

Hockey for Life FAQ

General Questions

What is the framework for?

The Hockey for Life framework is an integrated, holistic and longitudinal framework for everyone involved in hockey in Wales. It has been established to allow all participants (players, coaches, officials, umpires, volunteers, educators and administrators) to engage with the sport and help Hockey in Wales to grow and excel.

Why is the framework needed?

In order to provide a clear, consistent pathway for all those wishing to be involved in the game and to develop a 'welsh way' which allows potential to grow and succeed under a clear philosophy. The philosophy is all about being person centered, development driven and competition supported, meaning we aim to develop the person (players, coaches, officials, umpires, volunteers, educators and administrators) to achieve their potential in the best way we can. In addition, the framework will permit a holistic and longitudinal focus on player development and encompass all areas of player development such as technical, tactical, physical conditioning, sport psychology and lifestyle over a period of time.

In essence we are all creating a pathway, which embraces talent development and in doing so achieves the following underpinning philosophical factors of talent development systems:

- *Create 'stretch' for players within the framework and move towards assessing learning rates.*
- *Move away from snapshot trials and competition based assessment and de-emphasise winning as the marker of success.*
- *Develop intrinsic motivation & commitment to the long-term process of total player development and encourage increased player responsibility in personal learning & development.*
- *Establish a monitoring system for all players, to effectively record and review personal achievement and progress, including technical, tactical, fitness, mental and lifestyle characteristics of developing excellence and prepare and support players through transitions in their development.*

How can I get involved?

As a player, coach, official, umpire, volunteer, educator or administrator you can get involved throughout the pathway, depending on you abilities, experience and desire.

Visit our website to learn more about taking part in any aspect of the pathway from social hockey to international representation.

Tier 1 FAQ's

What is 4689?

4689 is the new route to youth hockey. It is a progressive, stage and not age hockey format, with the game format starting with 4v4, moving to 6v6 where now coaching and umpiring is introduced, 8v8 and finally 9v9. The size of the playing area and number in a team gradually increases as the children's ability improves.

How will it help my school or club?

It will provide a fun, fresh approach for the delivery of hockey with a tool kit of resources via an interactive website that will support the delivery of hockey in school and community settings. It will include technical skills and activity cards with videos to bring the cards to life and show you ideas you can use in your club or school regardless of whether you have played hockey before or not. The small sided games will also allow more players more opportunities to take part, aiding skill development and contact time.

How much will it cost?

There will be a 3 hour training course which will give you full access to the website and resources which will be approximately £40. The course has been designed to help coaches, teachers and young leaders to deliver hockey using a 'child centred approach' and has been developed with Sports Leaders Uk. Hard copies of the resources will be available to purchase if you are interested.

How do I get involved?

If you want to get involved and develop 4689 in your school or club please contact Hockey Wales Caroline.Spanton@HockeyWales.org.uk or go to our website for a calendar of training dates across Wales.

Does it require specialist equipment?

4689 can be played anywhere – on grass, concrete, small spaces, indoor or on astro turf, with minimal specialist equipment – all you need are sticks, a ball and some cones to make goals.

Hockey Wales recommends the use of wooden/composite field hockey sticks and large lightweight hockey balls, however, it is acknowledged this equipment may not be available in all settings, therefore deliverers are encouraged to be flexible, and adapt equipment they have access to e.g.

- *Tape the reverse side of unihoc sticks so children only use one side*
- *Use mini footballs, tennis balls or airflow balls (especially when you are playing activities with goalkeepers)*
- *Use benches, cones or chalk to make goals*

Goalkeeping is introduced gradually, with goalkeeper enabling/introductory games being explored in the yellow stage, and the position being formally introduced into 9's. Specialist goalkeeping kit is not essential; except for during competition, but adaptations to rules and equipment (e.g. soft balls) will be necessary during practice to ensure goalkeepers are included safely and fairly.

What support will there be?

There will be training to support the implementation of 4689, a website full of ideas as mentioned and in some areas where there is a Hockey Agent present they will be able to support through mentoring of club coaches, leaders and teachers. If you are in area where we are yet to have a Hockey Agent we will work with you through your AYP teams and PESS to support the integration of 4689.

Where does 4689 fit in with other National programmes, Schools & Dragon sport?

4689 follows the Play to Learn, Multi Skills and Dragon Sport ethos of ability not age, and Hockey Wales are fully supportive of a multi skills approach. 4689 approach will provide a quality and supported transition and progression from multi skills and dragon sport allowing coaches and teachers to be confident in the delivery of hockey meeting the needs of young people according to their stage of development.

What is happening with activate?

Activate will now cease to run and there will be a brand new competition and festival format to compliment 4689 across the 4 stages. We hope this will encourage more schools and more young people to take part in hockey.

Will 4689 be available in the Welsh Language?

Yes 4689 will be fully bilingual on the activity cards, technical skills cards and the videos will be scripted in Welsh.

How can Tier 1 activity help adults get back into or enter the game?

Tier 1 offers new opportunities not currently seen before, of course you can go direct and join one of our existing clubs however if you are a little nervous about getting back into the sport and if you played years ago then our Back2Hockey programme will support you to come and have a go again, get your confidence up and provide a safe and social environment to get back into hockey.

But If you are after a more competitive, fast and condensed version of this fantastic sport RUSH Hockey may be the answer for you, an adult small sided game that can be played indoors or outside. 4/5 players, no goal keepers, light weight large all and self umpired. It can be a turn up and play format or a structured league run in your local leisure centre, astro turf or other venues.

What is a satellite centre?

Satellite centers will be established in areas where hockey isn't currently being played or offered but the infrastructure is there to support its development whether these being through facilities, coaches, leaders or a strong demand from education establishments. These will always work on the premise of being closely linked to a club exit route.

Tier 2 FAQ's

What will happen to Performance Development Centres (PDC) and Regional Academies (RA)?

360° Hockey Centres will be delivered as part of the talent development pathway, these will replace the former PDC/RA structure.

What is a 360° Hockey Centre?

360° Hockey Centres are delivery environments for the development of players between 13 and 18 years of age. All players will be coached in mixed gender, homogenous ability groups. To do this there will be two general age block sessions, u.15 and u.18. Within each age block players will be placed in to one of three groups, based on their current ability level. Players and coaches will be able to move flexibly between the three levels, based on their performances over time. The primary function of the 360° Hockey Centres is to introduce and develop core skill performance (deliberate practice) rather than preparing players for competition or selection.

Where will the 360° Hockey Centres be located?

There is an aspiration to have 12 centres over the next 3 years. We aspire for players not having to travel outside a 30 mile area to attend a Hockey Centre. In year 1 the centres will be held at Pen Y Groes / Colwyn Bay / Wrexham / Newtown & Tywyn / Haverfordwest / Swansea / Cardiff & Glamorgan / Newport.

How much will it cost?

The costs of the centres have still to be calculated and we envisage updating this in July 2012.

When will they be?

In favour of the longitudinal talent development process the 360° Hockey Centres will be run over a series of months in the year allowing growth to take place over a substantial period of time. Training sessions will take place on pre-set dates according to a priority calendar on a Sunday morning or afternoon depending on the group level attained.

Sunday sessions allow players to have more valuable time spent in one block, allowing time for self reflection and the deliberate practice required to achieve their potential and in addition the supporting areas of performance, such as lifestyle, mind matters and physical conditioning. The additional advantage is to train in daylight hours and when players are not fatigued from the school day.

A priority calendar will be developed and sent to all competition committees in June 2012, to assist in their planning of competitions, which will support the players in their development.

What is a Red Shirt Sunday?

These are national delivery days where selected players from 360° Hockey Centres are invited to attend a Red Shirt Sunday. Players involved in Welsh National Age Group squads also attend Red Shirt Sundays. Players selected for Red Shirt Sundays will only attend one 360° Hockey centre per month.

What happens if I have a hockey match on a Sunday?

A priority calendar will be developed by Hockey Wales to help guide players through their development. The key philosophy is player centred, development driven and competition supported. For teams not in the EHL all players will be advised to prioritize attending the 360° Hockey Centre or Red Shirt Sundays on the nominated dates.

Schools and clubs are advised to schedule in competition around the pre-set dates for Tier 2 delivery so that players are not put under pressure and are enabled to develop in skill centres which is supported by competition from the school, club, county or region.

For players representing an EHL team and involved in Red Shirt Sundays a discussion will take place between the player, club coach and Player Development Manager for Hockey Wales to decide on the most appropriate mode of hockey development for that player at that particular time.

How do I get involved as a player in the 360° Hockey Centres?

The processes for nominating players into the 360° Hockey Centres and the criteria players must have attained before attending will be posted on the website in July 2012.

How do I get involved in the delivery?

Job opportunities and volunteer roles will be advertised over the next few months so keep watching the website for further details. We will be looking for 360° Hockey Centre Managers, Head coaches, coaches and sport science educators.

How will the 360° Hockey Centres benefit the player?

The primary function of the 360° Hockey Centres is to introduce and develop core skill performance rather than preparing players for competition or selection. 360° Hockey Centres will be player-centred and will deliver 5 rings of support to all players involved. 5 rings support includes technical, tactical, mental skills, strength & conditioning and lifestyle. Pitch sessions will be based on the philosophy of deliberate practice and will engage the players in all aspects of the learning process.

Will the 360° Hockey Centres support my club?

Players who attend the 360° Hockey Centres will have the opportunity to develop their technical, tactical, mental skills, strength & conditioning and lifestyle aspects of hockey and will hopefully demonstrate these competencies when back at club level.

Club coaches will be able to get involved in the delivery of the centres or observe sessions. All staff will gain continued professional development opportunities, which we hope will be disseminated back into schools and clubs.

Tier 3 FAQ's

What is a performance club?

During 2012-13 we will be developing a performance club strategy at Tier 3. More details will follow on what is a performance club, the benefits and role of performance clubs and how can you become a performance club in the future.

Tier 4 FAQ's

Where is the u.16 age group?

In line with the longitudinal player development philosophy, all athletes in the National Age Group squads under the age of 18 years will be linked with the aspiration to deliver in ability groups and will only compete in under age groups.

Where is the u.21 age group?

In line with the longitudinal player development philosophy, all athletes over the age of 18 years will be linked with the aspiration to deliver in ability groups and compete only under age groups. The aim is to have a Wales A and a Wales development pathway.

How do I get involved as a player?

If you are under 18 year old you will need to attend either a 360^o Hockey Centre or equivalent structure in another home country.

To be eligible for selection to represent Wales in International matches for u.18 or u.16, an athlete must qualify through one of the following:

- a) Born in Wales*
- b) One of both parents born in Wales*
- c) Can prove continuous residence in Wales for a period of not less than three months, immediately preceding selection. In all cases players must also be a member of a club or school affiliated to Hockey Wales or hold individual affiliation of Hockey Wales.*

In addition: Players will only be able to represent Welsh aged squads (U21, U18, U16 etc) if they are under the necessary age by the 1st January in the year of competition or otherwise as deemed by the European Hockey Federation / International Hockey Federation.

How do I get involved as a coach/manager/umpire/physio/sports scientist?

Contact the Player Development Manager for an informal discussion about opportunities to be involved in the National Programme.

Tier 5 FAQ's

What is the Aspire^{GB} programme?

The Aspire^{GB} programme will provide a small number of exceptionally talented athletes who have the potential to play for Great Britain with intensive training and support. VISION 2020 provides an aspiration for Wales to provide 2-4 players to the Great Britain squad in 2020 – the Aspire GB programme will support these identified athletes.

How do I become part of the Aspire^{GB} programme?

Aspire^{GB} athletes will be nominated through the Wales National Age Groups, Wales A or Wales programme by the National Head Coaches. Selection will take place through the Player Development Manager for Tier 5.