

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis was to undertake an evaluation of the United Kingdom Coaching Certification (UKCC) and discuss the implications for current and future designs of the programme. This study extends and expands the research that has previously evaluated coach education programmes by examining the participants' perceptions of the programme and its impact on their competency. The study draws on Lyle's (2010) monitoring and evaluation model and examines the relevance, fidelity and effectiveness of the UKCC.

The broad research approach was a pre-post methodology utilising multiple methods of data collection and analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in the form of focus groups, reflective journals and surveys. Four UKCC sports in Scotland were involved in the study and these were rugby, squash, swimming and triathlon. Data was collected at 10 UKCC courses (levels 1-3) and a total of 136 participants were sampled.

The study's main conclusions regarding the relevance, fidelity and effectiveness of the UKCC were as follows. *Relevance*: At level one the UKCC appeared to play a big part in the participants' initial development as a coach whereas at level two and three the UKCC played a smaller role in the participants' development and instead these participants placed importance on their informal learning. The UKCC fulfilled the participants' expectations however they believed it needed to provide more technical and sport science knowledge, practical coaching experience, and opportunities to learn from others. *Fidelity*: The importance of informal learning was emphasised by the participants. The participants believed that informal methods, such as learning from others and learning from practical experience, were effective ways to learn. A negative of the UKCC was that it was a rushed learning environment. *Effectiveness*: The UKCC had a positive impact on the participants' perceptions of competency as post course competency was significantly higher than pre-course competency. Despite this significant impact, participants still only rated themselves as moderately competent at the end of the course and indicated they needed more technical knowledge and practical experience.

Based on these findings, a number of implications were provided for the UKCC. Implications were provided in three areas: the structure of the UKCC, the delivery of the UKCC, and the role of the UKCC within overall coach development.

## DECLARATION

I declare that I alone composed this thesis and that it embodies the results of my own research. Where appropriate, I have acknowledged the nature and extent of work carried out by others included in this thesis.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

There are a range of people who have helped me through the doctoral process and deserve acknowledgement in this section.

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