organise the group, set up a demonstration and deliver your part of the session
- Make interventions and give feedback when appropriate.

During this time the assessor will be observing your actions and those of the athletes. They will be checking to see how athlete centred the delivery is and whether or not the athletes are engaged or the coach is doing more of the talking. On occasions the assessor may come and stand with you. They may ask what you are looking for and also what you are seeing. On occasions they may offer a suggestion to you about where you are standing or how you are giving feedback. This is not to trip you up, but to help you in what you are doing. The assessors will be attempting to take notes about what they see you do and hear you say. This will help them give you personal feedback about your coaching.

Review 1 with the assessor

The purpose of this one to one discussion with the assessor is for them to tell you the aspects where you have met the requirements and those where further assessment is required. Potentially it will give you the opportunity of addressing those aspects that need a little work – ready for the 2nd practical assessment.

In some instances it may not be possible to address every aspect in time. For example, if technical knowledge is lacking in jumps, then it would mean that the coach may need to develop this area of their coaching away from the assessment. Their second practical assessment would still go ahead as it would give them the opportunity to show what they are capable of in other areas.

Practical Assessment – Part 2

This will only last about 10-15 minutes and will be a continuation of your first practical but in all likelihood, be a different unit from your session plan. The assessor will be focusing on the key areas identified during the first review as these are the areas to be addressed by the coach. The assessor will call a stop at the appropriate time.

Review 2 with the assessor

The purpose of this one to one is to help the assessor reach their decision. The assessor will start by asking about the positive side of the session – what went well from your point of view. They would carry on along this line and ask you to identify where perhaps the session may not have gone to plan or what you might do differently next time. The assessor will move onto the areas where the coach has not yet met the standards or where an area needs some development. They will ask questions of the coach, to check their understanding. The coach should give this information succinctly.

Assessor	Going back to the beginning of your session, talk me through how you showed the athletes what they were going to do.
Coach	I put the athletes where they could see, silently did the high knee drill three times and checked that they understood.
Assessor	Do you recall what the athletes said?
Coach	Yes – they said that they understood.
Assessor	What was it they understood – try to recall their words?
Coach	I think they said – yep, that’s cool.
Assessor	If we had asked the athletes what “cool” meant, what technical point would they have come back with?
Coach	Well it should be that the knees come to hip height and their toes should be pulled up to their shins.
Assessor	That’s right they should. At what point would they get this information?
Coach	At the beginning of the demonstration.
Assessor	...and what did you tell them at the beginning of the demonstration?
Coach	I didn’t say anything about what to look at, it was simply – this is the action I want you to do.
Assessor	What’s the benefit of really focusing their attention on one part of the movement?
Coach	They’ll only look at the part of the body that’s important. Otherwise some might look at legs, some at arms and so on.
Assessor	So next time you arrange a demonstration, what would differ about how you structured the demonstration today?
Coach	I would ask them to look at how high the knees come up and to describe the foot position in the air. Then once I had done the demonstration, I would ask them what they actually saw.
Assessor	An excellent way of ensuring a demonstration is done properly.

Using the example, the Coach would be assessed as a “Pass” – even though during the practical, they had not structured it correctly. During the review, they reflected and identified how it would be done. Had they not identified the steps for a good demonstration then the assessor would have had to make a different decision.

Depending on how many topics need to be discussed, the assessor is there to “pull” coaches through and not to trip up or fail coaches. With this said, there is only 15 minutes discussion time. On completion of the review, the assessor will make their decision as to whether the coach has met the requirements set by British Athletics.

Mesocycle/Development Period

The purpose of the professional discussion within the briefing is to explore the Mesocycle/Development Period document. The Assessor will discuss the goals set and achieved during this period, ascertain whether the balance of activities are suitable for athletes in the stage of development, and explore the plans for future focus. There will also be discussions around the role that the coach played within achieving or not achieving these goals.

Conclusion

The one to one is concluded with any action points arising from the conversation. At this point, the assessor should be able to give a complete picture of the work that is required to become a better coach, or meet the standards set. Should there be a need for a re-assessment, then the coach will clearly be told this.

There will be some coaches who meet the requirements quickly and there will be others that will take longer.

Regardless of the decision, the coach needs to continue being involved as an athlete so as to be fair to the other following coaches.

Re-assessments

The initial course fee paid covers the programme and the first assessment; any subsequent re-assessments will incur additional costs levied by the Home Country Athletics Association. Assessment days will occur several times per year, please liaise with your Home Country Education contact to ascertain dates and availability.

To avoid the additional expense of re-assessment we strongly advise you to ensure all work is fully completed and submitted on time (please ask for help and clarification if you are unsure). This Assessment Guidance document has been devised to help you with this process. Please utilise this support document to ensure your submission has the best opportunity of meeting the assessment criteria without incurring additional costs.

You should come to the practical assessment prepared. You should revise the technical information and key points for the 7 events covered on the programme and the How-2 On-Track 4 cards as these should be implemented in your coaching. You should have a copy of your Session Plan and Mesocycle/Development Period to work from and another copy for your assessor to view. Please ensure you are sufficiently prepared for your assessment day. Arriving for the practical assessment day without a session plan is unacceptable and will result in the assessor refusing to assess the practical element.

British Athletics maintains high standards in granting coaching licenses. As a qualified and licensed Athletics Coach you will be in a position of great responsibility in the development of athletes to reach their potential and ensuring a safe, fun and inclusive environment. Devising sessions and plans that meet the athletes' needs and are suitable to their stage of development is a vital responsibility. British Athletics needs to ensure that a minimum standard is achieved in the awarding of this qualification and the assessors will uphold these standards through the assessment process.

In the event of appeals regarding assessment decisions, please contact the relevant Home Country Coach Education contact within 10 working days of being informed of the assessment decision.

British Athletics wishes you well in your assessment and urge you to look back to your programme information to support you in the completion of all the assessment elements.