

3.2.3: Planning a coaching session

Aims and objectives

The sports coach should produce clear aims and objectives for every training session they plan. This will allow the coach to focus on what they want to achieve during the session (the aims) and how they are going to achieve the aims they have identified (the objectives).

For example, their aim might be to improve the shooting of the participants, so the objectives will be the drills and activities used to do this. After any coaching session, the coach should determine how well their session met the original aims and objectives.

Health and safety requirements

The sports coach will have to ensure that the health and safety requirements of the sporting activity, the facility used and the participants are considered at all stages of their planning.

This process should include a risk assessment for these different areas of responsibility, including any activities or drills that are planned and resources or equipment that will be used.

Identification of the needs of the group

These should be centred on the needs of the participants based on all the information about them that is available to the coach. These should also include the specific technical information and coaching points that the coach wants to focus on during the session. These needs might be based on the recent training or competitive performances. The coach might also use qualitative and quantitative data, including knowledge of results and knowledge of performance to decide on the aims and objectives for the sessions.

Appropriate activities

The coach should consider how the technical information and coaching points included in the aims and objectives for the session can most effectively be delivered to the participants. This will include consideration of activities and drills that can be used during the five components of the session.

If the coach and the participants have a lot of experience, more options will then be available as they will have a greater level of knowledge and understanding of the sporting activity.

The level of experience and the ability of the participants, along with their stage of learning, will dictate the types of practice and guidance that the coach will use during the training session to make sure it is accessible and meets the needs of the participants.

Resources needed

Once the coach has decided on the activities and drills that will take place, along with the transitions and progressions between them, they will have an understanding of the resources and equipment needed for the coaching session. The coach will then have to make sure that they have access to this equipment and organise for it to be ready at the venue for the coaching session at the appropriate time.

They will also have to carry out a risk assessment to ensure that the resources and equipment are not damaged and are safe to use. For example, the coach must check that all pieces of gymnastic equipment such as mats, boxes and vaulting tables are secure and not ripped or broken in any way that could cause an injury to one of the participants in the coaching session.

