

Pathway Coach Fast Track Programme

The Pathway Coach Fast Track Programme is an important part of our performance coach qualification framework and recognises that ex-professional players and coaches that have had experience playing and working on the ATP and WTA tours can bring significant benefit to the LTA Player Pathway coaching workforce, due to their experience and expertise in competitive tennis.

The unique experience of professional tennis at different levels means that specific individuals may have a different starting point in their coaching journey and they also may have different education and development needs. The Pathway Coach Fast Track Programme recognises and supports these needs.

The Pathway Coach Fast Track Programme allows players and coaches of a certain level of experience to start their coach education at different stages, based upon their playing and coaching experience in Performance Tennis. Details of these levels are shown in the table below.

Pathway Coach Fast Track Eligibility Criteria

The following table sets out the options that are available to eligible individuals wishing to take their coaching qualifications. All rankings are "career highs".

	Player Category A	Player/Coach Category B	Player/ Coach Category C
Player Level	Any player that achieved a WTA or ATP singles or doubles ranking	<p>ATP/WTA singles career high ranking 1000 or better and currently coaching in performance tennis</p> <p>ATP/WTA doubles career high ranking 300 or better and currently coaching in performance tennis</p> <p>Coaches with current or past experience as a travelling coach with WTA/ATP players ranked in the top 250 singles or top 100 doubles at the time of the coaching will also be considered for this option.</p> <p>Players meeting the criteria for category B will need to contact the LTA Head of Performance Coach Education for further details of the fast track programme and acceptance will be at the LTA's discretion and subject to the course acceptance policies in place at the time.</p>	<p>ATP/WTA singles 20 or better</p> <p>ATP/WTA doubles top 10 or better</p> <p>Coaches with an experience of coaching top 20 WTA/ATP players will also be considered for this option.</p> <p>Players meeting the criteria for category C will need to contact the LTA Head of Performance Coach Education for further details of an individual learning programme and acceptance will be at the LTA's discretion.</p>
Route into LTA coaching qualifications	<p>Start at and complete Level 1 course</p> <p>Coaches are then able to skip Level 2 and apply to Level 3</p>	<p>Candidates can be fast tracked onto the SPC Level 4 course subject to acceptance.</p> <p>In some instances players may be required to attend a preparation pre-course module at NTC. This will be at the discretion of the LTA</p>	<p>Players receive an individual learning programme which could be a combination of courses, private study, and mentoring and coach experience.</p> <p>On completion of the learning programme the individual will be assessed against the Level 4 or Level 5 competencies.</p>

Please note:

1. Ex-professional players that are already coaching are still eligible for the Pathway Coach Fast Track route if they meet the criteria and as long as they are currently working in and prioritising performance coaching.
2. The programme will allow individuals who meet fast track criteria “B” (see table above) to apply for the Level 4 Senior Performance Coach Award without having taken levels 1-3. The course will need to be completed and passed in full to gain the qualification. It must be noted that application may not result in acceptance onto the course. There are limited spaces on each course and all applicants are assessed for acceptance against published criteria.
3. Ex-professional players may choose to take a steadier route through the coaching qualification Levels 1 – 5 if they feel it is more appropriate for them. With this option, players that have earned an ATP or WTA world ranking point are eligible to skip Level 2 after passing Level 1. This is captured in criteria “A” in the table below.
4. The Pathway Coach Fast Track option is a route for individuals that are actively embarking on a career specifically in performance coaching on the LTA Player Pathway. Ex-professional players who are considering a broader ranging coaching career, should follow the regular coach education route
5. Coaches cannot be fast tracked onto the Level 5 Master Performance Coach Award. In order to take the Master Performance Coach Award, coaches must have first passed the Senior Performance Coach Award.
6. Fast Tracked coaches who are not yet part of the LTA accreditation scheme must possess a valid satisfactory DBS certificate before starting the SPC course.

Level 4 – Senior Performance Coach (SPC)

The Senior Performance Coach (SPC) will train and develop a coaching workforce capable of delivering the LTA Performance Strategy. The SPC qualification is targeted at coaches who wish to gain the required competencies and knowledge to develop international level 14 & under junior players, however it does not preclude coaches that are working with older players, or who wish to work with older players in the future. The assignments on the course will allow for this. The competencies developed on the SPC will be applicable to working with older players in addition to international 14 and under players and will prepare coaches who wish to take the Level 5 Master Performance Coach Award in the future.

The SPC consists of eight modules of 3 days each, one 4 day working visit to an international junior tournament, a set number of assignments to complete in between modules and the course operates on a continual assessment basis. Venues will vary for each module. It is possible for a flexible learning programme to be arranged that would involve completing the course over an extended period of time. Details of which would be discussed on an individual basis with the LTA Head of Performance Coach Education.

Pre-Course Module

In the event that the LTA Performance Coach Education Team deems a pre-course module is necessary for fast tracked SPC candidates, i.e. those meeting the criteria for Player Category B as shown in the above table and accepted on the course, it will be provided by the LTA at the National Tennis Centre. This pre-course module could last up to 4 days depending on the circumstances. There would be no cost for the pre-course module, however, the actual SPC qualifications will be charged in full.

The pre-course module could concentrate around core coaching skills that may be needed before starting the SPC course through the Pathway Coach Fast Track route.

The main areas will focus on a quick overview of levels 1, 2 and 3 and include topics such as:

- Mini Tennis
- Communication
- Drill construction and organisation

- Skill acquisition – understanding learning
- The coaching process – especially observation skills and goal setting

For more details relating to acceptance on LTA Performance Courses and Workshops please refer to our acceptance policy on the LTA website or contact PerformanceCoachSupport@lta.org.uk.

Simon Jones

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