



# Coach Apprentice Program Guide

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Coach Apprentice Program is to provide the opportunity for clubs to invest and commit to developing coaches in the Development Academy environment. The goal of the program is to support coaches in their development by providing opportunities to perform the tasks of an Academy coach as well as self-reflect and evaluate individual performance. The program is designed for the coach who is committed to their professional development and preparing to progress in coaching education to obtain the USSF B License.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

### APPRENTICE REGISTRATION

To apply for the program, coaches must hold a minimum USSF D License, and the DA Club must have already appointed a mentor to work with the apprentice coach. Coaches must have a current and updated profile in the [U.S. Soccer Learning Center](#).

Apprentice coaches must reapply at the beginning of each program cycle.

Apprentice coaches must pay \$25 at the time of registration for the program.

### MENTOR REGISTRATION

A mentor must hold a minimum USSF A License. A mentor can be assigned a maximum of three (3) apprentice coaches. Mentors must have a current and updated profile in the [Learning Center](#).

## **POLICY**

### APPRENTICE EXPECTATIONS

It is expected that all apprentice coaches who are accepted into the Coach Apprentice Program will abide by all policies set by the Development Academy and U.S. Soccer. The result of not abiding by all policies will result in removal from the Coach Apprentice Program. An apprentice coach will be removed from the program if they are dismissed from a game or commit any severe actions/behaviors that do not meet Academy standards and expectations; as determined by the Development Academy staff. If an apprentice coach is removed from the program, they risk eligibility to be reaccepted into the program.

It is expected that apprentices will complete all assignments by the scheduled deadline. All assignments must be completed in the Learning Center. All assignments must be graded as "Pass" for the apprentice to pass the program. An apprentice coach who passes the program is eligible to reapply for the program the following season. If an apprentice coach fails the program, they risk eligibility to be reaccepted into the program.

All apprentice coaches will be registered with the role of "Apprentice Coach" in U.S. Soccer Connect. Apprentice coaches are not allowed to coach a team in training or games without a USSF B License coach present.

It is recommended by the Academy that all apprentice coaches are assigned to assist with two (2) DA age groups throughout the entire season. This provides the opportunity for the apprentice coach to build rapport with players and coaches, participate in the players' development over a longer period of time and experience the developmental differences between age groups. The apprentice coach ideally would experience working with two different head coaches to observe multiple coaching styles, with age group appropriate focus and perspectives. Ultimately working with two age groups throughout the season will create a more comprehensive learning environment for the apprentice coach.

### MENTOR EXPECTATIONS

It is expected that all registered mentors of the Coach Apprentice Program will abide by all policies set by the Development Academy and U.S. Soccer. The result of not abiding by all policies may be removal from the Coach Apprentice Program. A mentor may be removed from the program if they commit any severe actions/behaviors that do not meet Academy standards and expectations; as determined by the Development Academy staff.

It is expected that all mentors evaluate and grade assignments and provide feedback to the apprentice coach in a timely manner (within two weeks of the assignment due date). It is encouraged that the mentor schedule regular meetings with the apprentice coach; these meetings should focus on the apprentice's development.

It is expected that the mentor is present for a minimum of three (3) training sessions and one (1) game in which the apprentice coach is the lead coach as a part of the apprentice's assignments. This is a requirement for both the fall and spring Activity Log assignment.

### REFUNDS

A refund for the program registration fee of \$25 will only be issued if an apprentice leaves the program prior to the official start date of the program. Once the program has begun, any apprentice who drops out for any reason will not be issued a refund. There are no partial refunds for an apprentice who earns the B License and graduates from the program. Any apprentice who fails the program will not be issued a refund.

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

The purpose of each assignment is to provide an opportunity for the apprentice coach to practice and improve upon the tasks of a coach. The assignments include opportunities to reflect on individual performance, as this is a fundamental skill in the development process. Each assignment will be completed twice by the apprentice: once in the fall season and once in the spring season.

### PERFORMANCE WHEEL

This assignment implements a reflection process in which the apprentice reflects and rates their personal performance of the six tasks of a coach.

The apprentice will submit the assignment using the provided Performance Wheel template.

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (PDP)

This assignment implements a goal setting process in which the apprentice identifies strengths and weaknesses in their coaching performance and develops a strategic plan to improve their weaknesses.

The apprentice will submit the assignment using the provided Personal Development Plan template.

### ACTIVITY LOG

The apprentice will submit a description and reflection of education activities they are participating in for development purposes. Apprentices will submit entries for coaching three training sessions and one game; the mentor must be present at all four events. The apprentice has an optional entry for an additional educational activity that is not a training session or game.

The reflection portion of the assignment should include details regarding what went well, what could be improved, and how the apprentice learned or developed from the activity.

### GRADING

The program uses a Pass or Fail grading system.

- Pass
  - Satisfactory completion of all assignments
    - All assignments are completed by the assigned due date
  - Apprentice is eligible to register for the program again
- Fail
  - Unsatisfactory completion of one or more assignments
    - One or more assignments are not completed by the designated due date
  - Apprentice is not eligible to register for the program again

### **RESOURCES**

- Mentor Support
- The Learning Center
  - Program Guide
  - Planning Tools
  - Technical/Admin Support
- Book of Experience

The Book of Experience is a collection of experiences and reflections recorded by the apprentice. It is recommended that all coaches create this by recording

meaningful experiences and reflecting on these experiences continuously. The compiled experiences and reflections are a resource for the coach when identifying trends of behaviors and actions. The coach will then be able to determine development goals related to the identified trends.