



DEAFNESS AND HEARING LOSS ICE SKATING COACHING RESOURCE



Let's Skate is an exciting project from British Ice Skating funded by Sport England, which will deliver opportunities for disabled people to get involved in ice skating – whether that's skating on the ice, volunteering, coaching or officiating.

We will be supporting rinks across the UK to deliver inclusive ice skating sessions, led by qualified coaches. British Ice Skating will showcase the impact of the Let's Skate project to celebrate our success and inspire prospective new skaters to try ice skating; with the aim of consistently developing new opportunities for everyone to be involved in the sport.

Throughout the project we will be working with rinks, coaches, officials, volunteers and skaters to gather feedback to shape future work and help us realise our potential. Overall, we will make ice skating welcoming, safe and accessible for all – with a view to offering pathways to competition, volunteering, coaching or officiating.

You can find out more about the project at iceskating.org.uk/lets-skate

Participation statistics tell us that there is still much work to be done to support disabled people in sport. The number of disabled people taking part in sport or physical activity is significantly lower across all age groups than the overall population.

Inspire and motivate disabled people to continue to play sport and take part in physical activity with the help of this advice:

- Involve disabled people in all of your sessions.
- Recognise a disabled athlete as an individual, not an impairment.
- Have a shared vision with your participants in terms of coaching goals and expectations.
- Communicate and work together to achieve their goals.
- Talk to your disabled participants about their impairment to plan effective coaching sessions and adapt practices.
- Know the sport you coach. Have a passion to develop yourself as a coach.

This resource has been put together by British Ice Skating in collaboration with UK Deaf Sport to support coaches in successfully coaching skaters with deafness and hearing loss.

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If you have any questions or feedback on the Lets Skate
project, please contact letsskate@iceskating.org.uk



UK Deaf Sport



1 GENERAL INFORMATION ON DEAFNESS AND HEARING LOSS

Top tips for including deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) people in your coaching sessions, in association with UK Deaf Sport

As coaches, we often talk about meeting participants where they're at. This is especially important for a deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) participant.

This resource contains a few ideas to help you ensure that they have a great first session and that you're able to meet their needs.

- Setting up for success (for you and the participant)
- Set the scene for the individual to feel included and valued at the session, and that you want them to engage.
- When you meet them for the first time, as well as finding out their name, ask if you can talk about their deafness and the communication modes they would like to use.
- Share the reason you should be aware and explain why you need to know.
- Have an open discussion about the challenges they face and how you can assist during the sessions, making it a more positive experience.
- Remember to listen and pay attention. It's impossible to predict the problems they may face unless you share the same disability, and it's critical not to minimise their disability with a small comparison of your own.
- Allow them to make the decision they feel most comfortable with. Asking someone to stand at the front each time is not a pleasant experience for anyone.
- Consider how you may need to adapt your current practices to ensure that the experience is good for everyone.
- Remember that empathy, not sympathy, is required.



2 COACHING SKATERS WITH DEAFNESS AND HEARING LOSS: PRE-SKATE PREPARATION

Session Readiness

A successful session starts before stepping onto the ice. Consider these preparation steps:

- Ask the participant where they prefer to stand to be able to hear or follow what is going on and suggest that it may be easier for them to stand near you when you are sharing information, having conversations, and providing instructions.
- Remember to listen and pay attention to the challenges the participants may face to accessing the activity and understand that everyone may face different challenges.
- Ensure you are in a position where the participants can see your face to lipread if required. Do not turn your back when speaking.
- You may want to learn some basic British Sign Language to make British Sign Language Users feel welcome.
- When sharing information, be creative in how you may be able to do this visually through written, drawn and practical demonstrations.



3 INCLUSIVE COACHING PRACTICE

It is well understood that multiple methods can be used in coaching. The following information should set out strong fundamental practices and principles that coaches should use through varied methods of coaching.

Fun and Engaging

Coaches first must understand their passion for the sport. Having a strong drive for the sport enormously influences your energy and ability to motivate skaters. Passion is contagious. If one skater or one assistant coach comes to practice excited and fired up, that emotion and passion easily is transferred to every other member of the team.

Coaching then is a fine balancing act. Sessions must be fun but also educational. They must be inclusive, encouraging the less competent skaters, but without quashing the innate competitive instinct that everyone thrives on.

Disabled people face numerous barriers when trying to access sport - an ice skating session could provide many life-changing physical and mental benefits.

Encouraging and Supportive

Find something positive to say to every skater at every practice. This satisfies the skaters need for attention, recognition and appreciation. Be specific with your praise — specific praise is used to reinforce the why of practice. Always attempt to find more positives than negatives while constantly praising effort.

When a skater finally masters a skill or concept don't hesitate to momentarily stop practice to recognise the achievement. Praise their effort and remind your skaters why mastery of the skill is so important.

The majority of disabled people will be trying ice skating for the very first time - support and reassure them throughout sessions to make them feel safe, comfortable and included at all times. Use the dispensation model at your discretion to encourage progress and inclusion.



4 SKATE UK DISPENSATION MODEL

British Ice Skating Association is committed, as a service provider, to promoting Equality within Ice Skating, eliminating unfair discrimination. We believe that Equality is defined by the terms fairness, justice, inclusion and respect for diversity.

It is about making sure that everyone has an equal chance to participate in and contribute to the aspects of ice skating that interest them, and that no one is discriminated against unfairly for any reason, including – but not limited to – sex, gender, race, disability, age, religious or political belief, sexual orientation, social background, ethnic origin, language, marital or civil partnership status or pregnancy.

Sports Equality is also about recognising and acknowledging that inequalities do exist in sport, taking positive and proactive steps to overcome these inequalities, and making sure that any barriers standing in the way of people who are traditionally not involved in ice skating are removed.

The Dispensation Model, developed in collaboration with Activity Alliance and built into British Ice Skating's learn to skate program Skate UK, is a key part of our commitment to building Sports Equality. It's designed to make ice skating more accessible for people with disabilities.



**Find out more
about Skate UK:
iceskating.org.uk/skateuk**

Examples of the dispensation pathways options for learning Skate UK skills:

Exercise	Dispensation A (Reduced skill)	Dispensation B (Aided)	Dispensation C (Combined)
1. MOVING FORWARD	Move forward half distance (i.e half width of rink surface instead of full width)	Move forward aided (i.e full width of rink)	Both A & B
2. MOVING FORWARD (10 steps) & TWO-FOOT GLIDE (with dip)	Move forward 5 steps with a half dip (reduced dip movement)	Move forward 10 steps & two foot glide (with dip) aided	Both A & B
3. SIT & STAND INDEPENDENTLY	Stand up only (coach to place skater down on ice)	Sit & stand aided	Both A & B
4. STATIONARY SNOWPLOUGH STOP	Use only one foot instead of two to show an understanding of a sliding technique	Stationary snowplough holding onto barrier, skating aid etc (aided)	Both A & B
5. MOVING SNOWPLOUGH STOP	Use only one foot instead of two and reduced stopping technique and distance (as long as the skater stops)	Moving snowplough aided	Both A & B
6. MOVING FORWARD (10 steps) & TWO-FOOT GLIDE INTO A FORWARD LEMON	Move forward 5 steps with reduced lemon shape	Move forward 10 steps & two foot glide into lemon shape aided	Both A & B

5 MEET THE LET'S SKATE TEAM

The Let's Skate team is here to support people on their journey into ice skating – we are dedicated to making the sport more accessible for everyone. Please get in touch if you require further support or have any questions:
letsskate@iceskating.org.uk.



Finally, if you have any feedback on something you have experienced within the project, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will work together to create a better environment for all.



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