



## **Finland FA Physical Performance Coach Diploma**

### ***Rationale***

### ***Course Vision***

“To produce Physical Performance Coaches who have the knowledge and skills to work effectively in a football environment, and can support players to achieve their physical potential”

### ***Course Mission***

This course will produce coaches that:

- Have the capacity to boost players physical performance to optimize the chance of competing at international level
- Are able to design, implement and manage a safe and effective physical performance plan (including people and processes) within a football club
- Are able to build and implement player physical development plans which are age and stage of development appropriate.
- Understand the relationship between fitness and football
- Are able to work in a multi-disciplinary way as part of a holistic coaching team
- are reflective and adaptable

### ***Target Audience***

Fitness coaches working within the top tiers of Finnish football

Fitness coaches from neighbouring countries who are working within professional football

### ***Structure***

The programme will be delivered over a 12-month period via a combination of 5 blocks of residential activity, and structured remote learning. Each residential block will last 2.5 days. To successfully complete the programme, participants will be required to attend all residential blocks.

### ***Delivery Methodology***

Residential blocks will be delivered in a highly interactive fashion, consisting of a blend of classroom and practical workshops supplemented by formal teaching



## Block 1. The role of the Performance Coach

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### **Aim:**

Introduce participants to the role and function of the physical performance coach, both individually and as a member of a multidisciplinary performance team

### **Block Goals:**

At the end of this block participants will have:

- *Explored the role of the physical performance coach as part of a multidisciplinary team*
- *Compared and contrasted methods to prepare players for a range of training sessions and matches*
- *Discussed how pre-training time can be optimised for physical development of players*
- *Designed and delivered a range of warm-up protocols for different purposes*
- *Critically explored different approaches to planning of training programmes (periodisation models) accounting for both technical and physical goals*
- *Reflected on their own existing practice and explored other/new approaches*
- *Evaluated their own competence in critical evaluation of scientific articles*
- *Evaluated their own competence in critical evaluation of scientific articles*
- *Developed coaching skills to facilitate conditions for learning, self-motivation, skill acquisition and development*

### **Indicative Content**

The multidisciplinary practitioner

- *Roles and responsibilities in relation to physical performance of players*
- *Use of critical and reflective thinking*

Evaluation of impact in an applied environment

Training preparation (role and content of warm-up). Theory and practical

Planning and periodisation of training. Creation of programmes which are structured, yet adaptable

Features of effective coaching



- *Use of motivation, instruction, feedback, empowerment of players etc*

***Core Staff***

JR, KW, CB

***Specialist Staff***

Ivi Casagrande, Aleksi Tossavainen

***Preparatory work:***

Webinar

Podcast

Scientific Paper

Blog

***Other (indicative) resources***

***Pre-block tasks***

Complete 4 elements of preparatory work

Undertake professional self-assessment (strengths / weaknesses)

***In Block Assessment***

Group task – ‘how do you evaluate impact on team performance?’



## Block 2. Load Monitoring and Management

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### **Aim:**

To explore the role of the Physical Performance Coach in monitoring and managing load which players are exposed to in training and matches. To evaluate contemporary systems for the planning, execution and evaluation of football training load in a variety of environments

### **Block Goals:**

At the end of this block participants will have:

- Been introduced to the concepts of load, load management and load monitoring
- Explored strengths and weaknesses of different approaches (objective, subjective, internal, external) to load monitoring
- Practically explored methods to tease out key messages in training and match data
- Experienced data collection, processing and reporting using a range of monitoring technologies
- Monitored and analysed physical demands of different training drills
- Discussed contextual influences on the physical demands of football (position, stage of week, drill structure etc)
- Explore mode, times and timings of different methods of recovery from football activity
- Used different technologies and systems to objectively measure recovery and readiness in players
- Gained knowledge about nutritional strategies to drive performance and recovery

### **Indicative Content**

- Introduction to concepts of load monitoring and management
- Introduction to management and analysis of data derived from football training
- Introduction to the use of contemporary technologies used to monitor and manage football training load
- Concepts of integrated vs isolated training
- Effect of contextual factors on training load
- Tactical and technical context
- Playing styles and patterns
- Positional requirements
- Demands of matchplay in different scenarios
- Coach philosophies regarding training programme structure



- Contemporary approaches and factors influencing recovery (e.g. sleep, travel)
- Nutrition and supplementation

### ***Core Staff***

JR, KW, CB

### ***Specialist Staff***

Vili Jaakola, (Nutrition)

Ville-Pekka Inkilä (Data)

### ***Preparatory work:***

Webinar (How to build up power bi report – Geet Raju Data Scientist Finnish FA)

Podcast

Scientific Paper

Blog

### ***Other (indicative) resources***

### ***Pre-block tasks***

Complete 4 elements of preparatory work

Critique of scientific paper

Update of portfolio

### ***In Block Assessment***

Presentation on critique of scientific paper



### **Block 3. Working off the training field. Development of strength and power**

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***Aim:***

To explore the role of the Physical Performance Coach in the development of physical qualities which will mitigate risk of injury, and underpin physical performances in the training and match environments.

To evaluate special considerations which should be borne in mind when dealing with young and developing players

***Block Goals:***

At the end of this block participants will have:

- Debated how strength and power work can impact on football specific fitness
- Explored different systems for development of strength and power in football players
- Utilised different technologies for assessment of strength and power qualities in football players
- Delivered practical sessions for development of strength and power in football players
- Examined the specific requirements of female and youth players in relation to strength and power training
- Utilised results from strength and power tests to build profiles of players, and to inform subsequent development programmes
- Explore design and delivery of strength and power programmes which are complementary to other aspects of football training (technical, tactical, physical)
- Experienced use of contemporary technologies to assess body composition and associated factors (PHV, predicted adult stature....) in football players
- Explored the use of a LTAD approach in the developing football player

***Indicative Content***

- Introduction to strength and power training, testing and monitoring
- Programming and periodisation of strength and power training
- Explore use of plyometric training in football
- Strength and power training considerations for female and young players
- Building individual strength and power profiles for players
- Assessment and development of movement qualities in football players
- Assessment of body composition
- Special considerations in relation to strength and power for goalkeepers



- Special considerations for the young and developing player
- LTAD
- Identification of peak height velocity
- Use of reassignment methods to address challenges with relative age effect

### ***Core Staff***

JR, KW, CB

### ***Specialist Staff***

Nick Grantham (S&C), Werner Helsen (online young players)

### ***Preparatory work:***

Webinar

Podcast

Scientific Paper

Blog

### ***Other (indicative) resources***

### ***Pre-block tasks***

Complete 4 elements of preparatory work

Update of portfolio

Collect and collate data collected from own club

### ***In Block Assessment***

Presentation and critique of data collected between block 2 and 3



## **Block 4. Working on the field. Development of locomotor qualities**

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### ***Aim:***

To explore the role of the Physical Performance Coach in the development of locomotor physical qualities to enhance physical performances in the training and match environments.

To evaluate special considerations which should be borne in mind when dealing with the female football player

### ***Block Goals:***

At the end of this block participants will have:

- Explored how football locomotor qualities (e.g. speed, agility and endurance) can be developed, both in an integrated and an isolated way
- Understood the development of locomotor qualities, both in a pure sense, and when applied to football specific movements
- Experienced the execution of a range of tests of locomotor performance using contemporary technologies
- Designed and discuss periodised plans for the development of locomotor qualities in football players
- Used the results of locomotor performance tests to inform individualised interventions for football players
- Examined the specific requirements of female and youth players in relation to locomotor development
- Utilised results from locomotor tests to build individualised profiles of players, and to inform subsequent development programmes
- Understand the specific considerations to be borne in mind when working with the female football player

### ***Indicative Content***

- Design, implementation and review of programmes to develop football speed, agility and endurance
- Implement, review and report on tests of football locomotor qualities (e.g. speed, agility, endurance....)
- Specific considerations for female and youth players in relation to locomotor qualities (programming and evaluation)
- Building of individual locomotor profiles in players





- Specific considerations for the female player (e.g. menstrual cycle, nutrition, RED-S, growth and development....)

### ***Core Staff***

JR, KW, CB

### ***Specialist Staff***

Martin Buchheit

### ***Preparatory work:***

Webinar

Podcast

Scientific Paper

Blog

### ***Other (indicative) resources***

### ***Pre-block tasks***

Complete 4 elements of preparatory work

Update of portfolio

Collect and collate locomotor profiles from players at own club

### ***In Block Assessment***

Presentation and critique Strength and Power profiles and analysis from own club



## **Block 5. The role of the Physical Performance Coach in prevention and management of injuries**

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### ***Aim:***

To examine factors influencing injury propensity in football players, and the role of the physical performance coach in mitigation of risk

Review of course learnings and applications

### ***Block Goals:***

At the end of this block participants will have:

- Acquired knowledge of common injuries which occur in (male, female and youth) football
- Understanding of the performance rehabilitation process from injury in football
- Explored how appropriate evidence based interventions can reduce injury risk in football
- Developed and delivered appropriate interventions for each stage of rehabilitation (RTE, RTT, RTP) in football
- Practically experienced execution of 'functional' screening protocols for football players
- Prepared and presented a case study focussing on an intervention in their own work environment
- Reflected on learnings across the course
- Created personal action plans to implement learning from the course

### ***Indicative Content***

- Common injuries in football, aetology and prevention strategies
- Fundamentals of rehabilitation
- RTT / RTP principles and protocols
- Injury risk reduction evidence and practice
- Pre-injury player profiling and screening
- Case study based on intervention in own environment
- Portfolio presentation
- Individual action plans

### ***Core Staff***

JR, KW, CB



***Specialist Staff***

Rehabilitation?

***Preparatory work:***

Webinar

Podcast

Scientific Paper

Blog

***Other (indicative) resources***

***Pre-block tasks***

Complete 4 elements of preparatory work

Update of portfolio

Preparation of case study

Collect and collate locomotor profiles from players at own club

Repeat strength-weakness self evaluation

***In Block Assessment***

Presentation and critique of locomotor profiles and analysis from own club

Presentation and critique of Case Study



## Case Study Guidelines

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The case study should be a reflection of a performance challenge which has required the candidate to create and implement an (innovative) intervention, either alone, or as part of a multidisciplinary team. It should not merely be descriptive of 'day-to-day' elements of their role (e.g. implementation of a player monitoring system) but should emerge from addressing a 'professional challenge'. Examples of challenges which could be acceptable include:

- development and validation of a new technology or testing protocol
- rehabilitation of a football injury
- establishment of training or testing normative data profiles

Where the intervention is delivered by a team, the candidate should explicitly outline the elements for which s/he took overall responsibility, and detail how the team worked together to deliver an integrated and aligned solution.

The completed case study should be a maximum of 3500 words, and should be structured as follows:

- Explanation of the issue. How did the performance challenge emerge
- Underpinning theoretical rationale for the intervention (should be focussed on the challenge in hand, and not, for example include a generic overview of the physiological demands of football)
- Methods employed, including methods for any data analysis
- Results and analysis. Please note – this is professional sport. Not all interventions produce positive results, and certainly not for all participants. The concept of individual response is highly prevalent in elite level sport. It is equally (sometimes more) impressive to see well argued rationale for non-responses than it is to see those for 'positive' outcomes
- Discussion / impact
- References
- Reflective account of the overall process. What went well? What might have gone better? What might have been done differently?

All candidates will be required to give a 15minute presentation of their case study in block 5, following which they will conduct a 10minute defence of questions / challenges



