

Roles within the UKA Coaching Framework

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the roles and functions leaders and coaching assistants can fulfil under the new UKA Coaching Qualifications. Leaders and coaches working within the roles defined below are insured under the UKA public liability cover. [Find further information on the UK Athletics coaching pages.](#)

Definition of roles

The UKA coaching awards are built to address the various roles that leaders and coaches serve within the athletics environment.

It is important to note that the Leader and Coaching Assistant awards were constructed with a fundamental aim: to provide successful candidates with the skills required to lead training groups at the foundation level under the **supervision or direct supervision** of a fully qualified coach. These awards should be considered supplemental to the Athletics Coach, Children's Coach and Coach in Running Fitness (CiRF) awards, the stage at which a coach is qualified to work independently with athletes.

The awards also serve a practical function:

- **Leader:** when deployed appropriately can help offset some of the demand placed on fully qualified coaches.
- **Coaching Assistant:** to assist with demand **and** to provide an entry point into the coach education pathway. With a basic level of knowledge of the principles of Run, Jump, and Throw, the Coaching Assistant is in a good position to practice the skills that will be required of them when they embark on a qualification at the "Coach" level.

Roles Defined

Athletics Leader

Should work from a session plan or task card, given to them by the Supervising Coach and be **directly supervised**.

Leader in Running Fitness

This is not a coaching role. The Leader should be working from session plans or task cards and can lead a group of runners on a run. The LiRF leader can take a group out for a run unassisted as they will have covered health and safety and risk assessment on the course to cater for this aspect of the role. LiRF leaders are qualified to lead sessions to athletes aged 12 years* and older. Please refer to the [Couch to 5k Leader Requirements](#).*

N.B: In Scotland there is no circumstance where a Leader can work with under 18s / Protected Adults.

Fell, Hill, Off Road and Trail Module – Leader

This is not a coaching role. The Leader can lead safe and enjoyable running experiences for runners aged 12 years+, away from made surfaces and parks, using existing paths and fell/hill routes, including how to have an enjoyable running experience while ascending, descending, and covering different terrains and under-foot conditions (such as rough surfaces, vegetation, muddy and wet areas), as Leaders will have covered the safety aspects of off-road running, with additional contingency measures in case of emergencies or accidents.

Whilst abilities and environments differ these Leaders can take groups on routes they are familiar with and which are well within the group's ability, in environmentally benign conditions. The course does not prepare Leaders for leading groups in unfamiliar areas, in adverse conditions or in more remote settings. Those wishing to do this are strongly advised to take the relevant [Mountain Training Association Mountain Leader award](#) or similar.

It is assumed that Leaders completing the Off-Road module will wish to lead groups in more remote areas (classified as Category C in the [UK Athletics First Aid policy](#)). To retain qualification they must thus have an approved Outdoor First Aid qualification, to be renewed every 3 years.

UKA Level One Coaches (from the previous qualifications system)

Should work from a session plan or task card, given to them by the Supervising Coach and **be supervised.**

Coaching Assistant

Should be working from session plans and /or task cards using adapted activities but they are insured to use competition javelins and shot. The Coaching Assistant may deliver a whole session unassisted but **a Supervising Coach should be present at the venue (with the exception of U18 Coaching Assistants who must be directly supervised)**

N.B. The Coaching Assistant course does not cover the coaching of event specific: **Pole Vault, Hammer, Discus, Triple Jump or Steeplechase** (with full sized athletics equipment). These events should be delivered by a qualified and licensed Coach in these areas, although the Coaching Assistant may assist the coach in the session.

Key definitions

Supervision

A leader, assistant or coach is considered to be supervised provided the said person has been told what to do or has agreed what should be done by the licensed coach. A licensed coach **must be present at the venue.**

Direct Supervision

A licensed coach should be **in eyeline and earshot** of the person being "directly supervised".

A Licensed Coach

Someone who has undertaken and completed the following qualifications and who has a current police records check (DBS in England & Wales, Access NI in Northern Ireland & Self Declaration/PVG in Scotland) i.e. one that is not more than 3 years old. They may hold one or more of the following qualifications: Coach in Running/Fitness, Children's Coach, Athletics Coach, Athletics Coach Endurance, Athletics Coach Throws, Athletics Coach Speed, Athletics Coach Jumps, UKA Level 2, Event Group Coach, UKA Level 3 Performance Coach, UKA Level 3 Development Coach, UKA Level 4 Performance Coach, UKA Level 4 Development Coach.

A licensed Coach is insured to coach unsupervised. They will have been assessed on their ability to coach specific areas of specialism, these areas are listed on their coaching licence. All Level 2 licenses and above, show that the bearer is insured to coach at level 2.



- **Group Event Coach** – this person is insured to coach whichever groups of events appear on their licence. e.g. jumps, throws, speed or endurance (or a combination of these).
- **Physical Preparation In Athletics Qualification**- coach physical preparation activities including Olympic lifting, derivatives of these lifts and weighted or resistance training to athletes aged 12+ and coach human movement from 8+.
- **Athletics Coach Endurance**– Sprints, Hurdles, Javelin, Shot, Long Jump, High Jump, Endurance Running, Wheelchair Racing and Walking.
- **Athletics Coach Throws** – Sprints, Hurdles, Javelin, Shot, Hammer, Discus, Long Jump, High Jump, Endurance Running and Walking.
- **Athletics Coach Speed** – Sprints, Hurdles, Javelin, Shot, Long Jump, High Jump, Endurance Running, Wheelchair Racing and Walking.
- **Athletics Coach Jumps** – Sprints, Hurdles, Javelin, Shot, Long Jump, High Jump, Pole vault, Triple Jump, Endurance Running and Walking.
- **Coach in Running Fitness** – endurance activities to over 12s*, including uphill & downhill running techniques, running over obstacles and running at speed.

*You are insured to coach endurance activities on the track if you completed your CiRF course after September 2014. If you completed your CiRF course prior to this, you will not be insured and will need to take the free CiRF Bridging Module on My Learning if you wish to take your athletes on the track.

- **Children's Coach** – all athletics activities using non-competition equipment i.e. adapted equipment for 8 - 12 year olds.

Role of the supervising coach:

A Supervising Coach should

- discuss the allocation of session units with Coaching Assistants and Leaders
- supervise Coaching Assistants during session delivery
- directly supervise Leaders in session delivery
- review Coaching Assistant and Leader development.

Supervision ratios:

Please note the exact number of Coaching Assistants and Athletics Leaders that could be supervised by any one Coach will be dependent on the content of the session, the environment, the space available, the number of athletes, the number of Coaching Assistants and Athletics Leaders available to support and ensure best practice operating ratios. The decision regarding manageable numbers to ensure the session can be delivered in a safe and developmental manner is ultimately the decision of the Coach.

The [guidance on appropriate supervision](#) levels for children, young people and adults provides more information and can be found on the UKA website.

More information:

For more information please visit the [British Athletics Website](#).