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| A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated  **talent pathway 2023/24**  Academy coaches handbook | **This booklet provides academy coaches with the resources, guidance and support to challenge the young athletes to be England Lacrosse players of the future.** |

**Talent Pathway 2018/19**

**Academy Coaches Guide**

**Coaches Pack**

The Talent Pathway purpose is to provide athletic decision makers who can perform under pressure the opportunity to learn how to maximise their potential in a supportive environment.

How are we going to achieve this?

* Programme delivery focused on individuals learning to perform under pressure.
* Improved coach-player relationship to give the individual personalised and detailed feedback to reflect upon.
* Phased physical development programme inclusive of warm-up, cool down and recovery that incorporates foam rolling routines to aid recovery.
* Nutrition and hydration advice to fuel the body for the demands of training, games and tournaments.
* Coach education, mentoring and a collective approach to develop an English approach to playing lacrosse that will lay the foundation for a successful National team of the future.

**Pathway Development Pentagon**

Pathways aims to maximise the potential of athletes who can make effective decisions under pressure in game relates situations on the pitch creating a culture of trying, working hard and reflection.

**Physical Capability**

* Introduce a phased conditioning programme
* Awareness of hydration and nutrition

Develop individuals as people and prepare them as decisive, athletic and reflective performers.

**Skills – Perform Under pressure**

* Technical and tactical decisions executed under pressure
* Refine in technical positional groups, 1v1, 4v4 & small games

**Game based Practices**

* All practices to feature Attack, Defence and Transition
* Constraints to explore understanding

**Mental Skills to perform**

* Pressure based practices
* Regular and timely feedback
* Perseverance and reflection
* Introduce goal setting.

**Coach Education/ training**

* Improvement in feedback
* Use of creative and specifically designed practices
* Monthly workshops

**Values and Expectations**

England Lacrosse has adopted 6 core values – the expectation is that all staff, coaches and athletes on the performance programmes and talent pathway adopt the values in their attitude and behaviour. If an individual’s conduct does not meet the values of England Lacrosse, we must challenge the behaviour.

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| **Mission** | |
| To promote and develop lacrosse, in all its forms, by working with our members, stakeholders and others to ensure that opportunities exist for individuals to participate, and achieve excellence in the sport of Lacrosse | |
| **VALUE** | **Demonstrated Through** |
| **Excellence** | Provided a high-quality experience and interaction with all our members and other parties through: |
| **Accountability** | Delivered clear responsibility and commit to ethical, equitable and safe practices and challenge exclusion and poor practice through: |
| **Respect** | Value the contribution of all by: |
| **Integrity** | Acted with openness and transparency to build mutual trust and cooperation with members and stakeholders through: |
| **Teamwork** | Value the contributions of individuals and work collectively as a team by: |
| **Inclusivity** | Allow an enjoyable experience for all through: |

As coaches on the academy we create must instil values and shape a performance culture from players to coaches. We must focus on how we can create a supportive environment for individuals to learn how to perform.

**Talent Pathway Coaching**

Coaching on the academy must prepare the athlete for the potential to play for England in the future, we cannot make decisions for players on the pitch, we must provide the environment for athletes to learn, reflect and improve.

It is essential that all sessions develop a decision-making environment; how can we do this?

* A generic principle should be that We **ASK** not **TELL.**
* Ask what they see?
* Ask what they feel their options are/were?
* Only give what you the coach see as the final option
* Let practices run for a minimum of 3-5 minutes with no talking from the coaches, use your skill to observe, analyse and monitor before interjecting
* All players must play **ATTACK** and **DEFENCE** and work hard through **TRANSITION** as with 10 a side game all players need to be able to do both

**Game Based Practices with technical refinement – Programme Delivery**

As a programme we need to create a shared vocabulary, this will need to evolve and be influenced by a top down approach from the England Senior and U19 Coaching staff.

At the Academy stage of the Pathway we can determine individuals understanding to maximise their potential by sharing a collective knowledge. For this benefit please adopt the term Skill that combines technical and tactical aspects. The pathway will be adopting principles of

1. **Attack**
2. **Defence**
3. **Transition**

Guidelines for language and content can be found in appendix i to iii.

Our challenge as coaches is to develop the individual through practices that feature the 3 principles of lacrosse and or design drills that are game realistic which expose skills under pressure.

We must make every session as game realistic as possible. Please be creative with your own technical drills and ensure progression into game-based practices or small sided games that use constraints or scenario’s.

This will require managing the intensity and work rate expected within game situations.

**Use your whistle and time constraints**

* 3 seconds on the ball, will help increase tempo/ possession and pressure. Count out the number of seconds and call a change of possession if the ball carrier holds the ball for too long.
* The whistle can act in the same way, by indicating that a player has timed out their time limit in a drill or not completed the task in a realistic time frame.

A couple of quick cheat to convert traditional drills into a practice that features attack, defence and transition

**3 Ball practice**

EG) 5 v 4 attack drill, trying to create a weak side or feed inside

* Ball 1; run the drill until a goal is scored or the defence clear. Play continues if the ball goes out of play.
* Ball 2; randomly throw the ball into play and follow conditions above
* Ball 3; Goalkeeper clears the ball to keep the defence focused on transition and programme the attacks work rate on the ride.

**Drills that are game realistic**

* Try to create conditions or constraints that represent the outcome you desire.
* Shooting drills – have more than one station where players can receive feeds whilst on the run.
* Have two goals 20m apart, 4 feeders, the shooter runs in a figure of 8 to receive feeds. Condition the passes to create shots down the alley and the 2nd feed is a cut.
* Put time limits or time the completion of the drill, add 5 seconds for missed shots to support reflection.

For further ideas please refer to the guide below, to reflect ideas that we want you to explore with the players during the academy year.

Use the STEPS approach to create and modify practices to build pressure and or explore the game realistic themes covered across the curriculum. To assist with planning some general ideas of how to use STEPS to create pressure in the ATTACK or DEFENCE have been provided in appendix iv and v.

**Feedback**

To empower and improve our athletes, we MUST offer personalised, accurate and timely feedback. To help coaches and players we have set out topic themes or components, with descriptors that will link to the timetable and highlight areas of strength and improvements.

Expectation:

* Coaches to complete feedback within 72 hours after academy block
* Use the criteria and scoring scale to personalise feedback
* Comment on personality and work ethic
* Athletes to reflect on feedback

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| **Resilience** | * Athletes work rate, perseverance and willingness to adapt. |
| **Athleticism** | * Speed with the ball |
| * Agility and balance |
| * Core stability and strength |
| * Speed Endurance |
| **Tactical**      Athletes level of Lacrosse IQ and there ability to make good decisions under pressure. | **Attack** |
| * Initiate Attack |
| * Work with or for someone |
| * Invade space when appropriate |
| **Defence** |
| * A collective in 1v1 – Approach, body position, Contact |
| * Communication |
| * Work with or for someone |
| **Transition** |
| * Move forward with awareness of situation |
| * Supports the ball carrier. |
| * Identifies transition against and reacts. |
| **Skill** | * Ability of the athlete to display functional skills under pressure. |
| **Value Added** | * The ability of the athlete to add value in competitive play. |

The descriptors are further linked to a score range 1 – 4 criteria, they offer support to coaches and provide clarity for the athletes to understand how they can improve within the performance component area. We will utilise the same online portal as last year. Sign in instructions to follow.

**Goal Setting and Reflection**

The athletes will be asked to complete a goal setting task before each weekend. The purpose will allow individuals to reflect against their own targets and feedback provided by the coaches.

**Safeguarding and Register**

Working with young people it is imperative to ensure everyone under our care is safe from harm and enjoying their experience. In order to ensure England Lacrosse staff and coaches have comprehensive records of attendance. Registers MUST be taken on three occasions during an academy day;

* AM: Registration (by central point & appointed coach)
* PM: Lunch
* PM: Departure

The detailed protocol will be issued to head coaches prior to academy sessions starting.

A list of injuries must be collated by the Head Coach, this will outline any areas, physical demands within the programme that we may need to change.

**Physical Component of Performance**

We have devised standardised physical preparation (warm up) and recovery (cool down) programmes. All groups must follow the routine. All coaches will be issued with the programme and video.

**Communication to parents, teacher and coaches**

We have created an information pack to support the athletes. The pack includes useful information on how to best support lacrosse athletes as they progress.

**Curriculum/ Timetable**

The Curriculum can be found as appendix vi. All athletes must experience playing attack and defence and work hard through transition. The curriculum has been designed to compliment invasion game principles, skills, decision making and playing under pressure..

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| **Skills: Technical and Tactical** | **Skill performed under pressure** |
| **Decision Making & reflection** | **Performed in games situation and feature ATACK, DEFENCE & TRANSITION** |
| **Challenge and/or pressure?** | **Resilience, reflection of performing under constraints and pressure** |

**Appendix i**

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| **SKILL COMPONENT - Reference** | | |
| ATTACK | **EXPECTATION** | |
| Play forward, with pace and tempo with movement. | |
| **Key statements** | * With the ball be direct, attack and use space * Without the ball, make space for the ball carrier * Or use space to be a pass/ feed * Shoot to finish – pipes are precision | |
| **Team or Unit Focus** | | |
| **Principles** | **In practice** | **Targets** |
| * Penetration * Possession * Support/ mobility * Width/ depth | * Speed & agility * Direct to goal * Use/ create space * Use 1v1; create 2v1 * Possess – know when to go to goal * Initiate- pace & tempo * Patience is not slow | * Create and use space * Create space for 70-80% shots * 3 seconds in possession or move the ball |
| **1 v 1 – Individual focus** | | |
| **Principles** | **Key Points** | **Questions** |
| * Penetration * Possession * Support/ mobility * Width/ depth | * Be direct and drive at space * Dodge for a purpose * Drive at front foot; change direction & pace out dodge * Dodge to feed – move defender * Shoot or pass early out of dodge * Possess – know when to go to goal | * What is the benefit of attacking/ driving at space? * Why are you dodging? * What are you trying to create from the dodge? * Why is it beneficial to change direction and pace? |

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| **SKILL COMPONENT - Reference** | | |
| DEFENCE | **EXPECTATION** | |
| Deny space, delay attack and add pressure to force errors | |
| **Key questions/ statements** | * On ball, position before checks * Where on the pitch should we throw checks? * How can we increase pressure to cause turnovers/ errors | |
| **Team or Unit Focus** | | |
| **Principles** | **In practice** | **Targets** |
| * Deny space * Delay * Support/ cover * Narrow * Regain possession | * Speed to deny space * Delay 1 v 1 * Position to ABC * In to Out principles * Be ready to break * Locate & communicate | * Deny space to 70-80% shots * Quick to close * Force errors at right time * Be aware of transition |
| **1 v 1 – Individual focus** | | |
| **Principles** | **Key Points** | **Questions** |
| * Deny space * Delay * Support/ cover * Narrow * Regain possession | * Be quick to get out & play * Get high to play attacker * Position; Hip to hip * Channel out of areas * Position; ABC | * How are you going to delay attack? * Why are we asking you to get high? * What is the purpose of making early contact? |

Appendix iii

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| **SKILL COMPONENT** | | |
| TRANSITION | **EXPECTATION** | What to do and where as an individual and as a unit |
| Recognise Fast/Slow breaks both sides of the pitch | |
| **Key questions/ statements** | Recognise   * Fast break options and play forward * Fast break to slow break option through x * Slow break against and unsettled defence * Slow break to settled play – what are the options | |
| **Principles** | **In practice** | **Targets** |
| Attack   * Positive possession * Mobility & support * Width & depth   Defence   * Be compact & narrow * Deny space & delay | Attack   * Control possession * Is it a fast/slow break   Defence   * Crash and cover * Locate & communicate | * Create and use space * Create space for 70-80% shot * 3 seconds in possession or move the ball |

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| **SKILL COMPONENT – Reference** | | |
| ‘GOALIE’ | **EXPECTATION** | |
| Save the ball, communicate ball location and organise defence. Be the start of attacks with accurate distribution. | |
| **Key questions/ statements** | Recognise   * Importance of consistency in movement patterns * Track the ball, scan at all times * Body position, hand and footwork on shots * Fast hands, feet and reflex * Understand defensive play and communicate | |
| **Principles** | **In practice** | **Targets** |
| Presence in goal | Consistent   * Ready position * Arc play/ position * footwork * Goal coverage | * Cover the goal confidently and effectively and in a consistent manner (as this puts teams off shooting) a deterrent * Consistent technical ability & footwork * Organise Defence via concise clear communication * Be the extra man in Defence |
| Save mechanics | * Body position * Track the ball & scan * Hand & footwork on shots |
| Shot mechanics | Movement patterns   * Straight shots * Shots on an angle * Stick side/ off side * Bounce & low shots |
| Athleticism | * Quick hands * Fast feet |
| Communication | * Scan the field/ play * Ball location * Player direction |
| Organisation | * Defence * Understand defensive play |
| Stickwork & Handling | * Technically strong * Vision for outlet pass * Clearing accuracy |

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| **HOW TO CREATE PRESSURE ON THE ATTACK** | | | | | |
| Aim | * to use space * to create space for ball carrier * Dodge to get an early shot or space for a pass | | | | |
| **STEPS** | **General OPTIONS** | **Short & Fat Layout** | **Restricted Boxes** | **Areas to Dodge** | **Dodge & Feed** |
| **SPACE** | Reduce space; force attack to work more effectively to maintain possession or create shooting options |  |  |  |  |
| **TIME** | Set time limits for possession. Hold ball no longer than 4 secs | Hold the ball for 3 seconds anywhere in the area. | Hold the ball for 3 seconds in the box. | Hold the ball for 3 seconds anywhere in the area. | Hold the ball for 3 seconds anywhere in the area. |
| **EQUIPMENT** | Set targets in goals; use smaller goals. Use whistle condition play | Cones mark out smaller area, 25m x 15m | Cones mark out areas for 1 v 1 dodge and shot | Cones mark out smaller area, 25m x 15m | Cones mark out smaller area, 25m x 15m |
| **PEOPLE** | Add/ overload defence | 3 v 3 or 3 v 4 | 1 v 1 in each box. | 1 v 1 in each box, progress to 4 v 4 | 4 v 4, 4 attacker in each area |
| **SPECIFICS/ CONSTRAINTS** | Shoot out of a dodge  Shoot at specific targets  Make a number of passes before going to goal | * Attacker must try to work an early shot. * Defender allowed to check and force attack out of area | * Attacker must try to dodge to work an early shot. * Defender allowed to check and force attack out of area * No shot in 4 secs pass to next box | * Attacker must try to dodge to work an early shot. * Defender allowed to check and force attack out of area * No shot in 4 secs pass to next box | * Attacker must try to work an early shot or feed inside. * Defender allowed to check and force attack out of area * No shot in 4 secs pass to next box |

Appendix iv

Appendix v

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| **HOW TO CREATE PRESSURE ON THE DEFENCE** | | | | | | | | |
| **Aim** | * To try and deny fast and early scoring opportunities * to deny space for attacker to have easy and early shots * Delay attack to allow team mates to get back and cover * Learn to press the attack and force errors | | | | | | | |
| **STEPS** | **General OPTIONS** | | **In and Out play** | **Restricted Boxes** | | **Crash and cover** | | **Stop the feed** |
| **SPACE** | Increase the space that defenders would normal occupy. This will encourage early decisions and expose positioning. | |  |  | |  | |  |
| **TIME** | * Extend the time attack can hold the ball * Defence given a time limit to make contact. | | Hold the ball for 3 seconds anywhere in the area. | Hold the ball for 3 seconds in the box. | | Hold the ball for 3 seconds anywhere in the area. | | Hold the ball for 3 seconds anywhere in the area. |
| **EQUIPMENT** | * No sticks for defenders * Cones to mark out area | | Cones mark out smaller area, 25m x 15m | Cones mark out areas for 1 v 1 dodge and shot  Turn area to diamond | | Cones mark out smaller area, 25m x 15m | | Cones mark out smaller area, 25m x 15m |
| **PEOPLE** | Add/ overload attack | | 4 v 3 or 5 v 4 | 1 v 1 in each box. | | 1 v 1 in each box, progress to 4 v 4 | | 4 v 4, 4 attack & defence in each area |
| **SPECIFICS/ CONSTRAINTS** | * Overload attack to create target feed, make space * Defenders restricted to areas * Get to a position to cover/slide | | * Attacker must try to work an early shot. * Defender allowed to check and force attack out of area | * Attacker to dodge to work an early shot. * Defender allowed to check and force attack out of area * No shot in 4 secs pass to next box | | * Attack to dodge to feed to set up weakside shot * Defender to check and force attack out of area and crash to red zone. | | * Attack to dodge to feed to set up weakside shot * Defender to check and force attack out of area and crash to red zone |
| **How we’ll deliver the sessions** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Suggested groups** | | **U14’s** | | | **U16’s** | | **U18’s** | | |
| **Tactical ‘skill’ supported by…** | | **Tactical**   * 1 v 1 * 2 v 1 to 3 v 2 * Possession through x * Position to Delay and deny space to defend and check | | | **Tactical**   * 1 v 1 * 2 v 1 to 4 v 4 * Cuts & feeds * Defensively; ABC & ready to break | | **Tactical**   * 1 v 1 * 2 v 1 - 4 v 4 – 6 v 6 * Where and when to pick * Defensively; | | |
| **Technical refinement ‘skill’ aspects.** | | **Technical**   * Deconstruction of key technical components ‘how can you be more effective at …technique? | | | **Technical**   * Improve footwork/position to highlight flaws * 1 on 1 breakdown of skills   ‘how can you be more effective? | | **Technical**   * Improve footwork, positioning will highlight flaws * 1 on 1 refinement of skills   ‘how can you be more effective? | | |
| **Decision Making & reflection** | | * Possession – use the decision making tree to prompt idea; * Guided discovery – were you successful? How can you improve? * Group set the challenge after the demonstration | | | * Fast and slow break options * Recognise when and how to support the ball carrier * Defensively, when to go & when to cover * 3 Ball ‘drill to practices’ | | * Fast and slow break options * Recognise when and how to support the ball carrier * Defensively, when to go & when to cover * 3 Ball ‘drill to practices’ | | |
| **Challenge and/or pressure?** | | * STEPS principle of constraints * Target and score keeping * Game based practices | | | * Smaller/ larger playing areas * Time or task constraints * Game based practices | | * Overload attack or defence practices * Time, task or space constraints * Scenario | | |

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|  | **09:30– 10:00** | **10:00– 10.30** | **10:30– 11.25** | **11.30 – 12.25** | **12.30 – 12.45** | **12.45 – 13.40** | **13.45 – 14.40** | **14.45 –**  **15.45** | **15.45 – 16.00** |
| **Day 1** | Registration | Warm Up & Handling | Small Sided Games | 1 v 1 Attack focus | **Morning Reflection: Individual review on task and theme.** | **Lunch** | 1 v 1 defence focus | Small Sided Games | Cool Down and reflection |
| **Day 2** | Registration | Warm Up & Handling | Attack under pressure | 2 v 1, building into 2 v 2. | Transition | 8 v 8 coached games | Cool Down and reflection |
| **Day 3** | Registration | Warm Up & Handling | Defence  under pressure | Positional Skills/ review & challenge | Half field 6 v 6 (with 1 GK) | 10 v 10 matches | Cool Down and reflection |
| **Day 4** | Registration | Warm Up & Handling | Finishing/ GK workshop | Small Games ‘constraint’ | 3 v 2, build in to 3 v 3. | 8 v 8 coached games | Cool Down and reflection |
| **Day 5** | Registration | Warm Up & Handling | Build practices | Team Attack into 5 v 4 | Team Defence 4 v4 into 4 v 5 | 10 v 10 games | Cool Down and reflection |
| **Day 6** | Registration | Warm Up & Handling | Open theme | Open theme | Games based or constraints practice | Scenario games | Cool Down and reflection |
| **Day 7** | Registration | Warm Up & Handling | 1 v 1 play to 4 v 4 | Positional play | **Working Lunch:** Game Planning | 10 v 10 tournament | | Cool Down and reflection |
| **Day 8** | Tournament registration | Qualification/ round robin format | | | Placing for tournament | | | |