



## THE SPORTS LEADER COURSE

The Sports Leader course is ideal as an introduction to volunteering and a better understanding of Inclusive Skating activities. The focus of this course is on skating and the practical application of volunteer skills. Participants will be expected to have completed the Inclusive Skating Safety course prior to commencing the Leader course. Upon completion of this Leader course the Assistant coaching course is available for those who wish to continue their journey on the coaching pathway.

The Leader course has been approved for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award for skills activities. The Leader Course will be suitable for candidates for the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Silver level who have completed the Inclusive Skating safety course.

Inclusive Skating is a CIMSPA Approved Training and Education Provider and all Inclusive Skating courses are assessed annually to meet the requisite CIMSPA quality assurance standards.

The Leader course will be delivered primarily by zoom sessions combined with some video and study materials. The course will cover:



Session	
1	Introduction
2	Role of Sport Leader
3	How to do a risk assessment for a training session
4	How to do a risk assessment for an individual inclusive skater,
5	How to set up balance frames
6	How to assess balance of a participant
7	How to meet skater's skill development needs
8	Choosing a program of activity
9	The Badge Program
10	The Elements Programs
11	An Introduction to the Technical Handbook
12	Communication Skills - generally
13	Communication Skills for an Inclusive skater
14	How to deal with difficult situations
15	Introduction to coaching skills
16	Safety Policy for activities in practice
17	Responsibilities of the Session Leader
18	Working in a Team
19	Classification
20	Conclusion and What Next
*	Social event and Presentation of Certificate

## **1. Introduction**

The Sports Leader course is ideal as an introduction to volunteering and a better understanding of Inclusive Skating activities. The focus of this course is on skating and the practical application of volunteer skills.

The Leader Course is suitable for you if you are over the age of 14, have an interest in sport and physical activity and if you are starting to volunteer with Inclusive Skating.

The Leader Course will introduce you to your role as a Sports Leader in a supervised Inclusive Skating environment and introduce important volunteer and skating skills in relation to yourself, others, and coaching. You will develop an understanding of professional practice and what practical activities are necessary in planned sports coaching sessions.

This course will provide you with opportunities to build knowledge, competence, and confidence around sports leadership. You will also be introduced to reflective learning skills and encouraged to develop a sense of personal responsibility.

The course will give knowledge of how to organise an Inclusive Skating Session and develop leadership skills such as organisation, communication and teamwork as well as helping to build confidence and self-esteem.

The first session will provide an opportunity to be introduced to the course and fellow participants on the course.

You may also be asked what the 3 most important things are that you would like to learn during the course.

## **2. The Role of the Sports Leader**

The role of the Inclusive Skating Session Leader is set out in the Inclusive Skating Safety Policy. The Session Leader operates within a team and Sport Leaders are part of the Leadership team working with the Session Leader, Coaches and Officials to support the delivery of activities.

Course participants will have completed the Inclusive Skating course and will have read the Safety Policy and will benefit from reviewing in more detail the Safety Policy section on the Inclusive Skating Leader.

<https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/safety-policy-290719124434.pdf>

Please refer to the most up to date edition of the Safety Policy.

This course provides some of the skating knowledge and skills that are necessary to fulfil the role of the Session Leader.

During this session we will explore the activities of the Session Leader, participants expectations and how they will benefit from taking the course.

### **3. Risk Assessment for a Training Session**

Safety is the most important aspect of any session and preparation is key.

This session will focus on How to undertake a Risk Assessment for a Training Session and will explore a sample Inclusive Skating Risk Assessment. [Link](#)

<https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/risk-assessment-form-with-covid-19-sample-270720190631.pdf>

During the session participants will consider a range of common scenarios and will complete a risk assessment for the risks identified with the modifications and actions undertaken.

#### **4. Risk Assessment for an Individual Inclusive Skater**

This risk assessment for the session provides an understanding of the totality of the risk but it is no substitute for individual risk assessments for each skater.

An individual risk assessment is recommended, and this is undertaken first by asking the skater to register on the Inclusive Skating platform where all the necessary information can be stored securely and confidentially.

Inclusive Skaters should be given all necessary support and facilitation to undertake skating. The most important time to exercise extreme caution is at the beginning where the skater has no prior knowledge or experience of the activity and similarly the volunteers and coaches have little experience with the skater and therefore may not have a full understanding of the needs of the skater.

All necessary information should be sought to assess risks and the necessary modifications and volunteers should be put in place before the skater starts the activity.

This session will consider the potential individual risks of skater and will explore how modifications can be made to promote safety for an individual skater. The following is taken from the Inclusive Skating Safety Policy.

##### **Assess the risks**

- Are the activities appropriate for your skater?
- Are there any contra-indications that suggest that the skater should not skate or undertake skating related activities?
- Does the skater have a medical condition that requires an emergency response procedure to be activated, e.g., Diabetes, allergies etc.
- Can the skater cope with the environment?
- Is it too cold? Is it too hot?
- Is it too noisy – does the skater need to wear ear defenders and/ or a helmet with ear defenders built in?
- Does the skater have a visual impairment?
- Is the lighting appropriate for the skater?
- Can the skater hear and/ or require assistance to understand instructions?
- Does the skater have delayed response and require extra time to comply with instructions?

- Does the skater understand instructions?
- Can the volunteers provide the necessary support to the skater- is the skater too big/ heavy/ violent etc.?
- Do the skaters/ participants have low attention span / memory difficulties and requires continual prompting?
- Do the skaters / parents and carers have low perception and assessment of risk and therefore take part in undue risky behaviours? Be prepared to say no!
- Do the skater/ parents/ carers have anger management difficulties?
- Does the skater have difficulties with personal contact which makes providing volunteer support problematic?
- Does the skater exhibit poor social control?
- Do they have episodic loss of consciousness?
- Does the skater have repetitive behaviours and/or routines that must be complied with?
- Is the skater noisy and loud and at risk of upsetting other skaters who cannot tolerate noise?

Mitigate the risk – select the best methods and implement them

- Choose the activities that are appropriate for you and the skater.
- It is possible that it is not safe for the skater to go on the rink during that session, for a period of time or at any time in the future.
- If the skater is getting cold then take a break, leave the rink, and go somewhere warm.
- Have alternative off rink activities available for those unable to go onto the rink or for those able to exercise for a short time.
- Always keep the situation under continual review and always stay alert.
- Inclusive Skaters may be unstable, and circumstances can change very quickly. Stay alert and keep all situations under continual review.
- Inclusive Skaters may fatigue more easily than other novice skaters. Manage sessions carefully and ensure that everyone always has a positive session. Be prepared to stop before fatigue sets in.
- Skaters with additional needs may panic and lose their balance suddenly. Stay alert.
- Ensure that the environment remains safe, quiet, and welcoming at all times.
- If a conflict arises keep calm and engaged. Continue to ensure safety for all – even if risk mitigation recommendations are rejected.
- Use the equipment and/ or aids that are appropriate for your skater.
- Use a wheelchair (non-electric) where appropriate.

- If the skater can stand but require a balance frame for support, they will need to use their balance frame on the rink too. Adjust the height of the balance frame to accommodate the increased height that results from the boot and blade or skate. Please refer to additional safety guidelines on the use of “penquins” and similar balance aids.
- Parents/ Carers should always remain with the skater wherever possible.
- If the skater is visually impaired, then they should wear a high visibility vest to alert other users (with a VI warning where possible). A VI skater may always require a guide.
- If the skater is unable to hear ensure that alternative methods of communication are provided. Can the instructions be videoed in advance with sign language? Can instructional videos be provided in advance with sub-titles? Is anyone available who can sign or speak Macatan?
- Do the parents/ carers require additional training and or support before they are able to support the skater?
- Be prepared to separate skaters/ groups according to their needs
- Ensure that all appropriate means are used to mitigate the identified risks.



## 5. How to Set up Balance Frames



This session will cover how to set up balance frames. Reference will be made to the relevant sections of the Safety Policy. Here is a video of how to set up the balance frame. [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM7Wqi4YSiM&list=PLqkg2cxZDGhiyzcKpiXstkBO-T5UJWem2&index=1&t=370s)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM7Wqi4YSiM&list=PLqkg2cxZDGhiyzcKpiXstkBO-T5UJWem2&index=1&t=370s>

This video explains how to open, adjust, and use the balance frames in a socially distanced world.

This will then be followed by discussion of the safe use of the balance frame.



## **6. How to Assess Balance of a Participant**

This session will cover how to assess the balance of the skater. The content of the session from a previous class is available on YouTube for participants to view ahead of the session.

[Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZT3ZroQ8tQ)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZT3ZroQ8tQ>

The session will cover in particular:

- assessment of balance by the medical profession and the risks posed in balance assessment,
- the essential features of a balanced skater with examples,
- actions to be taken if the skater does not balance sufficiently well and the use of equipment where the skater needs balance support.

Participants should refer to the equipment section of the Inclusive Skating website.

[Link](https://inclusiveskating.org/get-involved/equipment)

<https://inclusiveskating.org/get-involved/equipment>

Participants will be encouraged to discuss practical actions to support the development of skating-based activities for those with balance difficulties.

## 7. How to Meet Skater's Skill and Development Needs

This session covers identifying the skater's needs.



This session will focus on creating a profile of the skater that identifies their needs and provides the support for their participation. [Link](https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/profile-form-for-new-skaters-sddcs-resource-example-061118110450.pdf)

<https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/profile-form-for-new-skaters-sddcs-resource-example-061118110450.pdf>

## 8. Choosing a Program of Activity

This session covers identifying a suitable training plan to meet the skater's needs.

If the skater is a beginner and wishes to acquire basic skating skills, then the recommended progression is to start with the Badge program.

[link](https://inclusiveskating.org/technical/tests-and-skills-badge-structure)

<https://inclusiveskating.org/technical/tests-and-skills-badge-structure>



There are 3 levels of badge program depending upon the level of balance support needs of the skater. Each program moves at the average expected speed of a skater with high, average, and low support needs.

This session will cover the structure of the badge programs, the assessment of the ability of the skater and identifying what program of activity best suits the individual skater and meets their needs.

## **9. The Badge Program**

This session will consider the details of each of the 3 levels of badge program.

The booklets and Certificates are available on the website [Link](#)

<https://inclusiveskating.org/technical/tests-and-skills-badge-structure>

Skaters who are registered on the Inclusive Skating learning platform can also obtain named certificates.

## 10. The Elements Programs

This session will focus on the element's activities. Elements are an ideal steppingstone for skaters on their skill development journey from the Badge program.

The elements activities are contained with the Technical Handbook. In 2022 this is the 7th Edition and Leaders should always check for the most recent edition for element activities.

Element's activities are available for ice, in-line, roller and off skate activities.

Music is optional and skaters can learn and perform the skill and focus on the skill without performing the skill to music.

Skaters may perform each skill separately. Most skaters will perform the skills in their event consecutively.

When performing the skills at a competition or in an event the skaters should perform the skills consecutively. An appropriate rest is permitted providing this is within a reasonable time.

Activities are:

- Free Skating - including, jumps, balance, spins
- Compulsory Elements - also used for Classification
- Off Ice/ skate Elements

Skaters who have completed the Badge program for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Physical Skills will usually progress to the elements for their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Physical Skills.

The Compulsory Elements are used for Classification by Inclusive skating as they provide the opportunity to assess the balance of the skater and assess functioning on the right and left foot on a standardised basis.

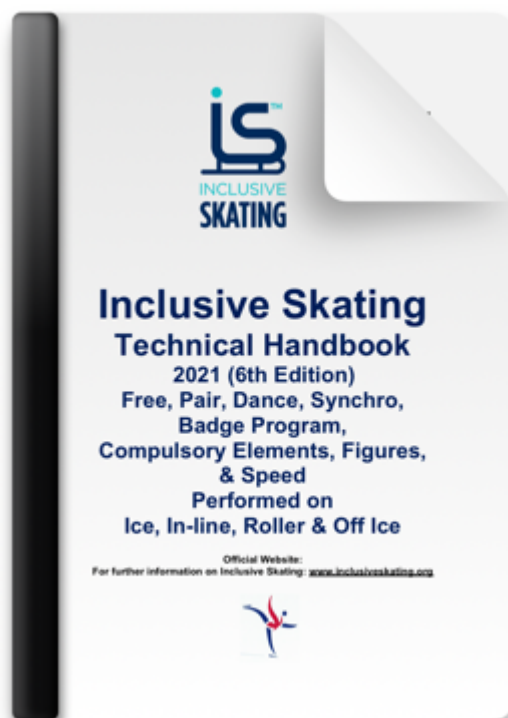
Skaters who can perform 3 or 4 elements in a sequence will usually be ready to progress to a program for music.

## 11. An Introduction to the Technical Handbook

The Inclusive Skating Technical Handbook contains all the technical rules for all the activities that are currently available. In 2022 the Technical Handbook is in the 7th Edition. Leaders should always check for the most recent edition as the Technical Handbook is updated regularly. [Link](https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/technical-handbook-7th-edition-2022-210122200931.pdf)

<https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/technical-handbook-7th-edition-2022-210122200931.pdf>

This session will review the contents of the Technical Handbook, how the events and activities are judged and introduce core rules and the concept of Classification.



## 12. Communication Skills: Generally

The CIMPSA Communications Skills course available on: [link](https://flex.futurefit.co.uk/register/reengage-inclusive-skating)  
<https://flex.futurefit.co.uk/register/reengage-inclusive-skating>

Communication skills allow you to understand and be understood by others. These can include but are not limited to communicating ideas to others clearly, a friendly and confident demeanor, respecting other points of view and speaking in a public setting. Developing your communication skills can do much to help you as a Leader. In this session, we explain what communication skills are and how you can improve your own.

### **What are communication skills?**

You use communication skills when giving and receiving different kinds of information. This can be written, spoken, typed or even body language. You might need to communicate ideas, feelings or what's going on around you. Communication skills involve listening, speaking, observing, and empathising. The skills are important whether you are speaking face-to-face, on a video call or through letters and emails.

### **Communication skills examples**

There are many different types of communication skills that you can make use of professionally. Continued practice will make you an effective and confident communicator. A lot of these skills work in collaboration with each other. This means that it is necessary to practice different communication skills whenever you get the chance. This could be at work, at home or when speaking with a friend or colleague.

Here are some skills to keep in mind:

- Active listening
- Adapting your communication style to your audience
- Friendliness
- Confidence
- Offering and taking feedback
- Volume and clarity
- Empathy
- Respect
- Understanding body language



- Responsiveness

### **Active listening**

An active listener pays close attention to whoever is speaking. People who are good active listeners often quickly earn the respect of co-workers as they appreciate the attention given when speaking. This can mean the active listener gets more attention back in return. While it seems simple, this is a skill that can be hard to develop and improve. You can be an active listener by focusing on the speaker and avoiding distractions. It is a good idea to offer questions, comments or ideas relevant to the conversation topic afterwards.

### **Adapting your communication style to your audience**

Different styles of communication are required depending on the precise situation you are in. It is important to be able to learn where and when to use these skills. Be mindful of your audience and how best to communicate with them.

For example, if you are communicating with a potential employer, it may be best to email them, rather than arrive at their place of work unannounced. It may be that a letter sent in the post is the best way to communicate. In the workplace, you may find it's easier to communicate complex information in person or via a video conference than in a long, dense email.

### **Friendliness**

In a friendship, it is important to be honest and trustworthy. It is the same for relationships in the workplace. When you're working with others, keep a positive and open attitude. Have an open mind and try to understand where colleagues are coming from, and why they have certain opinions. Small gestures such as asking someone how they are, smiling as they speak or offering praise for work well done can help you build positive relationships with both colleagues and managers.

### **Confidence**

People are attracted to confidence. In the workplace, people are more likely to respond to ideas that are presented by a confident speaker. There are many ways to appear confident. For example, consider making eye contact when you're speaking to someone, or sitting up straight with your shoulders open when listening. Make sure you prepare ahead of time so your thoughts are polished, and you can deal with any questions. This will help you avoid being flustered.

## **Offering and taking feedback**

Strong communicators can accept and request critical feedback without feeling attacked. Feedback should always be about the task at hand and should never be a comment on the person behind it. It is also important to provide constructive input to others, by focusing on the problems and all potential solutions.

## **Volume and clarity**

Make sure you are clear and audible whenever talking. This doesn't necessarily mean shouting. By adjusting your speaking voice, you can be heard in a variety of settings. This is an important skill, and it's critical to effective communication. Speaking too loudly may be seen as being disrespectful or arrogant in some situations. Speak to quietly, and people will lose interest if they cannot hear what you have to say. If you're unsure, read the room to see how others are communicating.

## **Empathy**

Having empathy means that you can understand and share the emotions of others. For example, if someone is expressing anger or frustration, empathy can help you acknowledge and diffuse their emotion. At the same time, being able to understand when someone is feeling positive and enthusiastic can help you get support for your ideas and projects.

## **Respect**

A key aspect of respect is knowing when to take part in a discussion. In a team or group setting, allowing others to speak without interruption is seen as important and a mark of respect to them. Respectfully communicating also means using your time with someone else wisely staying on topic, asking clear questions, and responding fully to any questions you've been asked.

## **Understanding body language**

A lot of communication happens through body language. Nonverbal cues such as this include facial expressions, eye contact and how someone is sitting. When you're listening to someone, you should be paying attention to what they're saying as well as their nonverbal language. Don't slouch, don't be fidgety and instead give them your full attention. By the same measure, you should be conscious of your own body language when you're communicating to ensure you're sending appropriate cues to others.

## **Responsiveness**

Whether you're returning a phone call or sending a reply to an email, fast communicators are viewed as more effective than those who are slow to

respond. A good idea is to consider how long an email response might take. If you can do it in a few minutes, why not do it straight away? If it might take a bit longer, put it to one side but let your colleague know you will act upon it very soon. If you give a timescale on when you will respond, this is viewed positively too.

### **How to improve your communication skills**

With experience and practice, you can learn and improve your communication skills. Start by identifying your strengths and then practice and develop those areas:

1. Ask someone you trust to evaluate your communication skills. Understanding your areas of improvement for communication can help you identify what to focus on.
2. Practice improving communication habits. Many communication skills are habits you have developed over time, so use them whenever you can.
3. Consider signing up for workshops to improve communication skills. These can be online or in groups at colleges and schools.
4. Find opportunities both on and off the job where you can practice communication skills.

### 13. Communication Skills for Inclusive Skating

During this session on communication, we will cover transactional analysis

- participants will be considering the PAC theory of communication,
- be given the opportunity to practice their communication skills, and
- discuss the communication of errors and feedback to skaters

Link

<https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/the-basic-elements-of-communication---transactional-analysis-210222215535.pdf>

## 14. How to Deal with Difficult Situations

For this session we will consider the Volunteers and Managing Difficult Situations materials available on [link](#)

<https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/volunteers-and-managing-difficult-situations-210222182953.pdf>

**Here's some useful guidance for everyone!**

### **Dealing With Misbehaviour**

Skaters will misbehave at times; it's only natural. You can respond to misbehaviour in two ways: extinction or discipline.

#### **Extinction**

Ignoring a misbehaviour—neither rewarding nor disciplining it—is called extinction. This can be effective in certain circumstances. In some situations, skaters' misbehaviour only encourages them to act up further because of the recognition they get. Ignoring misbehaviour teaches skaters that it is not worth your attention.

Sometimes, though, you cannot wait for a behaviour to fizzle out. When skaters cause danger to themselves or others or disrupt the activities of others, you need to take immediate action. Tell the offending skater that the behaviour must stop, and that discipline will follow if it doesn't. If the skater doesn't stop misbehaving after the warning, use discipline.

Extinction also doesn't work well when a misbehaviour is self-rewarding. For example, you may be able to keep from grimacing if a skater kicks you in the shin, but even so, he still knows you were hurt. Therein lies the reward. In these circumstances, it is also necessary to discipline the skater for the undesirable behaviour.

Extinction works best in situations in which skaters are seeking recognition through mischievous behaviours, clowning, or grandstanding. Usually, if you are patient, their failure to get your attention will cause the behaviour to disappear.

However, be sure that you don't extinguish desirable behaviour. When skaters do something well, they expect to be positively reinforced. Not

rewarding them will likely cause them to discontinue the desired behaviour.

## **Discipline**

Some educators say we should never discipline skaters but should only reinforce their positive behaviours. They argue that discipline does not work, that it creates hostility and sometimes develops avoidance behaviours that may be more unwholesome than the original problem behaviour. It is true that discipline does not always work and that it can create problems when used ineffectively, but when used appropriately, discipline is effective in eliminating undesirable behaviours without creating other undesirable consequences. You must use discipline effectively, because it is impossible to guide skaters through positive reinforcement and extinction alone. Discipline is part of the positive approach when these guidelines are followed:

- Discipline in a corrective way to help skaters improve now and in the future. Don't discipline to retaliate and make yourself feel better.
- Impose discipline in an impersonal way when skaters break team rules or otherwise misbehave. Shouting at or scolding skaters indicates that your attitude is one of revenge.
- Once a rule has been agreed upon, ensure that skaters who violate it experience the unpleasant consequences of their misbehaviour. Don't wave discipline threateningly over their heads. Just do it but warn a skater once before disciplining.
- Be consistent in administering discipline.
- Don't discipline using consequences that may cause you guilt. If you can't think of an appropriate consequence right away, tell the skater you will talk with her after you think about it. You might consider involving the skater in designing a consequence.

- Once the discipline is completed, don't make skaters feel that they are "in the doghouse." Always make them feel that they're valued members of the team.
- Make sure that what you think is discipline isn't perceived by the skater as a positive reinforcement, for instance, keeping a skater out of doing a certain drill or portion of the practice may be just what the skater desired.
- Never discipline skaters for making errors when they are competing.
- Never use physical activity—running laps or doing push-ups as discipline. To do so only causes skaters to resent physical activity, something we want them to learn to enjoy throughout their lives.
- Discipline sparingly. Constant discipline and criticism cause skaters to turn their interests elsewhere and to resent you as well.
- **Code of Conduct**  
All Inclusive skaters have agreed to the Inclusive Skating code of Conduct. Some coaches reinforce this by asking their skaters to sign a team code of conduct pledge at the beginning of the season. This code of conduct is based on your team and/or school policies.

### **Giving Feedback is a Difficult Situation!**

Communication skills in the Skating coaching environment can be challenging especially when giving feedback so always consider applying the guidance above when giving feedback.

There are a few specific ways you can be an effective communicator and when giving technical feedback during skating sessions:

- Be clear and concise. Making your message as easy to consume as possible reduces the chance of misunderstandings, speeds up projects and helps others quickly understand your goals. Offer further information only when necessary.

- Practice empathy. Understanding your colleague's feelings, ideas and goals can help you when communicating with them. It's a good way to develop trust.
- Assert yourself. At times, it is necessary to be assertive to reach your goals whether you are asking for a raise or resisting an idea you don't think will be beneficial.
- Be calm and consistent. When there is a disagreement or conflict, it can be easy to bring emotion into your communications. Be aware of your tone of voice and body language.
- Use and read body language. Body language is a key part of communications in the workplace. People may say one thing, but their body language may say another.

## **Detecting and Correcting Errors**

Good coaches recognize that skaters make two types of errors: learning errors and performance errors. Learning errors are those that occur because skaters don't know how to perform a skill; that is, they have not yet developed the correct motor pattern in the brain to perform a particular skill. Performance errors are made not because skaters don't know how to execute the skill, but because they have made a mistake in executing what they do know. There is no easy way to know whether a skater is making learning or performance errors, and part of the art of coaching is being able to sort out which type of error each mistake is.

The process of helping your skaters correct errors begins with your observing and evaluating their performances to determine if the mistakes are learning or performance errors. Carefully watch your skaters to see if they routinely make the errors in both practice and competition settings, or if the errors tend to occur only in competition settings. If the latter is the case, then your skaters are making performance errors. For performance errors, you need to look for the reasons your skaters are not performing as well as they know how; perhaps they are nervous, or maybe they get distracted by the competition setting. Find out the reason for the decline in performance and help them to tackle those issues. If the mistakes are learning errors, then you need to help them learn the skill, which is the focus of this section.

When correcting learning errors, there is no substitute for the coach knowing the skills well. The better you understand a skill—not only how it is performed correctly but also what causes learning errors—the more helpful you will be in correcting mistakes.



One of the most common coaching mistakes is to provide inaccurate feedback and advice on how to correct errors. Don't rush into error correction; wrong feedback or poor advice will hurt the learning process more than no feedback or advice at all. If you are uncertain about the cause of the problem or how to correct it, continue to observe and analyze until you are surer. As a rule, you should see the error repeated several times before attempting to correct it.

### ***Correct One Error at a Time***

Let's look at an example from a coach. Suppose one of your skaters is having trouble with her jumping technique. She's doing most things well, but you notice that she's swinging her arms forward outside the circle and up rather late as she approaches the take-off, thus causing her to miss the take off. What do you do?

First, decide which error to correct first, because skaters learn more effectively when they attempt to correct one error at a time. Determine whether one error is causing the other; if so, have the skater correct that error first, because it may eliminate the other error.

In a typical jumping session, a failed landing may be caused by an incorrect take off or entry position so as suggested above correct that first. In cases where neither error is necessarily causing the other, correct the error that will bring the greatest improvement when remedied. Correcting one error often motivates skaters to correct other errors.

### ***Use Positive Feedback to Correct Errors***

The positive approach to correcting errors includes emphasizing what to do instead of what not to do. Use compliments, praise, rewards, and encouragement to correct errors. Acknowledge correct performance as well as efforts to improve. By using positive feedback, you can help your skaters feel good about themselves and promote a strong desire to achieve.

When you're working with one skater at a time, the positive approach to correcting errors includes four steps:

#### *1. Praise effort and correct performance.*

Praise your skater for trying to perform a skill correctly and for performing any parts of it correctly. Praise the skater immediately after he or she performs the skill, if possible. Keep the praise simple: "Good try," "Way to hustle," "Good form," or "That's the way to follow through." You can also

use nonverbal feedback, such as smiling, clapping your hands, or any facial or body expression that shows approval.

Make sure you're sincere with your praise. Don't indicate that a skater's effort was good when it wasn't. Usually, a skater knows when he has made a sincere effort to perform the skill correctly and perceives undeserved praise for what it is- untruthful feedback to make him feel good. Likewise, don't indicate that a skater's performance was correct when it wasn't.

## *2. Give simple and precise feedback to correct errors.*

Don't burden a skater with a long or detailed explanation of how to correct an error. Give just enough feedback that the skater can correct one error at a time. Before giving feedback, recognize that some skaters readily accept it immediately after the error; others will respond better if you slightly delay the correction.

For errors that are complicated to explain and difficult to correct, try the following:

- Explain and demonstrate what the skater should have done. Do not demonstrate what the skater did wrong.
- Explain the cause or causes of the error, especially if it isn't obvious.
- Explain why you are recommending the correction you have selected if it's not obvious.

## *3. Make sure the skater understands your feedback.*

If the skater doesn't understand your feedback, she won't be able to correct the error. Ask the skater to repeat the feedback and to explain and demonstrate how it will be used. If the skater can't do this, be patient and present your feedback again. Then ask the skater to repeat the feedback after you're finished.

#### 4. *Provide an environment that motivates the skater to improve.*

Your skaters won't always be able to correct their errors immediately, even if they do understand your feedback. Encourage them to "hang tough" and stick with it when corrections are difficult, or they seem discouraged. For more difficult corrections, remind them that it will take time, and the improvement will happen only if they work at it. Encourage skaters with little self-confidence. For example, a skating coach might say something like, "You're doing a great job aligning your shoulder and hips, on your take off when you jump. With more practice, and a set routine, you will get the rotational snap in no time." This can motivate a skater to continue to refine her technique.

Other skaters may be very self-motivated and need little help from you in this area; with them you can practically ignore step 4 when correcting an error. Although motivation comes from within, try to provide an environment of positive instruction and encouragement to help your skaters improve.

A final note on correcting errors: Team sports provide unique challenges in this endeavour. How do you provide individual feedback in a group setting using a positive approach? Instead of yelling across the field to correct an error (and embarrass the skater), substitute for the skater who erred, and then make the correction off to the side. This type of feedback has three advantages:

- The skater will be more receptive to the one-on-one feedback.
- The other skaters are still active and still practicing skills and unable to hear your discussion.
- Because the rest of the team is still competing, you'll feel compelled to make your comments simple and concise—which is more helpful to the skater.

The team meeting setting can still be used to give specific, positive feedback. You can do so to emphasize correct group and individual performances. Use this team feedback approach only for positive statements, though. Keep negative feedback for individual discussions.

Additional Resources –The Coaching Feedback Model by Carol Wilson - available on Inclusive skating coaching resources website page (Good example of Questioning Feedback.)

## 14. Introduction to Coaching Skills



### Sport Skills

Many people believe that the only qualification needed to teach a skill is to have performed it. Although it's helpful to have performed it, teaching it successfully requires much more than that. And even if you haven't performed the skill before, you can learn to teach successfully with the useful acronym IDEA:

- **I** Introduce the skill.
- **D** Demonstrate the skill.
- **E** Explain the skill.
- **A** Attend to skaters practicing the skill.

### Introduce the Skill

Skaters, especially those who are young and inexperienced, need to know which skill they are learning and why they are learning it. You should therefore follow these three steps every time you introduce a skill:

1. Get your skaters skater's attention.
2. Name the skill.
3. Explain the importance of the skill.

### ***Get Your Skaters 'Attention***

Because many inclusive skaters are easily distracted, do something to get their attention. Some coaches use interesting news items or stories. Others use jokes. And still others simply project enthusiasm to get their skaters to listen. Whatever method you use, speak slightly above your normal volume, and look your skaters in the eye when you speak.

Also, position skaters so that they can see and hear you. In a group arrange the skaters in two or three evenly spaced rows, facing you. (Make sure they aren't looking into the sun or at a distracting activity.) Then ask if all of them can see you before you begin to speak.

### ***Name the Skill***

Although there may be other common names for the skill you are introducing, use the term in the Technical Handbook wherever possible for consistency. Decide before the start of the season which one you'll use and stick with it. This will help prevent confusion and enhance communication among your skaters. When you introduce the new skill, name it so that the skaters automatically correlate the name with the skill in later discussions.

### ***Explain the Importance of the Skill***

As Rainer Martens, the founder of the American Sport Education Program (ASEP), has said, "The most difficult aspect of coaching is this: Coaches must learn to let skaters learn. Sport skills should be taught so they have meaning to the child, not just meaning to the coach." Although the importance of a skill may be apparent to you, your skaters may be less able to see how the skill will help them become better skaters. Offer them a reason for learning the skill and describe how the skill relates to more advanced skills.

### ***Demonstrate the Skill***

The demonstration step is the most important part of teaching sport skills to skaters who may never have done anything closely resembling it. They need a picture, not just words. They need to see how the skill is performed. If you are unable to perform the skill correctly, ask an assistant coach, one of your team members, or someone more skilled to perform the demonstration.

These tips will help make your demonstrations more effective:

- Use correct form.
- Demonstrate the skill several times.
- Slow the action, if possible, during one or two performances so skaters can see every movement involved in the skill.
- Perform the skill at different angles so your skaters can get a full perspective of it.
- Demonstrate the skill with both the right and the left arms or legs.

### **Explain the Skill**

Skaters learn more effectively when they're given a brief explanation of the skill along with the demonstration. Use simple terms and, if possible, relate the skill to previously learned skills. Ask your skaters whether they understand your description. A good technique is to ask the team to repeat your explanation. Ask questions like "What are you going to do first?" and "Then what?" Should skaters look confused or uncertain, repeat your explanation and demonstration. If possible, use different words so that your skaters get a chance to try to understand the skill from a different perspective.

Complex skills often are better understood when they are explained in more manageable parts. When breaking down a skill, you might take the following steps:

1. Show them a correct performance of the entire skill and explain its function in the sport.

2. Break down the skill and then point out its component parts to your skaters.
3. Have skaters perform each of the component skills you have already taught them.
4. After skaters have demonstrated their ability to perform the separate parts of the skill in sequence, reexplain the entire skill.
5. Have skaters practice the skill in conditions like a competition simulation.

Young and/or Inclusive skaters have short attention spans. Long demonstration or explanation of a skill may cause them to lose focus. Therefore, spend no more than a few minutes altogether on the introduction, demonstration, and explanation phases. Then involve the skaters in drills or games that call on them to perform the skill.

### **Attend to Skaters Practicing the Skill**

If the skill you selected was within your skaters' capabilities and you have done an effective job of introducing, demonstrating, and explaining it, your skaters should be ready to attempt the skill. Some skaters may need to be physically guided through the movements during their first few attempts. Walking unsure skaters through the skill this way will help them gain the confidence to perform the skill on their own.

Your teaching duties, though, don't end when all your skaters have demonstrated that they understand how to perform a skill. In fact, your teaching role is just beginning as you help your skaters improve their skills. A significant part of your teaching consists of closely observing the hit-and-miss trial performances of your skaters. You will shape skaters' skills by detecting errors and correcting them using positive feedback. Keep in mind that your positive feedback will have a great influence on your skaters' motivation to practice and improve their performances.

Remember, too, that skaters may need individual instruction. So set aside a time before, during, or after practice to give individual help even if working in a group.

### **Helping Skaters Improve Skills**

After you have successfully taught your skaters the fundamentals of a skill, your focus will be on helping them improve it. Skaters learn skills and improve upon them at different rates, so don't get frustrated if progress seems slow. Instead, help skaters improve by shaping their skills and detecting and correcting errors.

## **Shaping Skaters 'Skills**

One of your principal teaching duties is to reward positive effort and behaviour—in terms of successful skill execution—when you see it. A skater does a great job with their take off for a jump. You immediately say, "That's the way to do it! Great effort and pursuit!" This, plus a smile and a thumbs-up gesture, goes a long way toward reinforcing that technique in that skater. However, sometimes you may have a long, dry spell before you see correct techniques to reinforce. It's difficult to reward skaters when they don't execute skills correctly. How can you shape their skills if this is the case?

Shaping skills takes practice on your skaters 'part and patience on yours. Expect your skaters to make errors. Telling the skater who made the good turn that he did a good job doesn't ensure that he'll have the same success next time. Seeing inconsistency in your skaters' technique can be frustrating. It's even more challenging to stay positive when your skaters repeatedly perform a skill incorrectly or lack enthusiasm for learning. It can certainly be frustrating to see skaters who seemingly don't heed your advice and continue to make the same mistakes. And when the skaters don't seem to care, you may wonder why you should.

Please know that it is normal to get frustrated sometimes when teaching skills. Nevertheless, part of successful coaching is controlling this frustration. Instead of getting upset, use these six guidelines for shaping skills:

### *1. Think small initially.*

Reward the first signs of behaviour that approximate what you want. Then reward closer and closer approximations of the desired behaviour. In short, use your reward power to shape the behaviour you seek.

### *2. Break skills into small steps.*

For instance, in spins break the spin into the entry three turn and the basic rotating position. One of your skaters does well in getting into the entry



three turn position, but then flattens the edge. Reinforce the correct techniques of getting into proper entry position and then teach how to increase the rotation to initiate the spin. When this is mastered, focus on getting the complete skill accomplished by bringing the free leg round into the desired spin position.

*3. Develop one component of a skill at a time.*

Don't try to shape two components of a skill at once. For example, when making the correction on increasing the rotation for the spin don't try to make another spin correction such as getting lower on a sit spin. Do one thing at a time. Skaters who have problems mastering a skill often do so because they're trying to improve two or more components at once. Help these skaters to isolate a single component.

*4. As skaters become more proficient at a skill, reinforce them only occasionally and only for the best examples of the skill behaviour.*

By focusing only on the best examples of a skill, you will help skaters continue to improve once they've mastered the basics.

*5. When skaters are trying to master a new skill, temporarily relax your standards for how you reward them.*

As skaters focus on the new skill or attempt to integrate it with other skills, the old, well-learned skills may temporarily degenerate.

*6. Go back to the basics.*

If, however, a well-learned skill degenerates for long, you may need to restore it by going back to the basics.

Coaches often have more-skilled skaters provide feedback to teammates as they practice skills. This can be effective but proceed with caution: You must tell the skilled skaters exactly what to look for when their teammates are performing the skills. You must also tell them about the corrections for the common errors of that skill.

### **Coaching Tip**

Writing out in detail each skill you will teach clarifies what you will say and how you will demonstrate and teach each skill to your skaters.

### **Coaching Tip**

Eliminate starting your feed-back to skaters with the word "Don't." By telling them what you want them to do instead of what not to do, you will create success rather than failure.

## **16. Safety Policy for Activities in Practice**

This session will cover trouble shooting and common problems that arise during Inclusive Skating Sessions.

How to identify, manage risks and solve common problems will be the key points that will be covered.

Participants will be asked to consider problems from their own experience and activities covered in the inclusive Skating Safety Policy

Link

<https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/safety-policy-290719124434.pdf>

## 17. Responsibilities of the Session Leader

The role of the Inclusive Skating Session Leader is set out in the Inclusive Skating Safety Policy. The Session Leader operates within a team and Sport Leaders are part of the Leadership team working with the Session Leader, Coaches and Officials to support the delivery of activities.

Course participants will have completed the Inclusive Skating course and will have read the Safety Policy and will benefit from reviewing in more detail the Safety Policy section on the Inclusive Skating Leader.

<https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/safety-policy-290719124434.pdf>

Please refer to the most up to date edition of the Safety Policy.

This session will cover the detailed responsibilities of the session leader and how a Sport Leader contributes to safety.



## 18. Working in a Team

Working in a team requires an understanding of fellow team members. There are many ways to achieve this understanding.

Getting to know your fellow team can really help to promote understanding. Here's a presentation provided by Alan Hannah on the colour model providing insights on you and your team members for you to try. This activity will be done in part during the working in a team session. [Link](https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/insights---creating-a-strong-team-210222202122.pdf)

<https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/insights---creating-a-strong-team-210222202122.pdf>

In the session you will be asked to consider what your dominant colour is and how you contribute to the team and how valuable everyone can be to the efficient working of a team.

## 19. Classification

This session will introduce the Classification Handbook and the general process of Classification.

General information on Classification is available on the Website [Link](#)

<https://inclusiveskating.org/technical/classification-information>

The Classification Handbook (5<sup>th</sup> Edition in 2022 or most up to date version) will be reviewed with special emphasis on the Table of frequently Used Classifications. [Link](#)

<https://inclusiveskating.org/resources/classification-handbook-5th-edition-070221204954.pdf>

The Inclusive Skating Inclusive Paralympic Classes and event structure will be considered.

## 20. Conclusion and What Next

This session will consider what has been learnt during the course. Wherever possible there will be a review of the three the most important



things participants wanted to learn from the course. If these three things were not covered then participants will be pointed towards further resources for further information.

Well done on completing the course.

The skaters are thrilled to welcome you as a Sports Leader to their next skating session!

Good Luck and Good Inclusive Skating!!!

# SOCIAL EVENT & PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE





## CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

INCLUSIVE SKATING HEREBY RECOGNISES THAT

  Name

has mastered the skill:



  
**MARGARITA SWEENEY-BAIRD**  
Inclusive Skating Chairperson

