

OFFICE OF SPORT

# FTEM NSW: Best Practice Tips for Coaches and Instructors - **The Foundational Levels**

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# Acknowledgment of Country

The NSW Office of Sport acknowledges that we are living and working on Aboriginal land and recognises the strength, resilience and capacity of Aboriginal people on this land.

We would like to acknowledge all of the Traditional Custodians of the land and pay respect to Aboriginal Elders past and present.





# Acknowledgements

**Dr Juanita Weissensteiner, Pathways Advisor** at the NSW Office of Sport led the development of the FTEM NSW Participant and Athlete Framework (FTEM NSW) and was the author of this accompanying resource.

FTEM NSW was informed by the **original FTEM framework** developed in and around 2011/12 by the Athlete and Pathways Development team at the **Australian Institute of Sport** comprising of Dr Jason Gulbin, Morag Croser, Elissa Morley, Dr Juanita Weissensteiner and Alicia Mathews. FTEM is recognised within the International Olympic Committee's consensus statement on youth athletic development released in 2015 within the British Journal of Sports Medicine (See Bergeron et al., 2015).

Special mention must go to the following people who have assisted Juanita more recently in putting this FTEM NSW resource for coaches together –

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# Future Champions Strategy:

## Supporting Coaching within NSW



The NSW Office of Sport's **Future Champions** strategy was launched in December 2019. Its primary focus is to ensure that the participants and emerging athletes of NSW, have the right fit of sporting engagement, knowledge and support to fulfill their sporting ambitions and success on and off the sporting field. To achieve this and utilising a consolidated best practice approach informed by the **FTEM NSW Participant and Athlete Framework**, the strategy provides clear recommendations for the NSW sports sector to review and refine their operational strategies and related education, networking and support systems.

It is well recognised that our **Coaching workforce** is integral to achieving favourable outcomes within the Foundational and Talent levels of sport and active recreation.

Educating and empowering coaches who support and mentor the participants and athletes of NSW is a key priority recognised within the **Future Champions** Strategy.

The following interactive resource was developed specifically to support **coaches and instructors within NSW**, in their understanding and application of the **FTEM NSW Framework**.

FTEM NSW was informed by the original FTEM framework developed by the Australian Institute of Sport, a fully integrated evidence based framework representing the major phases of Foundation, Talent, Elite and Mastery of the whole sport pathway continuum.

For more information on the Future Champions strategy including its key actions to better support coaches within NSW, please visit <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/>



# Some information about this resource

## Who is this resource for?

The considerations presented within this resource are pitched towards **all organisations that oversee the engagement, education and support of coaches and instructors within the Foundational (Participation) levels** including -

- clubs
- schools and universities
- local, regional, state and national level sporting organisations and agencies.

## How was this resource developed?

Substantial expertise and practical learnings sourced from the contemporary knowledge base of coaching and current practitioners and coach educators within the NSW sector, contributed to the development of this resource and its practical recommendations.

## How do I use this resource?

This resource can be viewed either in its entirety or you can access specific information for each Foundational level by clicking on the interactive tabs on the right hand side of page 10 onwards.

## How will it assist me in my role?

This comprehensive resource provides -

- a brief background on the FTEM NSW framework
- a description of each Foundational level of FTEM NSW
- a checklist of practical considerations for Coaches and Instructors, for each level (except for the FO Pre-Foundational level)

Importantly, the recommendations tabled are not intended to be exhaustive but provide a 'checklist' of considerations for progressing current strategy and practice. It is envisaged that this information will be of value to facilitate -

- effectiveness, efficiency and alignment of coaching practice
- coach recruitment
- coach engagement, development and retention strategies
- curricula and educational initiatives for coaches
- aligned accreditation processes.

## Where do I find more information?

For detail specific to the background and features of the FTEM NSW Participant and Athlete Development Framework please visit our website <https://sport.nsw.gov.au>.

To view detailed 'whole of sport' information incorporating the FTEM NSW Talent and Elite and Mastery levels please access the **FTEM NSW Participant and Athlete Framework: System level Guidelines - All levels** document or separate **Talent** and **Elite/Mastery** versions.

For more information and advice for parents, schools, clubs and sporting organisations please visit our website <https://sport.nsw.gov.au>.



Image courtesy of Simo Vilhunun



# Unpacking the Foundational Levels of FTEM NSW for Coaches and Instructors



## Pre-Foundation 0

Achievement of early developmental milestones through a complement of guided instruction and self discovery within early play.

## Foundation 1

Learning or re-learning (i.e., following an acquired disability) a broad range of Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) and development of early physical literacy through a complement of active play and FMS focused opportunities, guidance and support.

## Foundation 2

Extension and application of Fundamental Movement Skills and physical literacy within active play and developmentally appropriate introductory formats of sport and active recreation.

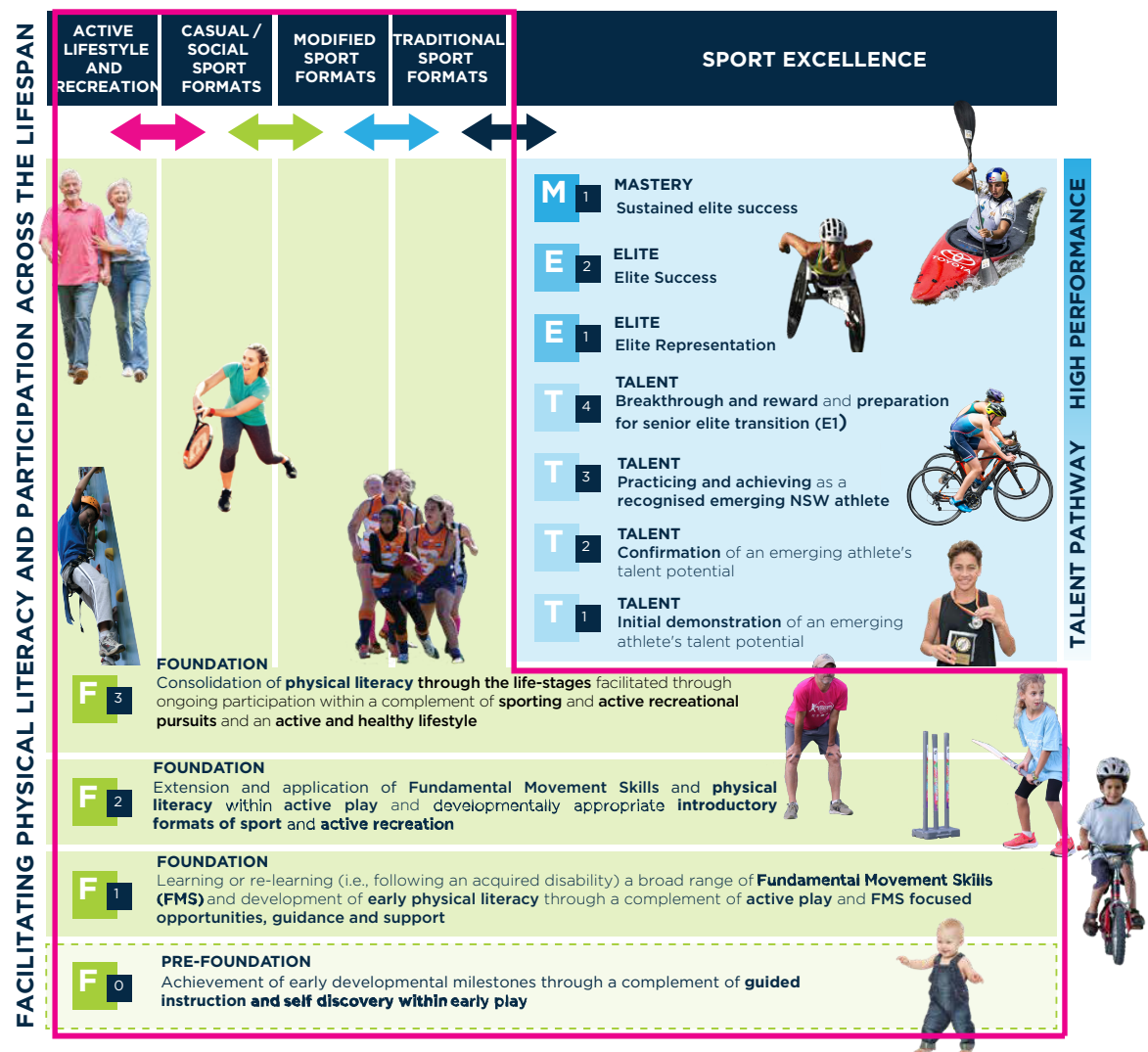
## Foundation 3

Consolidation of physical literacy through the life-stages facilitated through ongoing participation within a complement of sporting and active recreational pursuits and an active and healthy lifestyle.

# Key features of the **Foundational levels**

Provides a **whole of system blueprint** for supporting physical activity through its -

- chronology of **four progressive Foundational levels** to develop and facilitate physical literacy and support positive engagement in sport and active recreation.
- coverage of the **lifespan of the participant** (i.e., baby, child, youth, adult, senior) - A **pre-Foundational FO level** has been added to **FTEM NSW** to ensure coverage across the lifespan.
- capture of the participation landscape including the **complement of formats** from active lifestyle pursuits to casual, modified and traditional sport and caters to concurrent involvement in these opportunities by the participant.
- guidance informed by **contemporary best practice principles** specific to child motor development, physical literacy, pedagogy/coaching, ecological systems and skill acquisition and national and international **evidence, practice and consensus**.
- visualisation of **participation opportunities** (programs, products, delivery) specific to each life stage that are a fit to the motivation, demographic, capacity, capability and commitment of the participant.





# Why are the **Foundational Levels** so important?

The genesis of the original **FTEM** framework was borne from an imperative to attend to the FOUNDATIONAL levels of sport and active recreation. The Foundational levels are critically important to not only ensure life-long physical literacy but also effective and enjoyable sport engagement including providing the key foundations for developing future elite sporting performance.

Based on compelling and objective evidence specific to a diminishing sports participation base due to –

- declines in fundamental movement competencies and physical literacy
- an increase in youth participating in organised sport formats and specialisation in one sport much earlier

- corresponding declines in diversified sports and recreational participation and free play
- decreasing engagement in sport with increasing age
- increase in inactivity, sedentary lifestyles, obesity and related health issues
- recognised constraints specific to fit and sustainability of participatory sport strategies, underpinning programs and delivery.

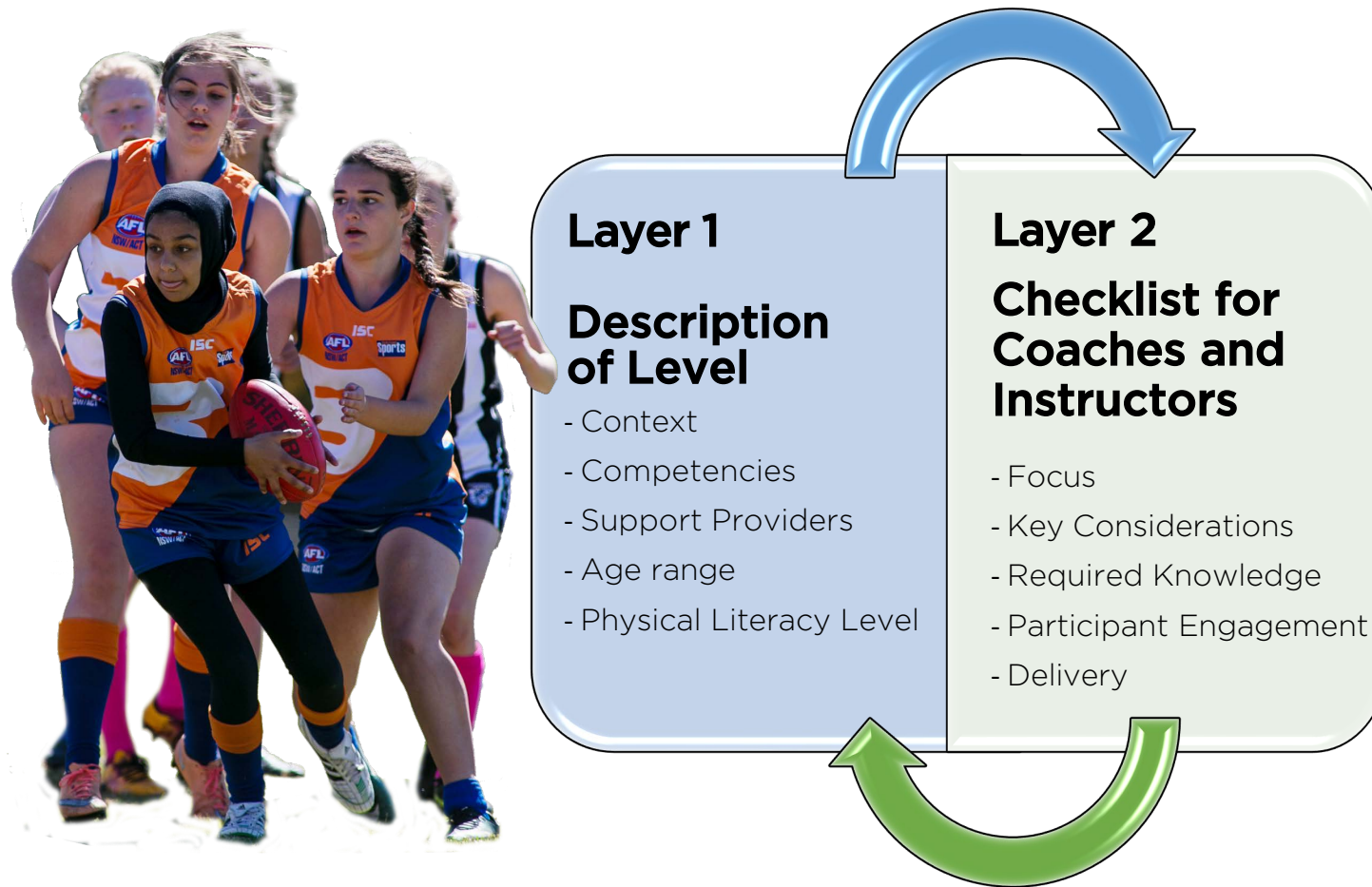
it was apparent that an evidence-based and practicable strategy that addressed these issues and truly supported the delivery and coordination of best practice within the critical foundational levels of sport and active recreation was warranted.



# Guidelines and practical tips

Over the next few pages, we will unpack the **F1 to F3 Foundational levels of FTEM NSW** integrating a holistic and ecological approach inspired by the 3D-AD (*Three Dimensional Athlete Development*) model. Guidance specific to the Pre-Foundational level F0 is not provided in this resource. Two layers of information and advice centred around the sport participant, will be provided for Coaches and Instructors specific to each level as depicted in the graphic below.

Please use the interactive tabs on the right of this page and throughout this section to access specific information for each level.





# Foundational level 1

## Description of level

**Focus:** Learning or re-learning (i.e., following an acquired disability) a broad range of Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) and development of early physical literacy through a complement of active play and FMS focused opportunities, guidance and support.

### Context for the participant

The participant is learning or re-learning (i.e., *child, teenager or adult following an acquired disability*) a broad complement of Fundamental Movement skills (FMS) including locomotor, object control, balance, aquatic and acrobatic skills and applying them within a complement of free play at home and at school, organised FMS programs, and through active recreation and an active and healthy lifestyle.

### Key support providers

- Early Childhood Education Providers and Teachers
- Medical and Allied Health Providers
- Rehabilitation Providers
- Schools
- Providers within Sport, Outdoor and Recreational programs specific to early acquisition of FMS

### Approximate age range

Generally 4 to 7/8 years but for individuals with an acquired disability it could be any age.

### Physical Literacy Phase

Foundation & Exploration

- Swimming in a pool or the ocean

### Aquatic skills

- Forward rolls
- Tumbling
- Somersaults

### Acrobatic skills

### Locomotor skills

- Running
- Hopping
- Jumping
- Using a wheelchair or prosthesis for participants with a disability

### Interceptive and object control skills

- Kicking
- Catching
- Throwing or Hitting a ball

### Dynamic Balance skills

- Riding a bike,
- Standing on a surfboard
- Riding a skateboard or snowboard

Foundational level 1

Foundational level 2

Foundational level 3

Developing a complement of FMS Competencies

# Foundational level 1

## Coaching principles and considerations

### The Coach or Instructor -

- ✓ Possesses good teaching, inter-personal, communication and influencing skills.
- ✓ A repertoire of different learning/teaching styles to support the individual needs of young sport participants.
- ✓ Ensures inclusion, safety and a positive learning environment for all participants.
- ✓ Engages positively with the participant's parents, guardians etc.
- ✓ Possesses a sound understanding of key motor/skill aspects of the relevant fundamental movement skills (locomotive, object control, balance, acrobatic, aquatic) underpinning a sport or recreational pursuit and can integrate these into the coaching curriculum and delivery.
- ✓ Possesses a sound understanding of the relevant level of physical literacy and related competencies (physical, psychological, technical, social) specific to the developmental level of the individual participant and can integrate these into the coaching curriculum and delivery.
- ✓ Possesses a sound understanding of best practice skill acquisition principles including game/play based learning.
- ✓ Delivers the right fit of engaging and age/developmentally appropriate tasks and activities for the developmental needs, attentional capacity and motivation of the participant.



# Foundational level 1

## Coaching principles and considerations cont.

### The Coach or Instructor -

- ✓ Ensures the right fit of equipment, play dimensions, surfaces etc. for the participant to support their early skill acquisition.
- ✓ Has the ability to create an environment where participants take ownership of their own learning to facilitate their early self-regulatory skills e.g., self awareness, self reflection, problem solving etc.
- ✓ Encourages participants to sample within and across all relevant fundamental movement skills and this is incorporated in the coaching curriculum and delivery.
- ✓ Possesses a good understanding of the importance of active play activities to complement organised instruction within programs to ensure FUN, promote early skill acquisition, physical literacy and more specifically, facilitate early problem-solving ability, creativity and adaptability.
- ✓ Encourages participants to further develop and apply their fundamental movement skills in the home environment through active play.

# Foundational level 2

## Description of level

**Focus:** Extension and application of Fundamental Movement Skills and physical literacy within active play and developmentally appropriate introductory formats of sport and active recreation.

### Context for the participant

The participant is applying and extending their FMS and early Physical Literacy within organised introductory formats of sport, diverse unorganised Play experiences within the home and school environment and through active recreation and an active and healthy lifestyle.

### Key support providers

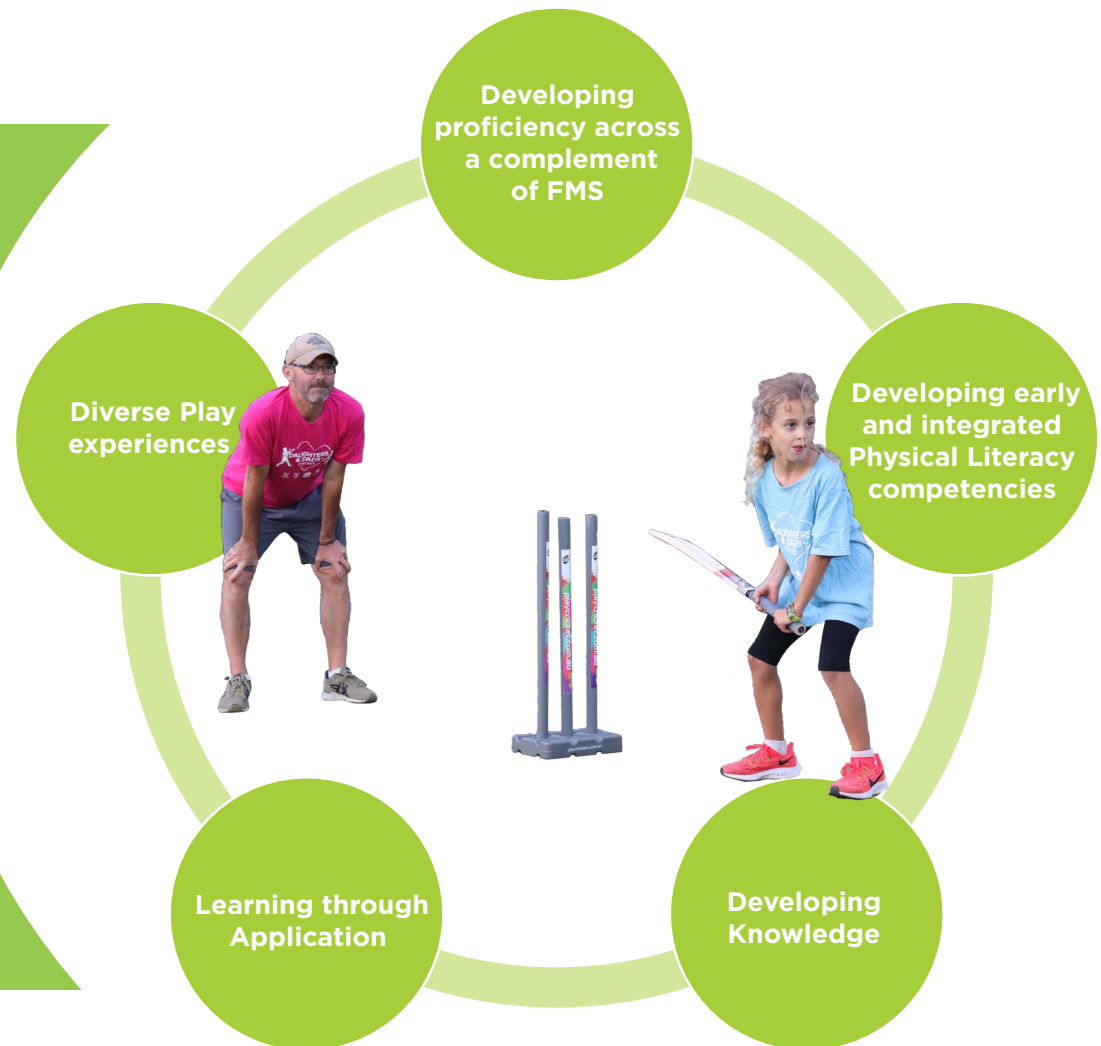
- Parents
- Teachers, Coaches/Instructors and Private Providers
- Schools
- Sports and their club network
- Recreational and Outdoor Providers

### Approximate age range

Generally 8 to 11 years for the majority of participants but could be any age for individuals with an acquired disability or youth/adults being introduced to a sport or recreational activity for the first time.

### Physical Literacy Phase

Acquisition and Accumulation



**Applying Fundamental Movement skills  
and extending Physical Literacy**

Foundational  
level 1

Foundational  
level 2

Foundational  
level 3

## Foundational level 2

### Coaching principles and considerations

#### The Coach or Instructor-

- ✓ Possesses good teaching, inter-personal, communication and influencing skills.
- ✓ A repertoire of different learning/teaching styles to support the individual needs of young sport participants.
- ✓ Ensures inclusion, safety and a positive learning environment for all participants.
- ✓ Engages positively with the participant's parents, guardians etc.
- ✓ A sound understanding of all relevant fundamental movement skills and the required level of physical literacy for a participant at this level and can integrate these into the coaching curriculum and delivery within introductory sport programs.
- ✓ A sound understanding of the holistic nature of participant development and its integrated dimensions (e.g. physical, technical, psychological, social elements etc) specific to the sport and participants they are instructing/coaching.
- ✓ Possesses a sound understanding of best practice skill acquisition principles including game/play based learning.
- ✓ Delivers the right fit of engaging and age/developmentally appropriate introductory formats of sport and activities for the developmental needs, attentional capacity and motivation of the participant.



## Foundational level 2

### Coaching principles and considerations cont.

#### The Coach or Instructor -

- ✓ Ensures the right fit of equipment, play dimensions, surfaces etc for the participant to support their early skill acquisition.
- ✓ Has the ability to create an environment where participants take ownership of their own learning to facilitate their early self-regulatory skills e.g. self awareness, self reflection, problem solving etc.
- ✓ Encourages participants to sample within and across sports through a complement of organised introductory sport formats and active play within the home and school environment.
- ✓ Possesses a good understanding of the importance of active play activities to complement organised instruction within programs to ensure FUN, promote early skill acquisition, physical literacy and more specifically, facilitate early problem-solving ability, creativity and adaptability.
- ✓ Encourages participants to further develop and apply their sporting skills in the home environment through active play.

# Foundational level 3

## Description of level

**Focus:** Consolidation of physical literacy through the life-stages facilitated through ongoing participation within a complement of sporting and active recreational pursuits and an active and healthy lifestyle.

### Context for the participant

The participant is consolidating their Physical Literacy and required knowledge structures and applying them effectively through the life stages within a complement of -

- active lifestyle and recreational pursuits
- casual, modified (age and capability appropriate) and traditional formats of organised sport
- unorganised formats of sport and recreational activity
- diversified Play experiences.

For gifted athletes, consolidation of their holistic sport-specific skills, expressed through commitment to learning within training and competition, sampling a broad range of sport, recreation and play and specialising later, provides solid foundations for future high performance.

### Key support providers

- Parents
- Teachers, Coaches/Instructors Duke of Edinburgh and Private providers
- Schools, Universities
- Sports and their club network
- Recreational and Outdoor Providers (Sport and Recreational Centres)
- Regional Academies of Sport (if recognised as a Foundational level program by their respective SSO).

### Approximate age range

YOUTH 12-18 years;  
ADULT >18-65 years;  
SENIORS >65 years

### Physical Literacy Phase

Consolidation & Mastery,  
Transfer & Empowerment

Consolidating  
and applying  
Knowledge

Consolidating  
and applying  
Physical  
Literacy

Competence,  
confidence  
and positive  
engagement  
through Physical  
Activity

Learning and  
adaptation



Foundational  
level 1

Foundational  
level 2

Foundational  
level 3

**Extending on Strong Foundations and  
being Physically Active for Life!**

# Foundational level 3

## Coaching principles and considerations

### The Coach or Instructor –

- ✓ Possesses good teaching, inter-personal, communication and influencing skills.
- ✓ Possesses a repertoire of different learning/teaching styles to support the individual needs of different groups of participants i.e., Youth, Adult, Seniors.
- ✓ Ensures inclusion, safety and a positive learning environment for all participants.
- ✓ Engages positively with the young participant's parents, guardians etc.
- ✓ Has a good understanding of underpinning fundamental movement skills and the required level of physical literacy for the life stage, capacity and capability of the participant at this level.
- ✓ Can effectively integrate the required competencies for the sport or recreational activity they are coaching into their coaching curriculum and delivery (i.e. technical, tactical, physical, physiological, psychological and social components).
- ✓ Promotes participation through the life stages, within a complement of 'best fit' casual/social, traditional and modified formats of sport and recreational activities.
- ✓ Promotes and ensures good management of training and competition loading for the aspiring athlete and awareness/education specific to injury prevention.
- ✓ Has a good understanding of the impact of biological maturation on participant/athlete development and can effectively interpret an individual's maturational status which informs the right fit of competitive level/formats.

Foundational  
level 1

Foundational  
level 2

Foundational  
level 3



# Foundational level 3

## Coaching principles and considerations

### The Coach or Instructor -

- ✓ Integrates education on Sporting Smarts which includes - effective nutrition, hydration, injury prevention, effective competition preparation, adequate management of training and competitive load, sleep, recovery, anti-doping, sport integrity, psychological skills (e.g. self regulation, performance strategies, coping skills etc.).
- ✓ Offers good advice to Parents and other relevant stakeholders specific to appropriate training and competition loads and demands of the youth participant and liaises with other stakeholder groups e.g., school, club etc. to moderate these demands.
- ✓ Has a good understanding of the importance and benefits of sampling across sports and later specialisation.
- ✓ An understanding of the importance of active play and self-directed learning and practice to complement organised coaching sessions, to further hone the participant's technical, tactical skills and promote problem-solving, creativity and adaptability.
- ✓ The ability to create an environment where participants/athletes take ownership of their own learning to facilitate their self-regulatory skills.
- ✓ Has sound knowledge regarding the importance of promoting sport/life balance, well-being and positive and effective engagement in their participants.

# FTEM Related References

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# FTEM NSW: Best Practice Tips for Coaches and Instructors - **Foundational Levels**

For more information and advice on FTEM NSW please  
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