

USTA Accreditation Program Manual

FOR ORGANIZATIONS THAT
CERTIFY TENNIS COACHES &
TEACHING PROFESSIONALS



Pursuant to its strategic plan, the USTA has set an objective to increase both the quality and quantity of tennis coaches and teaching professionals throughout the United States. The USTA has determined that, in order to meet and maintain that goal, the U.S. tennis industry will benefit from a combination of well-trained, part-time or seasonal coaches as well as career-driven and well-rounded professionals committed to the sport. Tennis employers in the U.S. are seeking coaches and teaching professionals with a greater variety of on-court and off-court skills/qualifications to help grow the game and their business.

By embracing the Standards for Accreditation in this Third Edition of the Accreditation Manual, and by integrating research and best-practice principles into tennis delivery in the U.S., more players will play the game longer, leading to improved health and a larger pool of skilled players.

Lew Sherr

Chief Executive Officer & Executive Director



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Section 1: General Information

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE USTA

The United States Tennis Association (“USTA”) is the National Governing Body (“NGB”) for the sport of tennis in the United States, as designated by the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (“USOPC”). As such, the USTA is responsible for training players, organizing and staging competition, and promoting the growth of the sport of tennis within the United States. The USTA operates under authority of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (“Ted Stevens Act”), now codified at 36 U.S.C. §§ 220501 et seq. Pursuant to the Act, the USTA, as the NGB, has been granted the authority by the United States Congress to establish national goals for the sport of tennis and encourage the attainment of those goals, including the support of the highest-quality tennis player training within the United States, for able-bodied and wheelchair tennis players.

The USTA is the Accrediting Organization (AO) for entities that offer tennis coaching certification. As the AO the USTA is:

1. Responsible for developing criteria for the consistent application of quality coaching standards across all levels from a Level 1 Coach to a Level 4 Master Coach;
2. Responsible for the design of certain model learning programs, (i.e., online courses, in-person workshops, Coach Developer guidance and assessment tasks).
3. Responsible for the establishment and management of the Coach Developer Academy (CDA), which supports the recruitment and development of Coach Developers, who, in turn, facilitate and evaluate coach learning.



PURPOSE AND VALUE OF ACCREDITATION

THE USTA ACCREDITATION PROGRAM INCLUDES STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION TO PROVIDE AN ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK THAT:

1. Establishes criteria for consistent quality coach education standards for tennis coaches;
2. Requires every Accredited Certifying Organization (ACO) to have and maintain certain minimum organizational standards and objectives, and to demonstrate how these standards are met and maintained;
3. Enables every ACO to offer well-developed, consistent and high-quality programs that provide tennis teaching professionals with the strongest foundation possible for their chosen fields of work;
4. Promotes recruitment and retention of a diverse group of coaches into the coach education certification pathway (lifelong learners);
5. Ensures that all coaches certified by an ACO have the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver high-quality instruction;
6. Ensures certified coaches and teaching professionals deliver safe, ethical and developmentally appropriate coaching to retain players in the game for a lifetime;
7. Promotes the inclusion of all tennis players regardless of their physical, intellectual, social or emotional abilities;
8. Elevates the status of certified tennis coaches and teaching professionals receiving certification from an ACO in the U.S. to better meet the needs of employers, tennis players and the public;
9. Informs players, partners and providers of the commitment to a set of standards, including consistent quality of coaching education by the USTA and ACO through the accreditation and quality assurance of coach learning and certification.

DEFINITIONS

Accrediting Organization (AO)	The USTA is the Accrediting Organization. The role of the AO is outlined throughout the Accreditation Program Manual.
Accreditation	Official recognition by the AO that a certifying organization has met the Standards of Accreditation and all other requirements of the USTA Accreditation Program to be considered an Accredited Certifying Organization.
Accreditation Review Panel (ARP)	The ARP oversees the implementation of the USTA Accreditation Program and is composed of up to five individuals appointed by the USTA Board President and accountable to the USTA Board of Directors.
Accredited Certifying Organization (ACO)	Organizations that successfully demonstrate that they meet and maintain the organizational, operational and programmatic requirements of the USTA Accreditation Program, including but not limited to the Standards for Accreditation for certifying organizations, and will be authorized to utilize the term “Accredited Certifying Organization.”
Approved Education Provider	Entities or organizations that provide learners with access to education and training approved by the AO, which may form part of a coach certification issued by the ACO or be independently credit-worthy, whether for credit towards certification or higher-education requirements. Approved Education Providers demonstrate that they meet the organizational, operational and programmatic requirements of the USTA Standards before they are authorized to offer programs as “Approved Education Providers.”
ARP Task Force	The ARP Task Force is a team of subject-matter experts from various education domains that are selected by the ARP. The ARP Task Force is utilized on a needs-led basis to serve as independent reviewers to perform program recognition evaluation.
Certification	An official status that an ACO provides to an individual who has met the specific competencies for that particular level (e.g., Level 1 through Level 4), and who has met and maintains all other requirements under the Standards for Accreditation and any other standards required by the ACO to obtain and maintain certification status issued by the ACO.
Coach Developer	An education leader who conducts in-person and virtual workshops, delivers specialty courses and assesses candidates for different certification levels.
Continuing Education Unit	A standard measure of continuing education delivered by a certifying organization or training provider.
External Quality Assurance (EQA)	The process undertaken by the ARP Task Force of ensuring that Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) activities have been conducted in a consistent and fair manner.
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	The process undertaken by the ACO of monitoring the teaching, learning and assessment activities offered directly by the ACO.
Program Recognition	ACOs and/or Approved Education Providers, who design, deliver and evaluate a specific program or curriculum for their learners, can apply for Program Recognition. The learning, assessment and quality assurance processes must meet the quality standards requirements. At the completion of the process, a designation of “Granted,” “Deferred” or “Denied” for each program under review for Program Recognition will be conferred. Only programs receiving “Granted” may be used toward the coach certification requirements for certification by the ACO. Program Recognition evaluation is conducted by the ARP Task Force and/or independent reviewers, separate from the ARP and AO.
Safe Play Approved	Safe Play is the USTA's athlete safeguarding program. Safe Play Approval is required and must be maintained in order to be considered a certified coach by the ACO. Safe Play Approval means the individual has successfully completed the criminal background screen, acknowledged the USTA Safe Play Policy and completed the U.S. Center for SafeSport Training.

ACCREDITATION REVIEW PANEL (ARP)

ROLE OF THE ARP

The ARP's purpose is to evaluate applications for accreditation and applications for re-accreditation and to confirm compliance by an ACO with the Standards for Accreditation, as well as the other terms and conditions established in the Accreditation Manual.

The ARP interprets protocols and standards when questions arise. In addition, it assists the ACOs that educate and certify coaches and teaching professionals in order to: i) assure that the ACO provides knowledge and skills consistent with the Standards for Accreditation, and, ii) deliver safe, age- and stage-appropriate instruction to athletes of all ages to support a lifelong love of tennis.

The USTA-U Managing Director will serve as the USTA Accreditation Review Panel Administrator (Administrator). In this capacity, the Administrator will serve as a liaison between the ACO or those organizations seeking accreditation by the USTA and the ARP. The Administrator will also be the primary contact between the ACO and the USTA for non-accreditation matters. USTA-U staff will not serve on the ARP or have any vote on which organization(s) to accredit or re-accredit. The Administrator does not engage in the formal evaluation of organizations. The Administrator is responsible for guiding requests by organizations and the ARP and is otherwise involved in developing and providing services to assist organizations, the ARP and independent reviewers in implementing the Accreditation Program. The USTA will dedicate additional staff as necessary to manage the Accreditation Program.

The ARP encourages and assists in improving the effectiveness and excellence of the ACO. Accordingly, the ARP is authorized by the USTA to undertake various activities, including but not limited to the following:

1. Establish and maintain an evaluation process to assess the capacity of the ACO to accomplish their goals by emphasizing self and peer evaluation through the application of the USTA accreditation criteria and standards;
2. Maintain a relationship with the ACO to ensure their adherence to the USTA accreditation criteria and standards;
3. Seek to establish and maintain relationships with other groups interested in and involved with accreditation and the improvement of tennis certification or the U.S. tennis industry as a whole;
4. Encourage and participate in efforts directed toward studying current issues related to the evaluation and improvement of organizations certifying tennis coaches and teaching professionals.

SELECTION OF USTA ACCREDITATION REVIEW PANEL

The members of the ARP ("ARP Members") are selected based on a variety of factors, such as proven expertise in the U.S. tennis industry and general expertise in relevant domains. The ARP is intended to reflect diversity of gender, thought and ethnicity. The term of service is two years. It is possible for individuals to be selected for consecutive terms on the ARP.

Criteria for selection of ARP Members includes:

1. Professional stature and experience within, and knowledge of, the U.S. tennis industry;
2. Interest in or experience with the accreditation process;
3. Willingness to devote the time necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the ARP;
4. Sensitivity to the mission and goals of tennis coaching certification organizations; and
5. Willingness to agree to the Conflict of Interest Policy set forth in Section 4 of this manual.

A task force of subject-matter experts (“ARP Task Force”) will provide content support to the ARP. The Task Force will conduct programmatic review, including evaluation and enhancement of the ACO’s or education provider’s learning content, assessment and quality assurance and select independent reviewers as necessary.

The USTA reserves the right to change or develop additional policies and procedures specific to the conduct and responsibilities of the ARP and its members.



Section 2: Accreditation

INTRODUCTION

The Accreditation Program is intended to strengthen and sustain the quality and integrity of the U.S. tennis industry. The extent to which each organization accepts and fulfills the responsibilities inherent in the accreditation process is a measure of their commitment to achieving excellence.

The USTA will update or issue clarifications to its policies, procedures and Standards for Accreditation as necessary to maintain the highest quality of tennis coaching certification practices. Reasonable notice will be provided to organizations to enable the organizations to be in compliance with any material changes or updates to the Standards for Accreditation.

Section 3 provides a detailed explanation of the Standards for Accreditation. The Coach Certification Pathway is constructed across four levels that reflect a novice-expert continuum.

THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

STEP 1: PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION

The purpose of a Provisional Accreditation period is to provide the organization seeking accreditation with the opportunity to develop a plan to achieve and maintain compliance with the Standards for Accreditation, to develop a comprehensive application and to prepare for an audit of its governance and operational readiness.

It is anticipated that after the Provisional Accreditation period, the organization will be fully prepared to meet and maintain compliance with the Standards for Accreditation or will withdraw from the accreditation process. The ARP will provide additional information as requested.

In order for an organization to be granted Provisional Accreditation, it must:

1. Submit Application for Provisional Accreditation (see Appendix A).
2. Agree to provide evidence that it meets the Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation.
3. Agree to work toward full compliance with the Standards for Accreditation and provide evidence to the ARP.

The Standards for Accreditation as well as the expectations of USTA-accredited organizations are high. The ARP recognizes that certain aspects of the Standards for Accreditation may take time to fulfill and offers up to a 12-month Provisional Accreditation status to organizations committed to fulfilling the obligations to become an accredited organization and meeting the Standards for Accreditation.

Provisional Accreditation status does not guarantee full accreditation status. An organization seeking accreditation must demonstrate continual progress in complying with the Standards for Accreditation during the provisional 12-month period. There will be semi-annual audits (based on the first day of Provisional

Accreditation status). Issues concerning an organization's ability to demonstrate compliance with the Standards for Accreditation must be resolved to the satisfaction of the ARP.

Eligibility Requirements

In order for an organization to meet the requirements for Provisional Accreditation status, organizations must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Incorporation under the laws of a U.S. state or the District of Columbia, and be headquartered in the U.S.;
2. An organizational mission and purpose that primarily focuses on education for and the support of U.S. tennis coaches and teaching professionals;
3. Managerial and financial capability to plan and execute its obligations and to scale education, workshops and mentoring programs throughout the U.S.;
4. At least 66% of the organization's governing body or certification program board members are primarily employed teaching tennis or supervising tennis teaching professionals in the U.S.;
5. At least 75% of the organization's governing body or certification program board members reside full time in the U.S.;
6. Have provided tennis coaching and education for a minimum of three years;
7. Consistent with the USTA's domestic scope, purpose and mission, the organization demonstrates a commitment to allocate revenue generated by U.S. membership fees primarily to services and programs for the benefit of U.S. tennis teaching professionals;
8. Provides equal opportunity to members, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, age, marriage or civil partnership, disability, or national origin, or any other federally protected class;
9. Affirmatively promotes ethical conduct for its employees, board and members through written policies and procedures that support and enforce compliance with the law, policies, standards or other corporate requirements; and
10. Demonstrated compliance with organizational bylaws and other self-governance policies.

Upon receipt by the ARP of all the required application materials from the organization applying for Provisional Accreditation, ARP will review the application and respond with the decision within 30 days of receipt. If all of the requirements are met to its satisfaction, the ARP will grant Provisional Accreditation status. Provisionally accredited organizations are permitted to use the statement: "Provisionally Accredited by USTA." In the event that the organization is denied Provisional Accreditation, the ARP will provide written reasons for the denial of the application. Organizations denied Provisional Accreditation status may reapply upon a demonstration that the reasons for denial have been remedied.

STEP 2: ACCREDITATION

In order for an organization to be granted and maintain full Accreditation, it must have:

1. Achieved Provisional Accreditation status;
2. Achieved full compliance with the Eligibility Requirements for Accreditation;
3. Achieved full compliance with the Standards for Accreditation; and once fully accredited
4. Achieved Program Recognition when applicable; and
5. Maintained continuous full compliance.

A decision to grant Accreditation is made by the ARP in its sole judgment and discretion based on its assessment of the organization's implementation and administration of the Standards for Accreditation, and meeting all of the requirements for Accreditation. Up to 90 days prior to Provisional Accreditation status ending, organizations may submit their self-assessment and application for full Accreditation (Appendix A).

The ARP anticipates that within 30 days of receiving the application, the ARP will contact the organization to set up a site visit. The ARP will use the application form, the Site Visit Report, and the organization's response, as well as its review of any complaints, publicly available information with respect to the applicant, and any other information the ARP, in its sole discretion, deems relevant to make a decision for Accreditation.

The ARP may take any of the following three actions after reviewing applications for Accreditation or Re-Accreditation:

1. Grant Accreditation;
2. Defer Accreditation pending further information;
3. Deny Accreditation.

The ARP will provide an organizational response and feedback within 30 days of conducting the site visit.

STEP 2A: PROGRAM RECOGNITION

Program Recognition is reviewed by the ARP Task Force, and the following must be demonstrated in order to receive Program Recognition:

1. A **learning program** to guide those with the responsibility for the administration, delivery, and assessment of the qualification(s). **Learning resources** will provide the relevant knowledge and skills to demonstrate evidence to achieve certification. Coaches will have access to all supporting materials presented in a variety of formats.
2. An **assessment strategy and tools** that enable the learner to generate the evidence required to complete the program of study and achieve certification at the level defined by the Standards.

3. An **Internal Quality Assurance strategy** that identifies how the ACO will quality assure the delivery of coach education programs and standardize the assessment and decision-making by Coach Developers to ensure the decisions made are according to set Standards.

The Program Recognition Guidance Document must be completed along with providing relevant documentation towards demonstrating the identified criteria (Appendix B). A minimum of two members of the ARP Task Force and/or independent reviewers will conduct a desk-based review and program observation.

There are three possible outcomes of the Program Recognition process:

- A. USTA Recognized Program status - Granted.
- B. USTA Recognized Program status - Deferred (with required actions and timelines for re-submission).
- C. USTA Recognized Program status - Denied for a minimum of 12 months before re-application.

STEP 2B: MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is granted for a term of three years (not including the 12-month Provisional Accreditation period) with semi-annual reporting. ACO will be required to undertake IQA as defined within their IQA strategy and provide reports with detail of the IQA activity. The ARP will monitor the organization's performance using the Standards for Accreditation through its EQA role.

The ARP may take whatever action it deems appropriate to ensure the integrity of its process and any decisions made, including removal of USTA Accreditation when deemed necessary. The ARP may rescind accreditation at any time if it concludes that the Standards for Accreditation are not being consistently met and maintained, following a notice of rescission and a reasonable opportunity to cure.

STEP 3: RE-ACCREDITATION

Re-Accreditation will be based on the same Standards for Accreditation and eligibility criteria as Accreditation (Section 2B). To avoid interruption, the self-assessment and renewal application for Re-Accreditation must be received no later than 90 days before the accreditation period ends.

Re-Accreditation prior to the expiration of its current accreditation period is required in order to maintain Accreditation. The ACO must submit an Application for Re-Accreditation (Appendix A). The ACO must also submit a self-assessment 90 days prior to expiration of the term. The organization will also undergo a site visit to be determined within 30 days of receiving the application.

Following the site visit, the ARP will prepare a Site Visit Report ("Report") within 60 days. The ACO will have 30 days from receipt of the Report to provide responses and corrections to its findings. A decision to approve Re-Accreditation will be made by the ARP. The Re-Accreditation term is two years. Annual review will be conducted during the term, unless the ARP determines that more frequent reviews are necessary.

STEP 4: APPEAL

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Administrator at accreditation@usta.com along with all other supporting documentation within 30 days of the date on which the organization receives written notification of an appealable decision. An organization must identify the grounds for the appeal, address the reasons for the denial or withdrawal of accreditation to the satisfaction of the ARP, and provide the specific facts that support the grounds for the appeal. A deferral of accreditation is not appealable.

The Appeal Panel consists of three individuals who are not members of the ARP, with not more than two USTA staff members and/or one Board member or another individual as appointed by the USTA Board President. The Appeal Panel meets three times a year to hear appeals if there are any pending at such time. Appeals are heard in February, June and November. Appeals are not intended to be presented in person. The Appeal Panel will render a decision within 30 days of the appeal hearings unless otherwise notified by the Appeal Panel regarding timing. The decision of an Appeal Panel requires a two-thirds majority vote.

Any and all disputes regarding decisions by the Appeal Panel may be pursued through final and binding arbitration at the sole cost and expense of the appealing entity. By submitting an application for Accreditation or Re-Accreditation, the organization agrees to final and binding arbitration administered by the American Arbitration Association, which may take place in either New York, N.Y., or Orlando, Fla., in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, without regard to the principles of conflict of laws. Each party shall be responsible for its own costs and expenses associated with the arbitration.

The appealing organization, by submission of the application and all related actions as a result of the application, agrees to grant immunity to the USTA, Appeal Panel and ARP Members from all claims of civil liability related to actions and decisions made by the USTA, ARP, Appeal Panel and ARP Members or its agents in the course of its work of accrediting and re-accrediting organizations, provided that it was acting in good faith and within the scope of its responsibilities.

Any accredited organization, or organization seeking accreditation, shall exhaust all administrative remedies in any controversy or grievance for the following accrediting actions: Ineligibility for Provisional Accreditation, or Denial of Accreditation and/or Denial of Re-Accreditation and/or rescission of Accreditation.

COMPLAINT PROCESS

The complaint process is separate and distinct from an appeal to the Appeal Panel. It is established to address inquiries and/or complaints about compliance with the Standards for Accreditation.

Inquiries and/or complaints about compliance by an accredited organization with the Standards for Accreditation may be submitted in writing to the Administrator at accreditation@usta.com. In order to be considered, the complaint must address issues other than a concern about an accreditation decision, and must be in writing (email) and be signed by the individual submitting the complaint. The USTA-U Administrator will work with the relevant parties to respond, and as appropriate and necessary, recommend corrective actions to ensure compliance.

Except in extraordinary circumstances, the ARP does not consider complaints if the alleged concern occurred more than one year prior to the filing of the complaint and is no longer ongoing. The ARP, at its discretion, may choose not to act on a complaint where the matters are under judicial consideration.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS TABLE

Step	Type of Accreditation	Timeframe	Application/Terms	Requirements and Assessments
Step 1	Provisional Accreditation	Up to 12 months	Application form (Appendix A).	ARP to respond 30 days upon receipt of Provisional Accreditation application.
Step 2	Accreditation	3 years	Send application and self-assessment 90 days prior to Provisional Accreditation terms ending (Appendix A).	ARP to confirm the receipt of application and identify timeline for a site visit within 30 days. Decision made within 60 days of conducting the site visit.
	Step 2a: Program Recognition		For ACOs that wish to design, deliver and evaluate their own programming, they must complete the Program Recognition application.	Self-assessment using identified criteria housed within the Program Recognition Guidance Document (Appendix B), which is evaluated by the ARP Task Force.
	Step 2b: Maintaining Accreditation		Ongoing Quality Assurance undertaken internally by ACO to be reported on a semi-annual basis.	The ARP will monitor the Standards for Accreditation implementation and the organization's performance during the period between re-accreditation reviews.
Step 3	Re-Accreditation	2 years	Send application and self-assessment 90 days prior to accreditation terms ending (Appendix A).	ARP to confirm the receipt of application and identify timeline for a site visit within 30 days. Decision made within 60 days after conducting site visit.



Section 3: Standards for Accreditation

INTRODUCTION

The USTA Accreditation Program is intended to strengthen and sustain the quality and integrity of tennis coaching in the U.S. The extent that each organization accepts and fulfills the responsibilities inherent in the accreditation process is a measure of its commitment to strive for and achieve excellence.

The USTA Standards for Accreditation establish criteria for organizational quality and for tennis coaching certification program effectiveness. The USTA expects organizations to work toward improving their quality, increasing their effectiveness and continually striving toward excellence. Its evaluative processes are designed to encourage such improvement.

In order to use the designation “Accredited by the USTA,” an accredited certifying organization must meet the following Standards for Accreditation:

STANDARD ONE: ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION AND PURPOSE

The organization’s mission and purpose is appropriate to domestic tennis coaching certification, consistent with its charter or other operating authority, and implemented in a manner that complies with the Standards for Accreditation. The organization’s mission gives direction to its activities and provides a basis for assessing and enhancing its effectiveness.

1. The organization continues to meet the eligibility requirements (pages 9-10) for Provisional Accreditation status;
2. The mission of the organization includes providing quality tennis coaching certification in the U.S., identifying the U.S. tennis industry needs that it seeks to serve, and reflecting both the organization’s traditions and its vision for the future;
3. The organization’s mission statement has been formally adopted by the governing entity;
4. The organization’s purposes enhance the U.S. tennis coaching communities it serves;
5. The mission and purposes of the organization are accepted and widely understood by its governing body, staff and tennis coaches. They provide direction to the curricula and other activities and form the basis on which expectations for tennis coach learning are developed; and
6. The organization periodically evaluates the content and pertinence of its mission and purposes, ensuring they are current and provide overall direction in planning, evaluation and resource allocation.

STANDARD TWO: ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

The organization has a system of governance that facilitates the accomplishment of its mission and purposes and supports organizational effectiveness and integrity. Through its organizational design and governance structure, the organization creates and sustains an environment that encourages excellence and integrity in certification programs. It demonstrates administrative capacity by providing support for the appropriate functioning of each organizational component. The organization has sufficient independence from any other entity to be held accountable for meeting the USTA Standards for Accreditation.

1. The organization has a functioning governing body or board that meets the Eligibility Requirements (pages 9-10) and is responsible for the quality, integrity and financial stability of the organization and for ensuring that the organization mission is being carried out. Its membership is sufficient in size and composition to fulfill all board responsibilities;
2. The organization's structure, decision-making processes and policies are clear and consistent with its mission and support its effectiveness;
3. The organization and its owners, governing board, officers and administrators act ethically, with integrity and in compliance with laws in their professional activities, business operations and relations;
4. The governing entity demonstrates sufficient independence to ensure it can act in the organization's best interest and in fulfillment of the Standards for Accreditation;
5. Owners, management, coaches and staff are qualified for their particular roles and possess the appropriate education, training and experience commensurate with the level of their roles and responsibilities; and
6. The organization has a robust internal quality assurance process in place to evaluate program delivery and assessment of the various levels of its tennis coaching certification programs. Systematic feedback from coach learners, teaching professionals, former teaching professionals and other relevant constituencies is a demonstrable factor in organizational improvement.



STANDARD THREE: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Introduction

The Coach Certification Pathway is constructed across four levels that reflect a novice-expert continuum. In this section, the requirements and specifications for each level are detailed.

Level 1 Coach – Certification Specifications

Role Descriptor

The Level 1 Coach provides safe, fun and organized sessions for beginner to low-intermediate players of all ages and abilities. The Level 1 Coach will create an environment that fosters positive tennis experiences, provides opportunities for success and develops a lifetime love for the game.

Participant Requirements

Minimum age	Minimum age limits to be determined at the discretion of each organization in accordance with all applicable laws
Coach's playing level	Minimum serve and rally with red ball
Previous coaching experience	Community/school coaches, assisting certified professionals, certification candidates
Standard	Maintain Safe Play Approved status

Units and Learning Outcomes

The Level 1 Certification Specification is structured into three units and based on the three key phases of the coaching process. Each unit is underpinned by a series of learning outcomes, which are written as competence-based statements identifying what the coach will be able to know and do by the end of the course of study. These are reflected in the three tables below:

UNIT 1. PLAN & ORGANIZE

Plan and organize age- and stage-appropriate tennis activities for beginner to low-intermediate level players making allowances for athletes who may need accommodations.

Learning Outcomes	Explore the USTA American Development Model and identify the requirements of red, orange and green ball tennis.
	Describe the elements of effective competition (team-based, non-elimination singles and doubles).
	Identify game situations, tactics and ball characteristics of an activity.
	Recognize that athletes will have varying abilities and disabilities that will require accommodations.

UNIT 2. DELIVER

Apply sound teaching/coaching principles to **deliver** safe, enjoyable and effective learning opportunities in which each player achieves success.

Learning Outcomes	Build quality relationships to increase player engagement and foster success.
	Demonstrate the appropriate GPS (Grip, Preparation, Swing Path) for serves and groundstrokes and identify how distance affects GPS.
	Use effective verbal and non-verbal communication to set up, manage and evaluate play, practice and competition.
	Provide opportunities for creative coach-led (including appropriate feeding) and self-directed skill development and play.
	Effectively manage activities, ensuring appropriate formations and rotations to maximize player engagement in cooperative and competitive activities.
	Facilitate and support a play environment that is free from misconduct, including bullying, hazing, harassment and physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

UNIT 3. REFLECT

Use techniques to encourage **player reflection** and development and utilize **self-reflection** to explore the effectiveness of their own role.

Learning Outcomes	Utilize age- and stage-appropriate communication techniques to check for player understanding and facilitate player development.
	Use reflective techniques to support self and peer learning.
	Identify opportunities for the progressive development of personal coaching knowledge and skills.

Evidence Requirements:

In order to achieve their Level 1 Coach certification, coaches will need to:

1. Successfully complete all online courses including Course Welcome, Coaching Fundamentals 1, Coaching Fundamentals 2 and Coach Youth Tennis.
2. Attend and successfully complete all workshop requirements, whether offered virtually or in person.
3. Undertake an observation of coaching performance conducted either virtually or in-person and provide evidence of planning and reflection.
4. Complete a coach profiling exercise and submit a professional development plan (PDP).
5. For all coaches age 18 and over, be Safe Play Approved and maintain Safe Play Approved status throughout their certification with the ACO.
6. Provide evidence of completing all additional requirements stipulated by the ACO, including but not limited to First Aid/CPR/AED.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: USTA AND ACCREDITED CERTIFYING ORGANIZATIONS

USTA

- Establish the Quality Standards, i.e., learning outcomes and assessment requirements
- Develop model learning programs for use by ACO
- Recruit (with input from accredited organizations) and train all Coach Developers for Level 1
- Undertake External Quality Assurance
- Provide API to ACO to ensure consistent tracking of Safe Play Approved status of members

Accredited Certifying Organizations

Assume responsibility for all elements, including both EQA and IQA of Level 1 programming, including but not limited to:

- Market and promote
- Recruit coaches
- Schedule courses and workshops
- Recruit and contract Coach Developers
- Provide Coach Developer Program orientation and training
- Register and track coaches into ACO Learning Management System
- Deliver courses
- Conduct coach evaluation
- Report on Level 1 Certification completion on an annual basis, which includes, but is not limited to, requiring completion and maintenance of First Aid, CPR/AED certifications issued by the American Heart Association and/or American Red Cross;
- Maintain a method to consistently track and report on Safe Play Approved status for all coaches;
- Award coach certifications
- Undertake IQA
- Report on coach registrations, attendees and completions to the Accrediting Organization on a quarterly basis

If an ACO wishes to design and deliver their own learning program, they must complete the Program Recognition Guidance Document to demonstrate how their program meets the requirements of the Level 1 Quality Standards.

Level 2 Professional – Certification Specifications

Role Descriptor

The Level 2 certified professional plans, delivers and evaluates progressive practices, play and competition with players of all ages, levels and abilities.

Participant Requirements

Minimum Age	18 Years Old
Coach's playing level	Minimum of 3.5 NTRP If in a wheelchair, minimum of a B player
Previous coaching experience/ coaching qualification	Level 1
Student's playing level (students that the coach teaches)	Beginner to advanced for all abilities
Standard	Maintain Safe Play Approved status

Units and Learning Outcomes

The Level 2 Certification Specification is structured into four units. Each unit is structured into learning outcomes with associated key concepts. Coaches are expected to apply the key concepts in their own coaching environment and provide evidence of their ability to meet the learning outcomes.

UNIT 1. PLANNING & ORGANIZING

Design a series of age- and stage-appropriate play and progressive practice sessions to guide the development of players, making allowances for athletes who may need accommodations.

Learning Outcomes	Key Concepts	Evidence Requirements
The coach will be able to:	The coach will know about:	To demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, coaches will need to:
1.1 Develop an athlete-centered coaching philosophy	The Reflective Practitioner Athlete-Centered Coaching Core Values Personal Coaching Philosophy	Integrate elements of athlete-centered practice into their coaching and comment on its impact on their player(s). Establish, review and evolve their coaching philosophy.
1.2 Build a program philosophy consistent with their own coaching environment	Program Philosophy Elements of a Successful Program	Identify the purpose and core values of the facility where they work. Provide an overview of the program elements offered by their facility for adults and juniors and describe their role in each. Consider both the purpose and program and create a program philosophy that reflects the current culture of their facility. Reflect on if/how this is consistent with their personal coaching philosophy.

1.3 Utilize rating tools to evaluate players and guide the planning process	Standards-based player evaluation NTRP	Using age- and stage-appropriate player evaluation tools, rate players in both practice and play settings. Give a final player rating based upon game situations, tactics and ball characteristics with descriptions of what they are capable of in each.
1.4 Integrate elements of the Tennis American Development Model and plan for age- and stage-appropriate coaching	The USTA American Development Model Growth, Development and Maturation The 5 C's	Reflect on their current coaching environment and identify specifically where and how key elements of the USTA American Development Model are applied. Utilizing the players already profiled, justify how key considerations of growth, development and maturation are integrated into the planning process. Utilizing the players they are working with, indicate how the 5 C's are integrated into each lesson and how this applies to the specific age and stage they are working with.
1.5 Utilize Net Generation to influence planning and practice design	Net Generation Competencies Using the Practice and Play Plans Using the Net Generation App to Evaluate Players Net Generation Community and Coaches Practice and Play Plans for Wheelchair and Adaptive Athletes	Evaluate three players from their program with the Net Generation app, ideally one red, one orange and one green ball player and design tailored session plans. Utilize the Net Generation app to create red, orange and green ball practice plans. Reflect on the effectiveness of this tool from a planning perspective.
1.6 Design a series of progressive practice sessions to guide the development of the whole athlete	Player Profile Designing Lesson Plans Teaching Private Lessons Teaching Group Lessons	Create a player profile. Design a private lesson, including but not limited to the components of warm-up, skill development, game and wrap-up. Design a series of developmentally appropriate progressive plans (i.e., minimum of five) for a group of players, including allowances for athletes who may need accommodations. Components to include, but not limited to warm-up, tennis and athletic skill development, game and wrap-up.
1.7 Reflect upon and evaluate the practice, athlete experience and coaching behaviors to inform the design of subsequent sessions to support individual progression	Reflective Practice	Integrate reflective practice within and across all elements of their coaching practice, i.e., planning (pre-reflection), coaching session (reflection in action) and post (reflection on action).

Required Online Course Commitment

As a minimum requirement, all coaches will need to complete the following online courses, ideally before attending the in-person workshop:

- Athlete-Centered Coaching
- Designing Your Coaching Program
- Developing Player Standards
- Lesson Planning
- Utilizing Net Generation
- Coaching Wheelchair and Adaptive Tennis

UNIT 2. COACHING & TEACHING

Facilitate learning and develop players utilizing athlete-centered coaching strategies.

Learning Outcomes	Key Concepts	Evidence Requirements
The coach will be able to:	The coach will know about:	To demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, coaches will need to:
2.1 Create a safe, positive and fun tennis environment to maximize the player's learning and development	The USTA American Development Model Athlete-Centered Coaching Safety	Evaluate how effectively they have created and maintained a safe and positive tennis environment free of misconduct throughout their coaching practice. Evaluate how effectively they have utilized the athlete-centered coaching strategies across the coaching program.
2.2 Utilize the athlete-centered coaching strategies to develop the whole athlete	Principles of Coaching Coaching Emotional Intelligence Communication USTA American Development Model	Integrate the development of the player's athletic and movement skills into their coaching sessions. Integrate the principles of coaching and reflect on how effectively these have contributed to the development of the whole athlete. Evaluate how well they have implemented emotional intelligence skills within their own coaching.

2.3 Integrate developmentally appropriate and progressive practices	<p>Organization and Management</p> <p>Types of Practice</p> <p>Open and Closed Environment</p> <p>Formations and Rotations</p> <p>Feeding</p> <p>Progressions/Regressions</p> <p>Cooperative and Competitive</p>	<p>Plan for, deliver and reflect on the delivery of a series of progressive sessions and explain how players have learned and developed.</p> <p>Connect the type of practice to the age and stage of the players.</p> <p>Utilize appropriate formations and rotations for each activity to ensure equal play opportunities.</p> <p>Manage group lessons on multiple courts and maximize play opportunities.</p> <p>Demonstrate the appropriate use of open and closed environments.</p> <p>Demonstrate effective hand and racquet feeding according to the age and the stage of player.</p> <p>Utilize appropriate individual feedback/instruction during group lessons with minimal distraction to other players.</p> <p>Integrate appropriate progressions/regressions to support player learning and address mixed abilities.</p>
2.4 Observe, analyze and develop the player's tactical skills in singles and doubles	<p>Tactical Tennis</p> <p>Doubles Tactical Tennis</p> <p>Phases of Play</p>	<p>Incorporate the basic patterns for all game situations in singles and doubles, justifying how these change according to the level of player.</p> <p>Differentiate the three game styles and show these during point play.</p> <p>Show how the three horizontal and vertical zones of the court change according to the level of the player.</p> <p>Plan for and coach high-percentage tennis for singles and doubles.</p> <p>Demonstrate the phases of play and how they change according to the level of the player.</p>
2.5 Observe, analyze and develop the player's technical parameters in singles and doubles	<p>Technical Tennis</p> <p>Tennis Movements and Footwork</p> <p>Three Stages of Skill Development</p>	<p>Observe, analyze and develop the player's technical skills through the use of video.</p> <p>Explain and demonstrate biomechanical terms and principles, grips, stroke patterns and footwork for each stroke.</p> <p>Demonstrate how technical skills apply to the five ball characteristics.</p> <p>Show the three stages of skill development over three separate practices.</p>
2.6 Implement appropriate strategies/tools for evaluating player training, development and performance	<p>Performance Analysis and Development</p>	<p>Utilize player analysis strategies/tools to evaluate player performance and guide the coaching process.</p> <p>Identify why, when and how to intervene during practice.</p>

2.7 Engage athletes in a process of continuous self-assessment and reflection to foster responsibility for their own learning and development	Autonomy-Supportive Coaching	Critically reflect on how effectively they have engaged athletes in their own learning and development.
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Required Online Course Commitment

As a minimum requirement, all coaches will need to complete the following online courses, ideally before attending the in-person workshop:

- High-Percentage Singles and Doubles
- Tactical Considerations
- Stroke Fundamentals
- Player Analysis
- Teaching and Learning
- Organization and Management
- Growth and Development
- Athletic Development
- Tennis Movements and Footwork
- Sports Science

UNIT 3. PLAYING & COMPETITION

Plan, organize and conduct age- and stage-appropriate practice, play and competition opportunities for the developing player.

Learning Outcomes	Key Concepts	Evidence Requirements
The coach will be able to:	The coach will know about:	To demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, coaches will need to:
3.1 Demonstrate the five ball characteristics and three game situations for singles and doubles	Five Ball Characteristics Game Situations Doubles Positions Phases of Play	Demonstrate all five ball characteristics on groundstrokes, volleys and serves. Demonstrate the three main positions for doubles and how to play offense, defense and neutral phases of play.
3.2 Plan and organize age- and stage-appropriate play and competition opportunities for the developing player	Program Philosophy Program Elements The USTA American Development Model Difference between Play and Competition	Provide an overview of the facility player development pathway and opportunities for play and competition across various ages, stages and abilities. Identify the difference between play and competition and how this changes according to the age, stage and ability of players.
3.3 Design and apply level-based and equal play during practice sessions	Evaluate Players Age and Stage Appropriate Formats	Integrate level-based play into practice. Integrate the concept of equal play opportunities in practice through the use of appropriate formations and rotations.
3.4 Design and conduct facility play and competition opportunities	Level-Based Play Events and Formats Rules and Regulations Referee and Umpire	Organize and manage a round robin. Utilize developmentally appropriate non-elimination formats and level-based play to promote equal play opportunities. Plan, conduct and evaluate a play event at your own facility.
3.5 Understand and integrate the concepts of sportsmanship, etiquette and personal development	Character Development Sportsmanship/Etiquette Personal Development (e.g., mental skills and life skills)	Integrate and evaluate the impact of character development into junior lessons. Integrate opportunities for personal development into adult lessons.
3.6 Inform and involve stakeholders about play and competition opportunities	Inform Stakeholders (e.g., players, parents and officials) of Play and Competition Standards as well as Behavioral Expectations Understand, Integrate and Promote the Competitive Pathway	Plan, conduct and evaluate a 'Parents and Significant Others' session at your facility.
3.7 Reflect and evaluate on play and competition activities to influence the planning process	Evaluation	Deliver and evaluate a 'Play' event at your own facility.

Required Online Course Commitment

As a minimum requirement, all coaches will need to complete the following online courses, ideally before attending the in-person workshop:

- Basics of Play and Competition
- Referee and Umpire
- Working with Parents and Significant Others

UNIT 4. BUSINESS

Describe the basics of tennis facility operations, including administration, management and customer service.

Learning Outcomes	Key Concepts	Evidence Requirements
The coach will be able to:	The coach will know about:	To demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, coaches will need to:
4.1 Define customer service and identify measurable KPIs	Customer Service Key Performance Indicators	Define customer service and identify measurable KPIs.
4.2 Identify the various components of administration and promotion of lessons and programs	Administrative Tools Personal Organization Promotion of Programs and Lessons	Identify personal organization for lesson scheduling and the various types of administrative tools. List successful approaches to promoting lessons and programs.
4.3 Identify the basic components of racquets, strings, grips and options for customization	Racquet Technology String Types and Tension Types of Grips Racquet Customization	Describe the various racquet specifications, including head size, weight, balance, string pattern and length. Identify the basics of tennis strings, including construction, gauge, tension and restringing.
4.4 Create a strategy for personal development including time management, ethics and behavior	Time Management Ethics and Behaviors	Recognize effective time-management, balancing on-court, off-court and personal. Describe the certification organizations areas for ethics and behavior.
4.5 Explain the various stakeholders in the tennis industry and additional racquet/paddle opportunities for tennis teaching professionals	Tennis Alphabet Soup Racquet and Paddle Sports	Identify the various stakeholders in the tennis industry and the roles they play. Explain the additional racquet/paddle opportunities and their benefits.
4.6 Describe the certification process and opportunities for continuing education	Onboarding Use of LMS Certification Pathway	Identify the steps for certification. Explain the certification pathway and opportunities for continuing education.
4.7 Explain the role of Community Tennis Associations and the importance and role of Diversity and Inclusion in the tennis business	Community Tennis Associations Diversity and Inclusion Unconscious Bias Athletes with Disabilities	Describe how to create and grow a Community Tennis Association. Define Diversity and Inclusion and its value in coaching. Identify unconscious bias and skills for effectively managing their blind spots.

Required Online Course Commitment

As a minimum requirement, all coaches will need to complete the following online courses:

1. The Tennis Business (developed by certification organizations)
2. Personal and Professional Development (developed by certification organizations)
3. Diversity and Inclusion

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: USTA AND ACCREDITED ORGANIZATIONS

USTA

- Establish the Quality Standards, i.e., learning outcomes and assessment requirements
- Develop model learning programs for use by ACO
- Recruit (with input from accredited organizations) and train all Coach Developers for Level 2
- Undertake External Quality Assurance
- Provide API to ACO to ensure consistent tracking of Safe Play Approved status of members

Accredited Certifying Organizations

Assume responsibility for all elements, including both EQA and IQA of Level 1 programming, including but not limited to:

- Market and promote
- Recruit coaches
- Schedule courses and workshops
- Recruit and contract Coach Developers
- Provide Coach Developer Program orientation and training
- Register and track coaches in to ACO Learning Management System
- Conduct coach registration
- Deliver courses
- Conduct an assessment of the coach's knowledge and skills
- Track coach progress of Level 2 certifications and any other additional requirements
- Award coach certifications
- Report of coach registrations, attendees and completions on a quarterly basis
- Provide a Coach Developer or staff member to serve as a key point of contact to either individuals or a cohort of certification candidates
- Track and report on Safe Play Approved status for all coaches

If an ACO wishes to design and deliver their own learning program, they must complete the Program Recognition Guidance Document to demonstrate how their program meets the requirements of the Level 1 Quality Standards.

LEVELS 3 AND 4

There will be additional levels of certification that can be obtained, based on career tracks and professional interests. Level 3 Specialty and Level 4 Master will be offered by the ACO. Level 3 Specialty has four different career tracks for certification—Adult, Junior, Performance and Director of Tennis, with aspects of wheelchair and adaptive tennis integrated in each area. Adult, Junior and Director of Tennis specialties will be developed and delivered by the ACO. The Performance specialty will be developed and delivered by the USTA. Unit specifications for Level 3 will be provided as a supplement to the manual when available.

RECOGNITION OF CURRENT COMPETENCY

In exceptional circumstances, there will be coaches (for example, international coaches or experienced yet uncertified coaches) who are operating effectively within the coaching role at a specific level without certification. These coaches must be able to access a process by which their knowledge and skills can be recognized and validated at that level. This process is called the “Recognition of Current Competence”. It is an assessment process that enables people to gain formal certifications for the knowledge and skills they already have.

To facilitate the Recognition of Current Competence, the ACO must provide coaches with access to the process. This process is a self-assessment based on pre-determined criteria, as established by the USTA, and designed to enable coaches to demonstrate how their current knowledge and skills meet the requirements of a coach certification at a specific level. This self-assessment will be submitted to the ACO for review and confirmation.

The ACO must report on any Recognition of Current Competence activity as part of their IQA reporting. This will be subject to External Quality Assurance by the Accrediting Organization to ensure that the process is being applied fairly and reliably.

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND RENEWALS

Continuing education requirements are in place for Level 2 certified coaches and higher. They are intended to encourage coaches to expand their knowledge and stay up-to-date on new developments. To maintain their membership and certification, Level 2 professionals must renew every (3) years by successfully completing 15 hours of continuing education.

COACH DEVELOPER DESCRIPTION

Coach Developers are certified tennis teaching professionals and learning facilitators. Their role is to support the initial and ongoing education and training of tennis coaches, from beginner coach to master coach. The role may include but is not limited to instructional design, delivery of virtual and in-person learning, coach evaluation and mentoring.

Coach Developers deliver across a range of extensive programming internally for USTA and on behalf of partner training providers. Coach Developers are critical to the quality coaching agenda.

Coach Developers will:

1. Facilitate synchronous learning at in-person workshops and during virtual programs for different levels of certification.
2. Undertake formative and summative assessments during in-person workshops, remotely, e.g., video assessment, and the coaching portfolio.
3. Conduct specialty courses as required.

Experience and Education

1. Certified teaching professional in good standing with ACO
2. Supervision of a successful tennis program
3. Prior experience as a Coach Developer (e.g., ACO tester/clinician, USTA community facilitators, internationally recognized Coach Developer status) and/or community coaches (e.g., RCW, Schools Trainings, Net Generation Community)
4. Presentations and public speaking background preferable
5. Undergraduate degree preferable
6. Additional tennis certifications or specialty areas (e.g. ITPA, wheelchair, cardio, USTA High Performance)
7. Completion of all online courses at the next level of certification

Skills/Attributes

1. Learning, development and facilitation skills
2. Organization and management skills
3. High level of ethics and professional behavior

Certification and Coach Developer Levels

There are four levels of certification. The Coach Developer should have at least the next level of certification:

- **Level 1 Coach:** Coach Developer should have at least Level 2 certification.
- **Level 2 Professional:** Coach Developer should have at least Level 3 certification.
- **Level 3 Specialist:** Coach Developer should have Level 4 certification in the specialty area, and postgraduate degree (preferable).
- **Level 4 Master:** Coach Developer should have Level 4 certification in the specialty area, and postgraduate degree (preferable).

Levels 3 & 4 Coach Developer Requirements

Additional detail for Level 3 and 4 Coach Developer requirements will be available in the fourth quarter of 2023.

Section 4: USTA Policy Statements

USTA PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Organizations that are accredited or seeking Accreditation agree to public disclosure of accreditation status.

Notwithstanding full disclosure to the public of accreditation status of accredited organizations, it is the policy of the USTA and its Accreditation Review Panel to maintain confidentiality of information related to the accreditation and re-accreditation process to the fullest extent permitted by law, including the identity of any evaluators utilized by the USTA to evaluate organizational compliance with the Standards for Accreditation.

USTA CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

In carrying out its responsibilities, including as part of accreditation review evaluation teams, the ARP seeks to ensure that its decisions are based solely on the application of professional judgment to the information resulting from its processes. Therefore, it seeks to avoid both the reality and the appearance of conflicts of interest. Conflict of interest is defined as a circumstance in which an individual's capacity to make an impartial or unbiased accreditation decision may be affected because of a prior, current or anticipated organizational affiliation or other significant relationship or association with the organization under review.



Members must agree to full disclosure and restraint in any organizational review involving an actual or potential conflict of interest. Members agree to disclose and, at the direction of the ARP Chair, remove themselves or anyone appointed to act on behalf of the ARP in connection with the ARP, from deliberations or votes on decisions regarding organizations with which they may or do have a potential or actual conflict of interest. Members who are uncertain regarding the possible appearance or reality of conflict of interest shall seek the advice of the ARP Chair. At the request of the ARP Chair, the ARP can determine the question by vote. In general, however, if there is any doubt on the part of the ARP, it should be resolved by the ARP refraining from any discussion or action relating to the organization under review.

This Conflict of Interest policy also applies to ARP staff, members of appeals panels, consultants hired to work for the ARP and other representatives of the ARP.



Appendix A

APPLICATION FOR PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION AND RE-ACCREDITATION

Please complete this form clearly and accurately. If you run out of space, please attach additional pages and reference the question(s) you are answering.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Organization Name _____

Contact Name _____

Title _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____

Phone _____ Website URL _____

Email _____

Form of Organization _____ Year of Formation _____ State of Legal Domicile _____

Number of years your organization has issued tennis professional certifications: _____

Approximate number of current members: _____ Number of members residing in the United States: _____

Number of people in your organization's governing entity (board of directors, etc.) who are primarily employed in teaching tennis or in supervising tennis professionals in the U.S.: _____

Number of people in your organizations' governing entity who reside in the U.S.: _____

What percentage of your current budget is committed to coach education? _____

Are you currently or have you in the past held any accreditations? _____

Please list the accreditations held by your organization and the dates on which those accreditations were attained:

ORGANIZATION MISSION AND GOALS

State your organization's mission and purpose, consistent with your charter or other operating authority. Describe how the mission gives direction to activities that set standards for achievement in coach education.

Describe your current managerial and financial capability to scale coach education, e.g., resources, courses, workshops, etc.

Describe the capacity and capabilities of your organization's technology system (or e-learning management system) to deliver online education, as well as your organization's ability to track, maintain and validate certifications and renewal requirements. Also describe the measures in place to ensure security and confidentiality of member data.

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES

Describe the methods, policies and ways by which your organization affirmatively promotes ethical conduct and compliance with the law, policies, standards or other corporate requirements to your employees, board and members.

Describe the methods and means by which your organization encourages recruitment and provides equal opportunity to members, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age or national origin.

I CERTIFY THAT:

1. All information contained in and attached to this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
2. I have read the USTA Standards of Accreditation.
3. My organization agrees to abide by the USTA Standards of Accreditation.
4. My organization agrees to provide any additional evidence necessary to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the USTA that it meets the eligibility requirements for accreditation as provided in the USTA Standards for Accreditation.
5. My organization will not use the phrase "Provisionally Accredited by USTA" unless and until the USTA has approved this application for provisional accreditation.

Signature of organization head: _____

Printed name: _____

Organization: _____

Date: _____

Please attach:

- Latest form 990
- Latest consolidated audited financials
- Organization Bylaws

Appendix B: Program Recognition Guidance

USTA ACCREDITING AGENCY

ACCREDITED CERTIFYING ORGANIZATION PROGRAM RECOGNITION GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

As the Accrediting Agency for Tennis, the United States Tennis Association (USTA) is committed to ensuring the delivery of high-quality coach development programming leading to coach certification, by Accredited Certifying Organizations (ACO).

This document aims to set out the criteria required by the ACO to gain Program Recognition for their Level 1 and Level 2 Coach Certification Programs. The ACO will have to demonstrate the following components:

A **learning program** to guide those with the responsibility for the administration, delivery and assessment of the qualification(s) learning resources that provide the relevant knowledge and skills to demonstrate evidence to achieve certification. Coaches will have access to all supporting materials presented in a variety of formats.

An **assessment strategy and tools** that enable the learner to generate the evidence required to complete the program of study and achieve certification at the level defined by the Standards.

An Internal **Quality Assurance Strategy** that identifies how the ACO will quality assure the delivery of coach education programs and standardize the assessment and decision-making by Coach Developers to ensure the decisions made are according to set standards.

Structure of the Document

To enable the ACO to generate the required evidence for Program Recognition, the submission is structured into three discrete sections:

Section 1 – Learning

Section 2 – Assessment

Section 2 – Quality Assurance

Each section contains criteria that identifies what needs to be demonstrated and evidenced by the ACO to achieve USTA Program Recognition.

In addition to the criteria, guidance and information are provided where relevant and is highlighted in **green**. Examples of suggested evidence that could be included as part of the certifying organization submission are offered in **blue**.

This document is aimed at assisting in the understanding of the criteria and will serve as recommended guidance.

SECTION 1 – LEARNING

REF. #	Criteria	Guidance	Suggested Evidence	Evidence Submitted by the Certifying Organization
Does the approved certifying organization’s learning program:				
1.1	Match the requirements and standards of the certification specification	Show where and how the competencies/ learning outcomes and assessment criteria are integrated into the learning program.	Mapping exercise	
1.2	Include an appropriate orientation process for learners	Position the learner at the center of the process. Identify what learners need to know and should be able to do by the end of the program. The orientation will share the learning pathway (e.g., online courses, workshops or practical sessions) and assessment requirements (e.g., self-assessment, reflection and development opportunities, knowledge checks and observation of coaching performance).	Coach orientation pack Course overview Welcome video Coach profile and professional Development plan	
1.3	Include a variety of delivery methods, activities and resources which are appropriate for that level of study and support Learner’s development	Offer logically sequenced blended learning and assessment activities relevant to the learners’ needs and the context within which they operate. Offer synchronous and asynchronous online learning opportunities that encourage self-directed study and autonomous learning. Structure in-person workshops to complement self-directed learning and provide an adequate number of sessions to ensure learning is applied, e.g., micro-coaching.	Learning pathway Mapping exercise to show how/where the outcomes are integrated Online courses/virtual Workshops/recorded webinars In-person program overview and CD guidance notes	
1.4	Include an element of self-directed learning, with appropriate learning support mechanisms and resources	Clearly explain what support mechanisms are in place to support self-directed learning.	Comprehensive resource list for CD and learners	

REF. #	Criteria	Guidance	Suggested Evidence	Evidence Submitted by the Certifying Organization
	Learning support mechanisms and resources	<p>Have learning resources available in a variety of formats/media and meet the requirements of learners with specific needs, where appropriate.</p> <p>Ensure learners have access to CD and/or peer support away from in-person delivery.</p>	<p>Synchronous and asynchronous learning with audio and transcript capabilities, where appropriate</p> <p>Hard and soft copy, e.g., coach manuals, writable PDFs, third-party apps, e.g., Net Generation</p> <p>Peer learning, and development, including peer mentoring or communities of practice (e.g., discussion boards or social media groups)</p>	
1.5	Include opportunities for learners to practice skills in an appropriately supported environment	<p>Define what an ‘appropriately supported environment’ is and how to ensure learners can access this.</p> <p>Offer formative opportunities for learners to practice and reflect. Integrate and align self, peer and CD feedback with the learning outcomes to inform learner’s professional development plans.</p> <p>Ensure that coaching practice undertaken as part of the self-directed requirement will form part of the learning program.</p> <p>Ensure coaching practice and formative assessment/development opportunities should take place before any summative assessment.</p>	<p>On-court micro-coaching with CD-led and peer reviews</p> <p>CD guidance and program orientation</p> <p>Maximum CD:learner ratio</p>	

SECTION 2 – ASSESSMENT

REF. #	Criteria	Guidance	Suggested Evidence	Evidence Submitted by the Certifying Organization
Does the approved certifying organization's learning program:				
2.1	Identify the Learning Management System(s) and mechanisms used to register, track and certify learner completion and achievement	<p>Have a Learning Management System (LMS) to keep accurate records, e.g., register learners, provide access to online learning, enable learners to complete assessment tasks and submit the required evidence.</p> <p>Ensure assessment feedback and outcomes are available for learners in the LMS.</p> <p>Track learners from start to finish and generate a grade, completion profile or certification.</p>	<p>LMS systems</p> <p>Learner/CD support and guidance</p> <p>Grade profile certifications</p>	
2.2	Indicate the full process of assessment, including what will be assessed, how it will be conducted, when it will be conducted, the time required to complete it and opportunities to discuss assessment requirements	<p>Explain the different types of assessment (formative, summative, independent, internal) clearly to the learners.</p> <p>Ensure learners are clear on the assessment and development requirements.</p>	<p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Coach orientation pack</p>	
2.3	Integrate a variety of assessment methods/activities suitable to the certification, the Coach Developer's (assessor) ability to support and evaluate learner's needs	<p>Integrate and emphasize self-reflection to enable learners to take responsibility for their own learning.</p> <p>Integrate formative feedback opportunities within the face-to-face delivery for coaches to practice core elements of the coaching process (e.g., communication, observation, provision of feedback, preparation, planning, organization, use of coaching methods, evaluation, creation of positive learning environments, adaptation).</p>	<p>Learning pathway</p> <p>Assessment tools</p> <p>Coach orientation pack/ coaching portfolio</p> <p>Coach Developer assessment guidance</p>	

REF. #	Criteria	Guidance	Suggested Evidence	Evidence Submitted by the Certifying Organization
2.4	Have special assessment guidance and procedures on what flexibility might be available to assessors for learners with particular needs	Have specific policies to ensure that learners are assessed fairly and are not disadvantaged, or their safety compromised, by the assessment environment.	Assessment guidance policy CD orientation training	
2.5	Publish, promote and implement both appeals and complaint procedures that explicitly address the needs of its learners	Produce, promote and operate their own appeals and complaint procedures, which are clearly communicated with admin/CDs and learners.	Appeals and complaints policy Process documentation	



SECTION 3 – QUALITY ASSURANCE

REF. #	Criteria	Guidance	Suggested Evidence	Evidence Submitted by the Certifying Organization
Does the approved certifying organization's learning program:				
3.1	Have a clearly defined Coach Development Pathway that promotes the value of this level of coach certification	Promote its vision for coach Development. This level of coach certification should be positioned within the certifying organization's Coach Development Pathway. It should clearly identify how certified coaches at this level can contribute to the delivery of tennis within and across the industry.	Messaging and communication internally and externally, e.g., website and social media Coach orientation pack	
3.2	Produce and provide Coach Developer guidance to guide the effective, consistent and standardized delivery and assessment of the certification	Offer guidance for CDs on how to facilitate the learning program and conduct assessments, including formative and summative coach assessments. Support CDs to interpret guidance and reflect on how effectively they have implemented the guidance to support coach learning.	CD delivery and assessment guidance documents Course schedule with minimum and maximum numbers	
3.3	Provide a program of orientation and ongoing support for Coach Developers	Utilize CDs who have been trained and accredited with the USTA. Provide a learning program orientation and support for CDs to ensure they model best practices in facilitation and assessment. Ensure CD delivery and assessment practice is internally quality assured to highlight opportunities to enhance the quality of the delivery and assessment of the learning program. Provide on-going support/ professional development based on group and individual CD training needs analysis.	Proposed list of CDs to facilitate/assess drawn from the USTA-accredited CD list Orientation and standardization training programs Training needs analysis Ongoing professional development opportunities	

REF. #	Criteria	Guidance	Suggested Evidence	Evidence Submitted by the Certifying Organization
Does the approved certifying organization's learning program:				
3.4	Ensure all Internal Quality Assurance activity is monitored and recorded and available for review by the accrediting agency	<p>Have dedicated QA manager to assume responsibility for this organizational objective.</p> <p>Have IQA mechanisms which ensure that those responsible for implementation are equipped with sufficient knowledge and understanding of verification methodology and the technical aspects of the sport to fulfill the function effectively.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for learners and CDs to provide feedback and input into any review of the delivery and assessment of the qualification.</p> <p>Monitor, evaluate and report on the delivery and assessment of the certification.</p> <p>Have LMS systems which can track IQA activity and generate reports.</p> <p>Identify how the data and intel will be utilized to inform the ongoing development of high-quality learning/assessment and satisfy the reporting requirements of the accrediting agency.</p>	<p>Named IQA lead</p> <p>IQA strategy policy document detailing, for example, purpose, process, sampling strategies and QA methods (e.g., program observation, desk-based verification, profession discussions with CDs and coaches)</p> <p>IQA tools to evaluate delivery and assessment (in-person and desk-based sampling)</p> <p>LMS reporting systems</p>	

REF. #	Criteria	Guidance	Suggested Evidence	Evidence Submitted by the Certifying Organization
3.5	Have an Internal Quality Assurance workforce to quality assure the delivery and assessment of programs	<p>Have a dedicated IQA workforce that can act on behalf of the certifying organization yet are independent from the delivery of the program of learning and assessment.</p> <p>The IQA workforce will be deployed based on the requirements of the IQA strategy and would assume both information gathering and developmental responsibilities.</p> <p>Ensure IQAs are equipped with sufficient knowledge and understanding of learning methodology and the technical aspects of the sport to fulfill the delivery function effectively.</p>	<p>Named IQA workforce, this may be drawn from the list of approved USTA CDs</p> <p>IQA job specification</p> <p>IQA training program</p>	



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