

Coaching Regulations and Requirements 2026-2027

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1. Introduction

The governing body for ice hockey in the United Kingdom is Ice Hockey UK Limited (IHUK). There may be references in these terms to policies of England Ice Hockey (EIH/SIH) and Scottish Ice Hockey (SIH) which are now policies of IHUK and will continue to apply to all Clubs and Teams. IHUK is now entitled to enforce these. In due course we will rebrand EIH/SIH and SIH policies and other documentation. References to EIH or SIH shall, where the context requires, be construed as references to IHUK.

The coach is responsible for leading the team in games and practices, preparing strategy, and selecting players. England Ice Hockey (EIH/SIH) is committed to ensuring coaching across England and Wales is delivered to a consistently high standard.

To achieve this, all coaches must meet minimum qualification requirements through EIH/SIH's coaching pathway in order to obtain their EIH/SIH licence.

Beyond minimum standards, EIH/SIH supports coach development by offering recommended professional development opportunities and ensuring coaches remain up to date with changing regulations, practices, and best-in-class approaches.

As UK Coaching notes:

“Coaching qualifications offer formal recognition of a ‘fit-for-purpose’ coach, someone able to coach a specific sport or discipline, in a particular environment, to a recognised standard as defined by the governing body.”

1.1 General

Mandatory Requirements for All Coaches

1. Registration & Compliance

- Be registered with England Ice Hockey (EIH/SIH) and an EIH/SIH-affiliated club.
- Have paid all required EIH/SIH fees and dues.
- Hold a valid EIH/SIH Enhanced DBS check (with Children's Barred List) through Vibrant Nation.

2. Knowledge & Conduct

- Understand the rules and regulations of the sport, including those specific to the age group and competition they coach.
- **Follow the EIH/SIH Code of Conduct and comply with all EIH/SIH rules, regulations, and policies.** You will be asked to confirm you have read this when registering.
- Comply with UKAD's Anti-Doping Policy and the WADA Code.

3. Skills & Qualifications

- Be a competent skater.
- Hold a recognised EIH/SIH coaching qualification.
- Communicate effectively in English.

Data & evidence.

All compliance items (DBS, Safeguarding, First Aid, UKAD, IIHF, CPD) must be recorded.

1.2 Coach Registration & Licensing

Registration

- All coaches must register directly with England Ice Hockey (EIH/SIH) using the online portal.
- Registrations must be approved by EIH/SIH before a coach's licence and insurance are confirmed.
- A coach will be expected to complete mandatory requirements prior to their registration being approved.

Coaching Qualifications

EIH/SIH currently recognises the following coaching qualifications:

- Foundation Coach
- Level 1 – Assistant Coach
- Level 2 – Team Coach
- Level 3 – Advanced Coach

Membership & Activity Requirements

- A coach is not required to maintain EIH/SIH membership for the full duration of their qualification's validity. However, they must hold an active EIH/SIH membership in order to coach at any EIH/SIH-sanctioned competition.

- Coaches who have been inactive for more than three seasons will be required to undertake a refresher or revalidation process

1.3 Course Content and Delivery

EIH/SIH coaching courses are designed to ensure coaches are fully trained in both coaching methodology and the technical elements of ice hockey. Courses are delivered through a combination of e-learning and in-person sessions, with a brief syllabus outlined in the table below.

IHUK reserves the right to update course content as required. We are currently working to build our own bespoke courses. These will be released over the course of the season when available.

This pathway applies to all new coaches and to any coach seeking to progress their certification from July 2026 onwards.

Course	Foundation Coach	Level 1 Assistant Coach	Level 2 Team Coach
Enhanced DBS/PVG check via Vibrant Nation	•	•	•
Level 8 skating signed off by coach (except Para)	•	•	•
Safeguarding Essentials	•	•	•
Basic First Aid		•	•
In-person courses			
Level 1 Ice Hockey specific course		•	
Level 2 Ice Hockey specific course			•
Pre Course			
Enhancing Communication Skills for Coaches		•	
The Role of the Coach		•	
Teaching Techniques		•	
Ice Hockey Risk Management and Safety		•	
Leadership Skills for Ice Hockey Coaches			•
Comprehensive Year Planning for Ice Hockey Coaches			•
Developing Hockey IQ			•
Skills Analysis in Ice Hockey			•
Additional courses required			
UKAD Coach Clean			•
IIHF Integrity: Focus on coaches	•	•	•

1.4 Coach Progression Requirements

- Coaches must complete each qualification level in order before moving to the next, and all required courses must be finished to receive a full licence.
- Exceptions:
 - The Safeguarding in Sport, UKAD Coach Clean and IIHF Integrity Course must be completed prior to registration. A coach registration will not be approved with these pending.
 - Anyone who has already attended a Level 1 or Level 2 Ice Hockey-specific course does not need to retake it.
- Experience requirement: Level 1 coaches must complete at least one season of coaching before progressing to Level 2.
- DBS checks: If not on the Update Service, the Disclosure must be dated 1 August 2024 or later.

- Recertification: See Section 6.
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2. Safeguarding requirements

All coaches must complete the **Safeguarding Essentials** online training annually prior to registration being approved. (Previously used labels such as “Safeguarding in Sport” refer to this module.) This should be completed as a refresher course if you have completed a face-to-face course in the last 2 years.

The **Safeguarding Essentials** course is **free and open to everyone**:

[Safeguarding in Sport](#)

This online course begins with **Safeguarding Essentials**, a short module designed to increase awareness of safeguarding, why it's important, and how to apply it in a sporting context. Completion of this module is **mandatory** for all coaches.

In addition, we **recommend** that learners take the **Safeguarding Practice** and **Effective Safeguarding** modules at their own pace. These are optional but provide further insight and practical tools to strengthen safeguarding in sport.

Completion of the Safeguarding Essentials training is part of IHUK's **minimum standards** and supports our collective commitment to safe, inclusive participation across all levels of ice hockey.

Recommended free e-learning:

[Keep Your Child Safe](#)
[Safeguarding for all](#)
[Safeguarding for Committee Members](#)

Workplace safeguarding

Accredited workplace safeguarding, for example from a school, hospital or emergency services may be accepted as equivalent to the requirements outlined above. Please submit your certificate to IHUK for consideration of equivalency.

Evidence

Certificates must be [submitted](#) to IHUK to confirm completion.

3. Anti-Doping Education

As part of England Ice Hockey's commitment to clean sport, and in line with UKAD and IHUK policies, mandatory anti-doping education is being introduced for coaches.

- Requirement: Level 2 coaches should complete UKAD Coach Clean annually prior to registration being approved.
 - Foundation and Level 1 coaches are strongly encouraged to complete this module (counts toward CPD) (<https://www.ukad.org.uk/coach-clean>).
 - Evidence: Certificates must be [submitted](#) to IHUK to confirm completion.
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4. IIHF Integrity

To support integrity in coaching, England Ice Hockey is also introducing mandatory training in partnership with the IIHF.

- Requirement: Complete IIHF “Integrity: Focus on Coaches” annually prior to registration being approved. Evidence: upload certificate. Foundation and Level 1 coaches are strongly encouraged (counts toward CPD). (<https://cloud.priimalms.com/ns/iihf>).
 - Evidence: Certificates must be [submitted](#) to IHUK to confirm completion.
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5. First Aid Requirements

Creating a safe environment starts with preparation. Ice hockey is a contact sport, and all coaches must have the skills to respond if a player is injured.

Basic First Aid

- Mandatory: All coaches must hold a recognised Basic First Aid certificate. This can be an online course or face to face. An online course should be renewed annually. The face-to-face course should be renewed every three years.
- If a coach does not currently hold First Aid, it must be completed prior to registration approval, then renewed every three years if a face-to-face course. IHUK accepts the listed online courses for basic compliance, renewed annually; note they do not confer “qualified first aider” status.
- Course types accepted: Certificates must come from an awarding body or NGB. Accepted examples include:
 - FA Introduction to First Aid in Football (online)
 - Emergency First Aid in Rugby Union (online or in person)
 - Training Express Sports First Aid (online)
 - Pro Trainings UK Sports First Aid Level 3 (online)
 - UK Coaching First Introduction to First Aid and Sport & Physical Activity
- Skills covered: Courses must include core elements such as:
 - Assessing an incident
 - Managing an unresponsive casualty
 - Treating minor injuries
 - Basic lifesaving skills

Allied health professionals are asked to provide a copy of their license and registration number for approval, alongside an up-to-date CPD record. A first aid qualification or equivalent is required.

The following are considered Allied health professionals for the purposes of this document:

- Paramedics with IHCD paramedic course; Paramedic foundation degree or MSc in Paramedical Science, registered with the HCPC who have proof of regular annual training and are currently practising on the road or in a training centre
 - Nurses registered with NMC currently working in an emergency environment (Emergency department)
 - Therapists with a Graduate qualification in sports therapy or rehabilitation who also hold registration with SST, STA or BASRAT
 - Physiotherapists registered with the HCPC
 - Doctors registered with the GMC
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6. Recertification (3 year-cycle)

Coach education is ongoing. To keep a licence active, coaches must stay current with both technical development and core compliance.

Core requirements

- Safeguarding Essentials: Annual refresher.
 - First Aid: Either annual or three-yearly renewal depending on course delivery method.
 - CPD (Continuing Professional Development):
 - Level 1: at least 2 CPD activities every 3 years
 - Level 2 and above: at least 4 CPD activities every 3 years
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6.1 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Keep CPD practical and flexible. Minimums over a 3-year cycle: Level 1 – 2 activities; Level 2+ – 4 activities. We recommend spreading learning evenly across the cycle.

What counts (examples)

- IHUK/IIHF workshops or seminars
- Online modules (e.g., UK Coaching, UKAD Coach Clean, IIHF Integrity) UKIF netminder webinars
- Coaching at IHUK events or development camps
- Other recognised sport-related courses

Evidence

- Submit certificates or attendance confirmations to IHUK (brief reflection only if no certificate is issued).
- IHUK may approve or decline activities for CPD credit.

Summary

- Safeguarding: annual prior to registration.
 - First Aid: Either annual or three-yearly renewal depending on course delivery method.
 - CPD (3-year cycle): Level 1 – 2 activities over 3 years; Level 2+ – 4 activities over 3 years. Activities may include IHUK/IIHF workshops, UK Coaching modules, UKAD/IIHF courses, or approved equivalents. Log CPD within 14 days of completion.
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7. DBS requirements

To help ensure a safe environment for all participants, **IHUK requires Enhanced DBS checks (with Children's Barred List)** for individuals working regularly with children (U18s) in designated roles.

An **Enhanced DBS check is required** for all coaches.

How to Apply

All DBS checks must be completed **via IHUK's provider: [Vibrant Nation \(or any other provider used by IHUK\)](#)**.

- Applications must be initiated by the club's **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** through the Vibrant Nation portal.
- Only **Enhanced DBS checks with Children's Barred List** are accepted.
- IHUK will cover the cost of the **first DBS check**.
- Individuals must present their DBS certificate to their club DSL for verification and recording.

Validity & Update Service

- DBS certificates are **valid for three (3) years** from the issue date.
- **If not subscribed to the Update Service**, individuals will need to **renew** their DBS via Vibrant Nation every 3 years **at their own cost**.
- **If subscribed to the DBS Update Service (free for volunteers)**, IHUK can verify annually without requiring a new check.

For the **2026–27** season, DBS certificates **not** on the Update Service must be dated **1 August 2024 or later** to be considered valid.

Additional Requirements for First-Year Registrants with International Residence

All registrants are required to complete the standard UK screening requirements applicable to their role (e.g. DBS checks, safeguarding training, first aid, etc.) at the point of registration.

In addition, any individual registering for the first time with IHUK/EIH/SIH who has lived outside the UK within the last 5 years must also provide a certificate of good conduct or equivalent police check from each country of residence during that period (translated into English if necessary).

Following completion of the first year of registration and continued involvement in the sport, these individuals will remain subject to the same ongoing renewal requirements as all other registrants (e.g. DBS update service, safeguarding refreshers, etc.).

For any questions or further guidance, please contact: safeguarding@icehockeyuk.co.uk

8. Non-UK Qualifications (Equivalency)

Who this applies to: Coaches trained outside the IHUK jurisdiction.

What can be recognised: The ice hockey specific in-person coaching certificate issued by an IIHF-recognised national association.

Minimum evidence required:

- A copy of the coaching certificate (held within the last 3 years); and
- A brief written reference from the club(s) where the coach has worked

What still must be completed: All IHUK requirements (e.g., Safeguarding Essentials, First Aid, CPD) in addition to any recognised non-UK certificate. The IHUK in-person ice hockey course is not required where equivalency is granted.

Decision & conditions: IHUK will assign an equivalent IHUK level once evidence is verified and may require additional training where gaps are identified.

Right to work: Non-UK residents must hold the correct UK work permission before registering with IHUK.

9. Team Requirements

Lead coach & age

- A Level 2 (or above) coach must be in charge and present on the ice and on the bench for all junior and senior teams, including practices, games, camps, and hockey schools
- There are two exceptions
 - Level 1 coaches can run an U10 jamboree once the online bench management course has completed

- Two level 1 coaches can run the bench at U12 if both have completed the online bench management course
- The minimum age to be a Lead coach is 18

Recreational hockey

- No mandatory level, but it is recommended that at least a Level 1 coach is present. They should be registered and over the age of 18.

On-ice coaching ratios (minimum)

Players Minimum staffing

1–20	1 × Level 2 coach + 1 × Level 1 coach
21–30	1 × Level 2 coach + 2 × Level 1 coaches
31–40	2 × Level 2 coaches + 2 × Level 1 coaches
41–60	3 × Level 2 coaches + 3 × Level 1 coaches

Safeguarding supervision ratios (off-ice/headcount guidance)

Age group Adult : Children

U10	1 : 10
U18	1 : 12

Substitutions & notes

- Any Level 1 or Level 2 coach may be replaced by a more highly qualified coach.
- Player-coaches do not count toward the ratios while actively playing.
- Anyone assisting on the ice must be IHUK-qualified and registered to at least Foundation Coach level.

*Clubs remain responsible for risk assessment and ensuring appropriate cover for recreational activity.

9.1 Skills Demonstrators

- Supervision: May be used only under the direct supervision of a registered Level 2 coach (or higher).
- Ratios: Demonstrators do not count toward coach–player ratios.
- Safeguarding: Must follow all IHUK safeguarding policies. A DBS is not required for this role due to close supervision.

What demonstrators may do

- Set out equipment
- Demonstrate skills/drills
- Shoot for goalkeeper practice

What demonstrators may not do

- Coach or give instruction / run drills
- Take part in games or scrimmages

Who can act as a demonstrator

- Registered adult players may demonstrate but must not coach.
- Players aged 16–17 may demonstrate only in full playing kit, including neck guard and helmet with a face cage.

Safety

- All demonstrators must wear an approved ice hockey helmet on the ice.

Insurance

- Using unqualified or unregistered on-ice assistants will void insurance. They must register as a Foundation Coach.

Note: These requirements also apply to recreational teams where any U18 players are on the ice.

9.2 Minimum Bench Requirements – Match Days

Admin

- All bench staff — including player-coaches — must be named on the team list with their licence number.
- Registered coaches and managers must have their IHUK Registration number for the duration of the game.
- No one under 18 may take charge of the bench.

At puck drop (each team must have):

- Person in charge: 18+ and an IHUK Level 2 (or above) coach not playing in the fixture.
- Additional coach: At least one Level 1 (or above) coach on the bench.
- A Team Manager on the bench, if required but does not and cannot be considered part of bench strength. The coach responsible for the bench must agree the coach can be on the bench.

If the Level 2 in charge is ejected or leaves:

- Another Level 2 (or above) must immediately take charge.
- If none is available, a listed Level 2 player-coach may assume control only if they cease playing for the rest of the game and were denoted as player-coach on the team list before the game.
- Level 1 coaches and Team Managers cannot take charge under any circumstances.

If minimum standards cannot be met:

- The game must be abandoned; this is a failure to fulfil the fixture on behalf of the team without an eligible coach.
 - Officials may, if safe, allow the match to proceed as a challenge game (result not counting toward competition).
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9.3 Kit & Equipment

Standards: IHUK follows IIHF equipment standards.

- **Coach PPE (on-ice):**
 - **Mandatory:** A certified ice hockey helmet with the chin strap fastened and an ice hockey neck guard, properly secured and worn as per the manufacturer's specification, not altered.
 - **Foundation Coaches aged 16–17:**
 - May wear a half visor (instead of the full cage/visor required for U18 players).
 - Not permitted to participate in gameplay drills or scrimmages.
 - **Mandatory:** An ice hockey neck guard, properly secured and worn as per the manufacturer's specification, not altered.
 - **Player equipment compliance:**
 - Coaches must ensure players wear approved helmets and face protection, sticks, and gloves, in line with Section 4.
 - Wherever possible, players should also wear ice hockey-specific skates, elbow pads, and shin guards (full kit recommended).
 - **Pucks (mini hockey): Use lightweight (blue) pucks for U9/U10.**
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10. Duty of Care

Coaches and clubs have a duty of care to meet all standards set out in this section. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action under IHUK's DOPS Policy (including conduct bringing the game into disrepute).

- **Safeguarding:** Any breach involving children or vulnerable adults will be escalated and investigated as a safeguarding concern (in addition to any DOPS action).
- **Unqualified coaching:** Where it is proven that a person has coached while unqualified, that individual will be ineligible to attend an IHUK coaching course or register as a coach for 12 months. The club may also face sanctions from the relevant DOPS Committee.

Sanctions are applied following investigation and in line with DOPS procedures.

11. Appendices

A – Foundation Coach (Entry Level)
B – Level 1 – Assistant Coach
C – Level 2 – Team Coach
D – Contacts

Appendix A: Foundation Coach (Entry Level)

Purpose

Entry point to the coaching pathway. Supports a Level 2+ coach on-ice and on the bench.
Not permitted to run sessions/games or manage the bench.

Mandatory modules

- Safeguarding Essential (yearly)
- IIHF Integrity: Focus on coaches

Who it's for: New volunteers looking to begin coaching and support club delivery.

Prerequisites

- Age 16+
- Registered as a coach with IHUK and with an IHUK-affiliated club
- Enhanced DBS (Children's Barred List) via Vibrant Nation (through IHUK)
- Level 8 skating proficiency signed off by Club Head Coach

Delivery & assessment

- Fully e-learning, self-paced.
- Complete prior to registration approval.

Bench status

May support the bench; cannot manage the bench.

Progression to Level 1

- Foundation modules completed
- 25+ logged coaching hours (signed by Club Head Coach)
- Age 17+

Competency outcomes (summary)

- Role & conduct: knows assistant coach boundaries; codes of conduct; works as part of a team.
- Inclusive practice: adapts communication; supports diverse participants.
- Coaching basics: helps set up, demonstrates skills safely, supports warm-ups/cool-downs, gives simple feedback.
- Safety & safeguarding: understands duty of care, incident response, and reporting lines.
- Reflective practice: seeks feedback and identifies next steps in development.

Appendix B: Level 1 – Assistant Coach

Purpose

Assists delivery of coaching under the direct supervision of a more-qualified coach. May lead activities planned by a Level 2+ coach and contribute to session reviews. Not permitted to manage the bench.

Mandatory modules

(complete before coaching; refresh as noted)

- Safeguarding Essentials – (yearly)
- IIHF Integrity: Focus on coaches
- Basic First Aid – Either annual or three-yearly renewal depending on course delivery method.
- IHUK Level 1 Ice Hockey-specific workshop (in-person)

Who it's for

Foundation Coaches progressing on the pathway and aiming to help deliver quality sessions.

Prerequisites

- Age 16+
- Registered as a coach with IHUK and with an IHUK-affiliated club
- Enhanced DBS (Children's Barred List) via Vibrant Nation (through IHUK)
- Level 8 skating proficiency (signed by Club Head Coach)
- Foundation Coach modules completed

Delivery & assessment

- Mostly e-learning (self-paced) plus in-person Level 1 workshop.
- Complete e-learning prior to registration approval.
- Workshop dates published on the IHUK website.

Maintaining licence

CPD: 2 activities over 3 years; Safeguarding: annually prior to registration; First Aid: every 3 years.

Bench status

Level 1 coaches cannot manage the bench.

Progression to Level 2

Eligible when all three are met:

- 10+ months as a fully registered IHUK Level 1 coach
- 50+ logged coaching hours (signed by Club Team Coach)
- Level 1 status maintained (including safeguarding/first aid/CPD)

Competency outcomes (summary)

- Role & conduct: works within assistant-coach boundaries; models codes of conduct; supports safe practice.
- Inclusive delivery: adapts communication; supports diverse participants and learning styles.
- Coaching process: prepares environment, leads planned activities, supports warm-ups/cool-downs, gives basic feedback, contributes to reviews.
- Growth mindset: seeks feedback; maintains a simple personal development plan.

Appendix C: Level 2 – Team Coach

Purpose

Leads and delivers coaching sessions; plans programmes; manages the bench; mentors/supports Level 1 coaches.

Mandatory modules

(complete before being licensed as Level 2; refresh as shown)

- Safeguarding Essentials – (yearly)
- Basic First Aid – Either annual or three-yearly renewal depending on course delivery method.
- UKAD Coach Clean – (yearly)
- IIHF “Integrity: Focus on Coaches” – (every 2 years)
- IHUK Level 2 Ice Hockey-specific workshop (in-person)

Timing: Both existing and new Level 2 coaches must complete Coach Clean and IIHF Integrity prior to registration approval.

Who it’s for

Level 1 coaches progressing to independently lead high-quality sessions and manage a team bench.

Prerequisites

- Age 18+
- Registered as a coach with IHUK and with an IHUK-affiliated club
- Enhanced DBS (Children’s Barred List) via Vibrant Nation (through IHUK)
- Level 8 skating proficiency (signed by Club Head Coach)
- Level 1 completed
- Minimum 10 months as Level 1 and 50+ logged coaching hours (signed by Club Head Coach)

Delivery & assessment

- Mostly e-learning plus the in-person Level 2 workshop
- You cannot coach as Level 2 / manage the bench until all modules are completed and recorded
- Workshop dates: published on the IHUK website

Maintaining licence

CPD: 4 activities over 3 years; Safeguarding: annually prior to registration; First Aid: every 3 years; UKAD Coach Clean & IIHF Integrity: annually prior to registration.

Bench status

Level 2 coaches may manage the bench.

Competency outcomes (summary)

- Leadership & conduct: runs sessions safely; sets standards; models codes of conduct; manages assistant coaches
- Inclusive delivery: plans and adapts for age/stage, ability, and protected characteristics

- Programme planning: designs progressive, goal-linked sessions and season plans; risk assesses environment
- Technical/Tactical coaching: delivers accurate demonstrations; develops skills; prepares for competition; supports RTP after injury
- Analysis & review: observes, analyses, and provides constructive feedback; uses Plan–Do–Review
- Mentoring & development: supports Level 1 coaches; maintains own CPD and reflective practice

Appendix D: Contacts

General Manager for Coaching
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