

SPORT PROGRAM FRAMEWORK



ACADEMY COACHING STRUCTURE

Coach and Support Staff Role

The Academy provides a great level of support and encouragement to its coach and support staff throughout their time within the Academy.

It is the Academy's belief that essentially the key role of any coach or support staff member in the Academy is this;

To take your athletes from where they are, within their own sporting or life journey, and assist them to get to where they want, or in some cases, need to be.

Within the position of this great role, comes great responsibility. And with that said, one of, if not the **core responsibility** of an Academy coach during their time at South West Sydney Academy of Sport, can be defined as

The responsibility to provide a safe and supportive environment in which to provide our youth-aged athletes with Influential mentorship; encouraging and allowing the athlete to find and grow within their sporting prowess; all whilst teaching the athlete life skills, respect, and sportsmanship.

The impact that each coach can have on an athlete within the Academy program is endless. It has often been quoted that one coach has the ability to impact more people in a single season than the average person can in a lifetime.

Yet core to your role you have as an Academy Coach or Support Staff is this; you are NOT 'Just a Coach'.

The Academy is a unique environment in that it is not a professional sporting team, even though coaches may have at their disposal a large team of experts and field professionals to call upon as far as administration, sports services, technical, tactical and sports science / medicine advice.

We are still a relatively small organisation within the high performance pathway, so have limitations on resources, both financial and personnel within each sporting program.

The Academy is often the first step in the representative and high performance pathway for our athletes, where the focus is not purely on their sheer athleticism and ability to 'play' the sport.

We are often the first port of call to add in a focus of strength and conditioning, sports science, and sports education. We may also be the first competitive environment that athletes are a part of where the focus is not on winning at all costs, but their continual (and often post-Academy) development.

As such, as coach and support staff, the Academy needs to model the expectations of sport's high performance pathways, yet have a knowledge and understanding of our athletes position often being at the beginning of those pathways.

With that said, the Academy has a strong Coach and Support staff structure in place to ensure a favoured position of retention and internal promotion throughout, in order to maintain consistency in the direction, content and overall presentation of Academy programs.

Coaching Structure

Each Academy program ideally contains an average of between four and eight coach and support staff.

Whilst these position may be stipulated in part by the MoU, the Academy Coach structure will consist of at minimum a;

- Head Coach / Coordinator, and
- Squad (Program) Manager

Mentor, Assistant, Apprentice and Trainee coaches will be appointed as required.

Guest (External) Coaches may also be invited / included by the Head Coach and/or Academy to attend and conduct training sessions, and may be provided by the State Sporting Organisation on consultation with the Academy.



The final structure of each program's coaching staff is to be determined in consultation with the Academy, however the Academy aims for an athlete to coach ratio of no more than **6:1**. (being one coach for every six athletes selected in the program)

This can however vary from sport to sport depending on coach suitability and availability, and individual sport MoU requirements.

Coaches are selected ordinarily by a nominations and interview based process, or where required, on advice from the SSO.



HEAD COACH

Level 2 + or equivalent
Representative/State League
Coaching Qualification.

ASSISTANT COACH

Level 1 or equivalent
Club Coaching Qualification.

TRAINEE COACH

Graduate Athlete /
Community or Introduction
to Coach Qualifications.

**SQUAD / PROGRAM
MANAGER**

Experience working with Junior athletes
in a local club or state league level
representative environment.

Academy Coach Development Pathway

Selected Coach and Support staff then primarily enter into the **Academy Coach Development Pathway**.

The majority of coach and support staff arrive at the Academy with a community club or representative coaching background. Coaching staff will often have been identified through their own sport's development pathways as a coach with potential in a range of areas.

Depending on what level of coaching qualification a coach holds, or the specific requirement of the Academy program at that time, a coach may enter in to the Pathway at the most appropriate level.

Multi-Year Program

The Academy Coach Pathway exists to allow coach and support staff a multi-year progression and development within the Academy, from a trainee coach, through to the opportunity to undertake a Head Coaching role; whilst being supported in remaining active within their own club or representative program.

Each sport program carries with it an additional coach development and succession plan to ensure the ongoing development and progression of coach and support staff. And the Sport Program Framework itself contains specific outcomes targeted to the coach and support staff who assist implement it.

Academy Coaching staff are generally 'contracted' in two-year cycles to allow the coach to adequately gain a development experience, whilst growing and working with the Academy's athletes in a multi-season program environment.

A significant proportion of coaching staff will however remain within the Academy framework for a significant number of years, with many progressing through from Apprentice and Trainee coaches, to Assistant and eventually Head coaching staff.

Coach Development

This pathway therefore encourages coaches at all levels within the Academy to participate within the areas of coach succession, program planning and implementation processes involved within a high-performance sport program environment.

The Academy environment encourages a higher level of coach and athlete relationship and mentorship through shared experiences with fellow coaching staff during the program, and as a part of the Academy's coach education program which exists to provide further education and professional development opportunities for its coach and support staff.

Coaches are encouraged to continue their professional development through opportunities to undertake further training. Such as gaining a higher-level General Principles of coaching, Sport Trainer accreditation, Advanced Sports Taping, as well as engaging in the Academy's community-based Coach Education lecture series program, and cross-train within the multi-sport environment. Often financially supported by the Academy.

It is through these shared experiences that each coach is expected to place a significant value in their own experience and growth as a coach in an effort to provide significant impact into the life and sporting potential of each athlete they coach.

Athlete to Coach Transition

One potential outcome of combining the Academy Sport Program framework with the Academy Coach Development Pathway, is to create a structure that can support the growth and journey of an Academy Athlete, and transition this athlete through the sporting pathway, to becoming an Academy Coach.

Cyclic Coach Transition

Coaching staff may eventually exit the Academy program, where it is hoped that they will gain selection as either a State or National level pathway coach within their sport, or at the very least, return to their local club, representative program, or community environment.

And in doing so, having gained the additional knowledge and skills ready to coach at a higher level and provide these skills to athletes and fellow coaching staff within their home organisation.

Academy Coach Benefits

Whilst being an Academy Coach has a large expectation and responsibility, there are a number of benefits of being an Academy coach and support staff which includes;

- *Opportunity to develop and train to a skill equivalent of state-level programs*
- *Coach within a high-quality development program without the focus or pressures of winning*
- *Influence and develop athletes who want to gain experience at a high level in their own individual development*
- *Work with talent-identified athletes (and coaches) within a recognised high-performance sporting pathway*
- *Access to a high-quality coaching network and identified coach development pathway, whilst building and enhancing own coaching network*
- *Access to the Academy Lifecycle and Program Framework, including targets and performance outcomes for athletes and coaching staff*