

STRENGTH & CONDITIONING PROFESSION

Employer Hiring Guide for **Strength and Conditioning Roles**

A practical guide to clearer, fairer, and more proportionate S&C
job recruitment aligned to the IUSCA IQF Practitioner pathway



GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose & Who This Guide Is For

Purpose

The IUSCA Employer Hiring Guide for Strength and Conditioning Roles has been developed to support employers in writing clearer, fairer, and more proportionate job adverts for strength and conditioning, athletic development, physical preparation, sport performance, and related roles.

The guide is intended to help employers define roles more accurately, set appropriate essential and desirable criteria, align qualification and certification requirements to the actual scope of the role, and support better recruitment decisions.

It should be read alongside the IUSCA IQF Level Descriptors, the IUSCA IQF Role Classification and Salary Alignment Guide, and the IUSCA Example Job Descriptions and Criteria Templates.

The IQF Level Descriptors define progression in strength and conditioning practice through increasing sophistication in reasoning, professional judgement, autonomy, responsibility, complexity management, and error correction. The framework is designed to move beyond job title, time served, or simple accumulation of rule-based knowledge and fixed methods as the primary markers of practitioner capability.

Who this guide is for

This guide is intended for:

- Clubs
- Schools
- Universities
- Academies
- Private facilities
- Professional sport organisations
- National governing bodies
- Institutes of sport
- Charities and community sport organisations
- Performance departments
- Recruitment teams
- Human resources teams
- Employers advertising strength and conditioning or related roles

UK University-specific guidance will also be addressed separately in the IUSCA UK University S&C Role Grading and Salary Guide, particularly where university grading structures, HERA-style role evaluation, student supervision, academic practitioner duties, or degree accreditation are relevant.

SECTION 01

Core Hiring Principles

1.1 Start with role scope, not job title

Job titles in strength and conditioning are often inconsistent. The same title may be used for very different levels of responsibility, autonomy, decision-making, and professional accountability.

For example, an “Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach” may be a genuinely developmental role with supervision and limited responsibility. In another organisation, the same title may involve independent programme design, interdisciplinary decision-making, athlete monitoring, and responsibility for outcomes.

Employers should therefore define the role by asking:

- What is the practitioner expected to do?
- What decisions are they expected to make?
- What outcomes are they accountable for?
- How much supervision will they receive?
- How complex is the athlete or client population?
- Will they design programmes or mainly deliver them?
- Will they lead people, systems, or strategy?
- What level of professional judgement is genuinely required?

The IUSCA IQF classification should follow the scope of practice, not the job title alone.

1.2 Make essential criteria genuinely essential

Essential criteria should describe what a candidate must already have in order to perform the role safely and effectively.

Employers should avoid using essential criteria as a wish list. Excessive essential criteria can reduce applicant diversity, discourage suitable candidates, and create poor alignment between role level, salary, responsibility, and opportunity.

A useful test is: Would the candidate be unable to perform the role safely, ethically, or effectively without this criterion? If the answer is no, the criterion should usually be listed as desirable rather than essential.

1.3 Match qualifications to responsibility

Qualifications and certifications should be proportionate to the role.

A low-paid, supervised, early-career role should not normally require a degree, advanced professional certification, and several years of independent experience.

Equally, a role involving full professional accountability, independent programme design, interdisciplinary decision-making, staff leadership, or strategic responsibility should recognise that higher level of professional capability through appropriate criteria, salary, title, and status.

1.4 Avoid over-specification

Over-specification occurs when a job advert asks for qualifications, certifications, or experience beyond what the role actually requires.

Common examples include:

- Requiring a master's degree for a supervised assistant role.

- Requiring advanced certification for a low-paid delivery role.
- Asking for several years of experience for a role that is clearly developmental.
- Requiring autonomous programme design without offering appropriate salary or status.
- Advertising a senior leadership role with an assistant-level title or salary.

Over-specification can harm the profession by raising barriers to entry while failing to recognise the level of work being requested.

1.5 Support progression

Good job adverts should help practitioners understand where a role sits within a career pathway.

Developmental roles should describe supervision, mentoring, learning opportunities, and progression routes.

Autonomous roles should describe the level of decision-making, accountability, and programme responsibility.

Senior roles should describe leadership, system responsibility, interdisciplinary influence, and contribution to the quality of others' practice.

SECTION 02

Relationship to the IUSCA IQF Framework

2.1 What the IQF framework provides

The International Qualification Framework (IQF) provides a structure for understanding professional progression in strength and conditioning across different countries, sectors, and employment settings.

The IQF Level Descriptors were developed to provide a clearer account of progression in S&C practice. The framework describes development from externally guided, rule-following behaviour at lower levels, through increasingly conditional and context-sensitive reasoning, towards scientific, system-level, and field-shaping judgement at higher levels.

For employers, this means the IQF can help answer a practical question: **What level of practitioner does this role actually require?**

2.2 IQF levels and employment roles

The following table provides a practical employer-facing summary.

IQF level	Broad role type	Typical role scope
IQF Level 2	Supervised / developmental	Structured delivery, observation, supervised practice, limited independent responsibility
IQF Level 4	Defined-scope practitioner	Independent practice within defined boundaries, basic programme adaptation, accountable within scope
IQF Level 6	Scientific practitioner	Degree-level autonomous practice, independent programme design, evidence-informed decision-making, full professional accountability
IQF Level 7	Advanced scientific practitioner	Master's-level advanced practice, senior leadership, interdisciplinary responsibility, system development, responsibility for others' decision quality
IQF Level 8	Master practitioner / thought leader	Strategic leadership, governance, standards, organisational influence, field-level contribution

Levels 1, 3, and 5 remain important within the full IQF framework, but employer job adverts will most commonly map to Levels 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

2.3 Associated IUSCA IQF certifications

Employers are encouraged to refer to the relevant IUSCA IQF certification or professional recognition, or equivalent recognised professional certification, when advertising strength and conditioning roles.

IQF level	IUSCA IQF certification or recognition	Typical advert use
IQF Level 2	IUSCA IQF Level 2 Certified Strength and Conditioning Instructor	Supervised, placement, assistant, delivery-focused, or developmental roles
IQF Level 4	IUSCA IQF Level 4 Certified Strength and Conditioning Practitioner	Defined-scope practitioner roles and early-career autonomous delivery
IQF Level 6	IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP)	Autonomous practitioner roles requiring degree-level knowledge, professional accountability, and evidence-informed programme design

IQF level	IUSCA IQF certification or recognition	Typical advert use
IQF Level 7	IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP*m)	Senior, lead, advanced, and interdisciplinary roles requiring master's-level knowledge and responsibility for complex practice environments
IQF Level 8	IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (mISCP)	Head of department, director, strategic leadership, governance, expert practitioner, and profession-level contribution roles

The current Job Description and Criteria Templates also use this level structure and associated certification mapping across common S&C role types.

SECTION 03

Qualification Expectations by Level

3.1 Important principle

The IQF levels should not be interpreted as requiring a degree at every stage.

IQF Level 2 and IQF Level 4 sit below full degree-level professional recognition. They should be accessible through appropriate education, vocational training, supervised practice, professional certification, and relevant applied experience.

IQF Level 6 represents degree-level scientific practitioner capability. A relevant undergraduate degree should normally be essential for Level 6-aligned roles.

IQF Level 7 represents advanced scientific practitioner capability. A relevant master's degree should normally be essential for Level 7-aligned roles.

3.2 Qualification table

IQF level	Degree expectation	Recommended employer approach
IQF Level 2	No completed degree requirement	Do not require a degree. Accept relevant education, training, supervised experience, or certification.
IQF Level 4	No completed degree requirement	Do not normally require a full degree as essential. Accept relevant education, vocational training, professional certification, or equivalent applied experience.
IQF Level 6	Relevant undergraduate degree normally required	Require a relevant degree and Level 6 professional certification or equivalent.
IQF Level 7	Relevant master's degree normally required	Require a relevant master's degree and Level 7 professional certification or equivalent.
IQF Level 8	Senior professional recognition	Require evidence of senior professional distinction, leadership, contribution, and impact. A doctorate may be desirable in some contexts, but should not be assumed as essential unless the role genuinely requires it.

3.3 How to word Level 2 and Level 4 criteria

For Level 2 and Level 4 roles, employers should avoid wording that implies a completed degree is essential unless there is a clear and proportionate reason.

Better wording: Relevant education, vocational training, professional certification, supervised experience, or equivalent applied experience appropriate to the role scope.

For a graduate-specific appointment, it may be appropriate to state: where the role is specifically advertised as a graduate appointment, applicants may be expected to hold, or be working towards, a relevant undergraduate degree. For other Level 4 developmental roles, relevant education, vocational training, professional certification, or equivalent applied experience may be appropriate.

3.4 How to word Level 6 criteria

For Level 6-aligned roles:

Relevant undergraduate degree. **IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP)**, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

This should normally apply where the role requires autonomous programme design, evidence-informed decision-making, responsibility for athlete or client outcomes, and full professional accountability.

3.5 How to word Level 7 criteria

For Level 7-aligned roles:

Relevant master's degree. ****IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP*m)****, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

This should normally apply where the role requires advanced judgement, senior responsibility, interdisciplinary leadership, system development, staff supervision, and responsibility for the decision quality of others.

SECTION 04

Deciding the Appropriate IQF Level for a Role

4.1 Classification factors

Employers should consider the following factors before advertising a role:

Factor	Key question
Autonomy	Will the practitioner make independent decisions, or work under supervision?
Supervision	Will they be directly supervised, periodically supported, or fully accountable?
Programme design	Will they design programmes, adapt programmes, or mainly deliver sessions?
Athlete or client population	Is the population developmental, general, elite, high-risk, injured, professional, or complex?
Decision-making complexity	Are decisions routine, conditional, interdisciplinary, strategic, or system-level?
Evidence use	Will the practitioner need to interpret evidence, data, and context independently?
Interdisciplinary working	Will they contribute to, coordinate, or lead interdisciplinary decisions?
Leadership	Will they mentor, supervise, manage, or develop other practitioners?
Strategic influence	Will they shape systems, standards, policy, governance, or organisational direction?
Accountability	What outcomes will they be responsible for?

4.2 Level 2 roles

A Level 2-aligned role usually includes:

- Supervised practice.
- Structured delivery.
- Clear boundaries.
- Limited independent decision-making.
- Programmes designed by others.
- Regular feedback.
- Defined escalation routes.

Typical titles:

- Strength and Conditioning Intern
- Placement Coach
- Delivery Assistant
- Performance Support Intern

Suitable certification wording: IUSCA IQF Level 2 Certified Strength and Conditioning Instructor, or equivalent — or working towards IUSCA IQF Level 4 Certified Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, or equivalent.

Employers should not normally require a completed degree, advanced certification, or several years of experience for Level 2 roles.

4.3 Level 4 roles

A Level 4-aligned role usually includes:

- Defined-scope independent practice.
- Some session planning and adaptation.
- Accountability within role boundaries.
- Access to senior support.
- Basic monitoring and review.
- Ability to justify decisions using principles and intended outcomes.

Typical titles:

- Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach
- Strength and Conditioning Practitioner
- Academy S&C Coach
- Athletic Development Coach
- Physical Preparation Coach

Suitable certification wording: IUSCA IQF Level 4 Certified Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Employers should not normally require a completed degree as essential for Level 4 roles unless the role is specifically designed as a graduate role or the responsibilities justify it.

4.4 Level 6 roles**A Level 6-aligned role usually includes:**

- Full professional accountability for a defined area of practice.
- Independent programme design.
- Evidence-informed decision-making.
- Athlete or client monitoring.
- Programme evaluation and adaptation.
- Responsibility for outcomes.
- Working with incomplete information.
- Interdisciplinary contribution.

Typical titles:

- Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner
- Lead Sport S&C Coach
- Performance Support Practitioner
- Autonomous S&C Coach
- Physical Performance Coach

Suitable certification wording: IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP), or equivalent recognised professional certification. A relevant undergraduate degree should normally be essential for Level 6 roles.

4.5 Level 7 roles**A Level 7-aligned role usually includes:**

- Advanced professional judgement.
- Master's-level knowledge.

- Staff mentoring or supervision.
- Interdisciplinary leadership.
- System development.
- Quality assurance.
- Responsibility for the decision quality of others.
- Management of complex trade-offs.
- Departmental or programme-level influence.

Typical titles:

- Senior Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner
- Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner
- Head of Athletic Development
- Lead Physical Performance Coach
- Performance Lead

Suitable certification wording: IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (alSCP*m), or equivalent recognised professional certification. A relevant master's degree should normally be essential for Level 7 roles.

4.6 Level 8 roles

A Level 8-aligned role usually includes:

- Strategic leadership.
- Governance.
- Policy influence.
- Long-term organisational responsibility.
- Standards development.
- Professional contribution.
- Senior staff development.
- System-level or field-level influence.

Typical titles:

- Head of Strength and Conditioning
- Director of Performance
- Director of Athletic Development
- High Performance Director
- Strategic Performance Consultant
- National Performance Lead

Suitable certification wording: IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (mISCP), or equivalent recognised senior professional distinction.

A Level 8 role should require evidence of senior professional leadership, contribution, impact, and responsibility. A doctorate may be desirable in some contexts but should not be used as a default requirement unless the role genuinely requires doctoral-level academic or research responsibility.

SECTION 05

Setting Essential and Desirable Criteria

5.1 Essential criteria

Essential criteria should normally include:

- Required professional certification or equivalent.
- Required level of education where genuinely needed.
- Required applied experience.
- Required scope-specific competence.
- Safeguarding or welfare requirements where relevant.
- Legal or regulatory requirements where applicable.
- Ability to work with the relevant population.
- Ability to perform the role safely and ethically.

5.2 Desirable criteria

Desirable criteria may include:

- Additional qualifications.
- Experience in the specific sport or sector.
- Experience with particular technologies or systems.
- Specialist knowledge.
- Research literacy.
- Experience mentoring others.
- Experience in interdisciplinary environments.
- Higher-level certification where the role may develop towards a higher level.

5.3 Avoiding inflated criteria

Employers should avoid:

- Listing a degree as essential for Level 2 or Level 4 roles.
- Listing Level 6 or Level 7 certification as essential where the role is supervised or basic delivery-focused.
- Asking for several years of experience for an entry-level role.
- Requiring specialist experience that can reasonably be developed after appointment.
- Requiring elite sport experience where the role does not involve elite sport demands.
- Using desirable criteria to imply an unrealistic preferred candidate.

5.4 Example: better criteria design

Less appropriate — Essential: Master's degree, advanced accreditation, three years' experience, experience in elite sport, experience with GPS, force plates, athlete monitoring, return-to-play, and interdisciplinary case management.

For a Level 4 assistant role, this is likely excessive.

More appropriate — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 4 Certified Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification. Relevant education, vocational training, professional certification,

supervised experience, or equivalent applied experience appropriate to the role scope. Experience delivering safe and effective S&C sessions. Ability to adapt practice within defined role boundaries.

Desirable: Experience with athlete monitoring, sport-specific populations, or progression towards IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP), or equivalent.

SECTION 06

Salary and Role Alignment

6.1 Why salary alignment matters

Salary should be proportionate to:

- Role scope.
- Required qualifications.
- Required certification.
- Experience expectations.
- Autonomy.
- Responsibility.
- Complexity.
- Leadership.
- Contract type.
- Working hours.
- Sector and country.

A role requiring higher levels of professional judgement, education, certification, autonomy, and responsibility should be recognised accordingly.

6.2 Salary transparency

IUSCA strongly encourages employers to disclose salary or salary range.

Salary transparency helps:

- Improve applicant decision-making.
- Reduce wasted applications.
- Support fairer recruitment.
- Reduce confusion around seniority.
- Align expectations between employer and candidate.
- Improve trust in the recruitment process.

Where salary is not disclosed, applicants cannot easily judge whether the role is proportionate to the qualifications, experience, and responsibility required.

6.3 FTE and contract clarity

Employers should clearly state:

- Full-time, part-time, casual, fixed-term, seasonal, self-employed, or permanent.
- FTE where relevant.
- Weekly hours.
- Term-time only arrangements.
- Evening and weekend expectations.
- Travel expectations.
- Whether additional duties are expected.
- Whether the salary is pro rata.

A role advertised at £24,000 may mean very different things depending on whether it is full-time, part-time, casual, term-time, or pro rata.

6.4 Alignment examples

Scenario	Likely issue
Level 2 supervised role with clear mentoring and modest pay	May be appropriate if responsibilities are limited
Level 4 assistant role requiring a degree	Likely over-specified
Level 6 autonomous role without degree-level requirement	May under-recognise professional accountability
Level 6 autonomous role paid as an entry-level assistant	Likely salary misalignment
Level 7 lead role without recognition of staff leadership	Likely role and salary misalignment
Level 8 strategic role advertised as an operational coaching post	Likely status and responsibility misalignment

SECTION 07

Writing a Clear Job Advert

7.1 Recommended job advert structure

Employers should include:

1. Job title
2. Employer or organisation
3. Location
4. Salary or salary range
5. FTE / hours
6. Contract type and duration
7. Closing date
8. Role purpose
9. Reporting line
10. Key responsibilities
11. Essential criteria
12. Desirable criteria
13. IUSCA IQF classification or recommended certification wording
14. Supervision and development arrangements
15. Safeguarding and welfare requirements
16. Application process
17. Contact details or application link

7.2 Role purpose

The role purpose should explain why the role exists.

Example: The Strength and Conditioning Practitioner will design, deliver, monitor, and evaluate physical preparation programmes for assigned athletes, supporting performance, development, welfare, and long-term progression.

7.3 Reporting line

The reporting line should clarify:

- Who supervises the practitioner.
- Whether the practitioner supervises others.
- Where the role sits in the performance structure.
- Who has final decision-making authority in complex cases.

7.4 Key responsibilities

Responsibilities should be specific enough for applicants to understand the work.

Avoid vague wording such as: Support all aspects of performance.

Better: Design and deliver strength and conditioning programmes for assigned athletes, contribute to monitoring and testing processes, collaborate with coaching and medical staff, and review programme effectiveness based on athlete response and agreed outcomes.

7.5 Supervision and development

For early-career roles, the advert should clearly describe:

- Named supervisor or supervising role.
- Frequency of feedback.
- Scope of independent practice.
- Development opportunities.
- Expected progression.
- Escalation routes.
- Restrictions on unsupervised work.

For senior roles, the advert should describe:

- Leadership responsibilities.
- Staff supervision.
- System development.
- Quality assurance.
- Strategic responsibility.

SECTION 08

Recruitment, Shortlisting & Interview Guidance

8.1 Purpose of the recruitment process

A well-designed recruitment process should assess whether candidates are capable of performing the role being advertised.

For strength and conditioning roles, this means assessing the candidate's ability to reason, coach, communicate, make decisions, work within appropriate boundaries, and act effectively in the context of the role.

The recruitment process should therefore be aligned to:

- The IQF level of the role.
- The responsibilities of the role.
- The level of autonomy required.
- The complexity of the athlete or client population.
- The supervision and support available.
- The level of programme design responsibility.
- The level of interdisciplinary, leadership, or strategic responsibility.

The process should not rely on arbitrary tasks that do not reflect the role. For example, asking every candidate to perform or demonstrate a fixed list of exercises may provide little useful information if the role is primarily concerned with reasoning, programme design, interdisciplinary communication, or strategic leadership.

Practical assessment can be valuable, but it should be role-specific and should assess the candidate's coaching, communication, judgement, and ability to adapt, rather than their own physical performance.

8.2 Where roles should be advertised

Employers should advertise roles in places that are likely to reach appropriately qualified and relevant candidates.

Depending on the role, this may include:

- The employer's own website or careers page.
- The IUSCA Job Board.
- Relevant professional bodies and certification organisations.
- Sport governing body or institute job boards.
- Club, academy, school, or organisation networks.
- University employability or alumni networks, where relevant.
- LinkedIn and professional social media channels.
- Relevant S&C, sport science, athletic development, and performance networks.
- Sector-specific recruitment platforms.
- Internal recruitment channels, where appropriate.

Employers are encouraged to include the relevant IUSCA IQF certification wording within the advert. For example: **IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.**

Advertising through the IUSCA Job Board can help candidates understand the role's relationship to the IQF Strength and Conditioning Practitioner pathway and can support greater consistency in how S&C roles are interpreted across the profession.

8.3 How long roles should be advertised

The advertising period should be proportionate to the seniority, complexity, location, and competitiveness of the role.

Role type	Suggested advertising period
Internship, placement, or developmental role	2 to 3 weeks
Assistant or Level 4 practitioner role	3 weeks
Level 6 autonomous practitioner role	3 to 4 weeks
Senior or Level 7 lead role	4 weeks
Head of S&C, director, or Level 8 strategic role	4 to 6 weeks
International or relocation-based role	4 to 6 weeks

Shorter advertising periods may be appropriate where there is an urgent operational need, but employers should still allow enough time for suitable candidates to find the advert, review the criteria, prepare an application, and apply properly.

Roles should normally have a clear closing date. Open-ended adverts can be used for ongoing recruitment, but employers should still explain how applications will be reviewed and when candidates can expect communication.

8.4 Application information

Employers should make the application process clear and accessible. The advert should state:

- How to apply.
- What documents are required.
- Whether a CV is required.
- Whether a cover letter or supporting statement is required.
- Whether candidates should respond to specific selection criteria.
- Whether certification evidence is required at application stage or later.
- Whether references will be requested before or after interview.
- Whether the role requires safeguarding checks, background checks, right-to-work checks, or equivalent local requirements.
- The expected timeline for shortlisting, interviews, and appointment.

For roles where the IQF level is specified, employers may ask candidates to provide evidence of the relevant IUSCA IQF certification or equivalent recognised professional certification.

8.5 Shortlisting

Shortlisting should be based on the published criteria. Employers should avoid adding new requirements after the advert has closed unless there is a clear and documented reason. Candidates should be assessed against the stated essential and desirable criteria, with particular attention to whether they meet the level of practice required by the role.

Shortlisting should consider:

- Relevant certification or professional recognition.
- Appropriate education and training.
- Applied experience relevant to the role.
- Evidence of safe and ethical practice.
- Evidence of coaching capability.

- Evidence of reasoning and decision-making appropriate to the role level.
- Evidence of programme design, monitoring, or leadership where relevant.
- Evidence of safeguarding, welfare, and professional conduct.
- Evidence of interdisciplinary or strategic work where relevant.

For **Level 2 and Level 4** roles, do not screen out candidates solely because they do not hold a completed degree, unless the role has been specifically and proportionately advertised as a graduate position. For **Level 6** roles, a relevant undergraduate degree should normally be essential. For **Level 7** roles, a relevant master's degree should normally be essential.

8.6 Interview panel

The interview panel should include people who understand the role and can assess the relevant level of practice.

A suitable panel may include:

- The line manager.
- A senior S&C or performance practitioner.
- A sport coach or relevant operational lead.
- A medical, sport science, or interdisciplinary colleague where relevant.
- An HR or recruitment representative.
- A safeguarding or welfare representative where the role involves children, young people, or vulnerable populations.
- A senior leader for Level 7 or Level 8 roles.

For senior and strategic roles, the panel should include people who can assess leadership, systems thinking, governance, interdisciplinary working, and organisational judgement.

8.7 Interview structure

The interview process should be proportionate to the role. A simple developmental role may require one interview and a short practical task. A senior leadership role may require multiple stages, including a presentation, stakeholder discussion, case study, and final interview.

Role level	Suggested process
Level 2	Short interview, supervised coaching discussion, basic scenario questions
Level 4	Interview, practical coaching task, short planning or reflection task
Level 6	Interview, case study, programme design task, applied decision-making discussion
Level 7	Interview, presentation, leadership scenario, interdisciplinary case discussion
Level 8	Strategic presentation, senior panel interview, governance or systems case, stakeholder discussion

The process should be explained to candidates in advance.

8.8 Practical assessments

Practical assessments should be used only where they reflect the role. For S&C roles, practical assessment should normally assess:

- Coaching communication.
- Ability to observe movement.
- Ability to give clear feedback.

- Ability to adapt a task to the individual.
- Safety and organisation.
- Professional presence.
- Ability to explain why a coaching decision was made.
- Ability to reflect on what could be improved.

Practical assessments should not focus mainly on the candidate's own physical performance. A candidate should not be judged on how much they can lift, how fast they can sprint, or whether they personally perform a movement to a high athletic standard, unless this is genuinely relevant to the role. Even where demonstration is useful, the assessment should focus on whether the candidate can teach, regress, progress, adapt, and explain the task appropriately.

Better practical assessment examples:

- Coach a short warm-up to a defined population.
- Teach a hinge, squat, jump, landing, acceleration, or change-of-direction task to a small group.
- Adapt a session for an athlete with limited training age.
- Explain how a session would change for different athlete needs.
- Identify risks or errors in a short scenario.
- Reflect on what they would change after observing the session.

8.9 Presentations

Presentations can be useful where the role requires reasoning, communication, programme design, leadership, or strategy. The presentation topic should match the IQF level.

IQF level	Suitable presentation topic
Level 2	"How I would support safe delivery in a supervised S&C environment"
Level 4	"How I would plan and adapt a session for a defined athlete group"
Level 6	"How I would design, monitor, and evaluate an S&C programme for an assigned team or cohort"
Level 7	"How I would improve consistency and decision-making across an S&C service"
Level 8	"How I would shape a performance strategy, governance structure, or professional standards framework across an organisation"

Presentations should not become academic exercises unless the role genuinely requires academic or research presentation capability. For most applied roles, the presentation should assess practical reasoning, decision-making, communication, and ability to explain action in context.

8.10 Case studies and work samples

Case studies are often more useful than generic interview questions because they show how a candidate thinks. Examples include:

Level 4 case study: You are supporting a group of academy athletes during a lower-body strength session. One athlete reports fatigue and poor sleep, while another is progressing quickly. How would you adapt the session within your scope and what would you escalate to a senior practitioner?

Level 6 case study: You are responsible for the S&C programme for a team entering a congested competition period. Monitoring data, coach feedback, and athlete reports are mixed. How would you review the situation, make decisions, and adapt the training plan?

Level 7 case study: You lead a small S&C team across several squads. Coaches want more high-intensity work, medical staff are concerned about availability, and junior staff are applying different approaches. How would you improve decision-making and consistency across the service?

Level 8 case study: You have been asked to review the organisation's performance system. There are issues with staff alignment, unclear standards, inconsistent athlete monitoring, and competing stakeholder priorities. How would you approach the review and establish a more effective system?

Case studies should allow candidates to show how they define the problem, identify relevant information, consider trade-offs, make decisions, and revise their approach.

8.11 Interview questions by IQF level

Level 2 — suitable questions may include:

- Describe how you would prepare for a supervised coaching session.
- What would you do if you were unsure whether an athlete should continue with an exercise?
- How do you respond to feedback from a supervisor?
- What does safe practice mean in a gym or field-based environment?
- Give an example of something you have learned from observing another coach.

Level 4 — suitable questions may include:

- Describe how you would plan a session for a defined athlete group.
- How would you adapt a session if athletes responded differently than expected?
- How do you decide when to progress or regress an exercise?
- Give an example of a coaching decision you made and the rationale behind it.
- What would you escalate to a senior practitioner?
- How do you use feedback to improve your coaching?

Level 6 — suitable questions may include:

- Describe how you would conduct a needs analysis for an assigned team or athlete group.
- How do you balance evidence, coach input, athlete feedback, and monitoring data?
- Give an example of a time you changed a programme based on athlete response.
- How do you make decisions when the available information is incomplete?
- How would you evaluate whether a programme is working?
- How do you manage competing short-term and long-term outcomes?

Level 7 — suitable questions may include:

- How do you develop consistency across a team of practitioners?
- How do you support junior practitioners in improving their decision-making?
- Describe a time you had to manage disagreement within an interdisciplinary team.
- How do you identify and correct poor practice without creating defensiveness?
- How would you build a culture of review and learning within an S&C service?
- How do you decide when not to intervene?

Level 8 — suitable questions may include:

- How would you define and implement a performance strategy across an organisation?
- How do you establish professional standards across teams, departments, or systems?
- Describe how you have contributed to the development of practitioners, systems, or the wider profession.
- How would you balance performance, welfare, resource, governance, and long-term organisational priorities?
- How do you ensure that systems remain open to review and correction?

- How would you respond if current practice across the organisation was culturally embedded but poorly justified?

8.12 Questions to avoid

Employers should avoid questions or tasks that are vague, arbitrary, discriminatory, or poorly connected to the role. Examples include:

- Asking candidates to perform maximal lifts.
- Asking candidates to complete fitness tests unrelated to the role.
- Asking candidates to demonstrate exercises without assessing coaching rationale.
- Asking overly technical questions unrelated to the advertised responsibilities.
- Asking academic research questions for a delivery-focused role.
- Asking leadership strategy questions for a supervised intern role.
- Asking personal questions unrelated to role suitability.
- Asking questions that test whether the candidate uses the employer's preferred method rather than whether they can reason effectively.

If a practical demonstration is included, the assessment should focus on how the candidate coaches, adapts, communicates, observes, and explains, rather than whether they personally perform like an athlete.

8.13 Scoring and decision-making

Employers should use a structured scoring process. A scoring rubric may include:

Area	What to assess
Technical knowledge	Understanding appropriate to the IQF level
Coaching communication	Clarity, confidence, adaptability, and professionalism
Reasoning	Ability to explain decisions and link actions to intended outcomes
Safety and welfare	Risk awareness, safeguarding, scope of practice, and duty of care
Programme design	Ability to plan, adapt, monitor, and evaluate where relevant
Evidence use	Ability to interpret evidence and context appropriately
Reflection	Ability to identify errors and improve practice
Interdisciplinary working	Ability to collaborate and communicate across roles
Leadership	Ability to support others, shape systems, and improve decision quality
Strategic judgement	Ability to manage long-term complexity, governance, and organisational priorities

The weighting should reflect the role. For example, leadership should carry little weighting for a supervised intern role, but significant weighting for a Level 7 or Level 8 role.

8.14 Candidate communication

Employers should communicate clearly with candidates throughout the process. This should include:

- Confirmation of application.
- Expected shortlisting timeline.
- Interview date options.
- Details of interview tasks.

- Names or roles of interview panel members where appropriate.
- Expected duration of the interview.
- Whether preparation is required.
- What equipment or facilities will be available for practical tasks.
- When candidates can expect an outcome.

Candidates should not be surprised by major tasks on the day of interview. If a presentation, practical assessment, or case study is required, candidates should receive appropriate information in advance.

8.15 Adjustments and accessibility

Employers should provide reasonable adjustments where required and should ensure the process is accessible. This may include:

- Adjusting interview format.
- Providing questions or tasks in writing.
- Allowing additional preparation time.
- Ensuring physical access to the interview location.
- Providing alternatives to physical demonstration where demonstration is not essential to the role.
- Avoiding unnecessary physical requirements.

Practical tasks should be linked to job requirements and should not create unnecessary barriers for candidates.

8.16 Safeguarding and professional conduct

Where the role involves children, young people, students, vulnerable groups, injured athletes, or high-risk environments, the recruitment process should include appropriate safeguarding and professional conduct assessment. This may include questions about:

- Duty of care.
- Professional boundaries.
- Escalation routes.
- Confidentiality.
- Working with parents, coaches, or medical staff.
- Responding to welfare concerns.
- Managing pressure from coaches or stakeholders.
- Knowing when to refer or seek support.

Safeguarding checks and background checks should be conducted in line with the relevant country, sector, and legal requirements.

8.17 References and evidence checking

Employers should verify essential claims before appointment where possible. This may include:

- Certification status.
- Education or qualification evidence.
- Professional registration or recognition.
- Right to work.
- Safeguarding or background checks.
- Relevant employment history.
- References from appropriate supervisors or employers.

Where a role requires IUSCA IQF certification or professional recognition, the employer may ask the candidate to provide evidence or use the appropriate IUSCA verification route where available.

8.18 Feedback to candidates

Employers are encouraged to provide feedback to interviewed candidates. Good feedback should be:

- Based on the published criteria.
- Linked to the role requirements.
- Constructive.
- Specific enough to be useful.
- Professional and respectful.

Feedback should avoid vague comments such as “not the right fit” unless accompanied by specific, role-relevant explanation.

8.19 Recruitment process checklist

Before beginning recruitment, employers should confirm:

- ☐ The role has been classified against the likely IQF level.
- ☐ The advert includes appropriate IUSCA IQF certification wording or equivalent.
- ☐ The advert has been placed in suitable locations, including the IUSCA Job Board where appropriate.
- ☐ The advertising period is proportionate.
- ☐ Essential and desirable criteria are clear.
- ☐ Degree requirements are only essential at Level 6 or higher.
- ☐ Master's degree requirements are only essential at Level 7 or higher.
- ☐ Shortlisting criteria match the advert.
- ☐ The interview process assesses the actual role requirements.
- ☐ Practical tasks are role-specific and do not assess arbitrary physical performance.
- ☐ Presentation topics match the IQF level.
- ☐ Interview questions assess reasoning, judgement, autonomy, complexity, and error correction appropriate to the role.
- ☐ The scoring process is structured.
- ☐ Safeguarding and welfare responsibilities are assessed where relevant.
- ☐ Candidate communication is clear.
- ☐ Evidence checking and references are planned.
- ☐ Feedback arrangements are agreed.

SECTION 09

Developmental Roles

9.1 What makes a developmental role appropriate?

A developmental role is appropriate when:

- It has clear supervision.
- The practitioner is not expected to hold full responsibility for outcomes.
- The workload is proportionate.
- The role includes genuine learning and mentoring.
- The required criteria are not excessive.
- The salary, stipend, or benefits are transparent.
- The role does not disguise a full professional post as an internship.

9.2 Internships and placements

Internships and placements should include:

- Defined learning objectives.
- Clear supervision.
- Limited independent responsibility.
- Safe scope of practice.
- Feedback and mentoring.
- Written expectations.
- Appropriate welfare and safeguarding arrangements.
- Clear duration.

They should not include:

- Unsupervised programme design.
- Full responsibility for athlete outcomes.
- Departmental leadership.
- Excessive hours without appropriate compensation.
- Requirements for advanced certification.
- Requirements for several years of experience.

9.3 Graduate assistant roles

Graduate assistant roles can be useful transition posts, but employers should be clear whether the role is truly a graduate role or simply an early-career developmental role.

If the role is explicitly designed as a graduate role, a degree may be appropriate. However, this should not be interpreted as an IQF Level 4 requirement. Level 4 itself does not require a completed degree.

SECTION 10

Autonomous Practitioner Roles

10.1 When a role becomes Level 6

A role should normally be treated as Level 6 where the practitioner is expected to:

- Hold full professional accountability for a defined area.
- Design and evaluate programmes independently.
- Interpret athlete or client data.
- Make decisions under uncertainty.
- Integrate evidence, context, and outcomes.
- Collaborate with other professionals.
- Adapt practice based on feedback and results.
- Manage a caseload, team, sport, or cohort.

10.2 Level 6 qualification and certification requirements

For Level 6 roles, employers should normally require: Relevant undergraduate degree. IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP), or equivalent recognised professional certification.

10.3 Avoid under-titling Level 6 roles

A role should not be advertised as an assistant or junior role if the practitioner is expected to hold full accountability for programme design, monitoring, interdisciplinary decision-making, and athlete outcomes.

If the responsibilities are Level 6, the title, salary, and criteria should reflect that.

SECTION 11

Senior, Lead, and Strategic Roles

11.1 Senior roles

A senior role may be Level 6 or Level 7 depending on scope. A senior title alone does not automatically mean Level 7. The role becomes Level 7 where the practitioner is expected to:

- Shape systems.
- Mentor or supervise practitioners.
- Lead interdisciplinary work.
- Review decision quality.
- Manage complex trade-offs.
- Influence practice beyond their own caseload.

11.2 Lead roles

A lead role should normally be Level 7 where it includes:

- Responsibility for service quality.
- Staff supervision.
- Departmental planning.
- Interdisciplinary leadership.
- System development.
- Performance strategy.
- Professional standards.

Recommended wording: IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP*m), or equivalent recognised professional certification. A relevant master's degree should normally be essential.

11.3 Head of S&C roles

A Head of S&C role may sit at Level 7 or Level 8. It is more likely to sit at Level 8 where it includes:

- Strategic leadership.
- Governance.
- Policy influence.
- Organisational accountability.
- Standards development.
- Senior staff development.
- Profession-level contribution.
- Long-term departmental or organisational direction.

Recommended wording for Level 8-aligned roles: IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (mISCP), or equivalent recognised senior professional distinction.

11.4 Director of Performance roles

A Director of Performance role should be recognised as a senior strategic leadership role. It should not be reduced to technical coaching competence. It should recognise:

- System leadership.
- Governance.
- Staff development.
- Interdisciplinary integration.
- Strategic judgement.
- Organisational influence.
- Long-term responsibility.
- Professional standards.
- Athlete welfare and ethical practice.

SECTION 12

Early-Career, Youth, and Private-Sector Contexts

12.1 Youth and school roles

Youth and school roles require particular attention to:

- Safeguarding.
- Welfare.
- Growth and maturation.
- Age-appropriate training.
- Communication with young people.
- Professional boundaries.
- Parent, coach, and teacher communication.
- Developmentally appropriate expectations.

A school or academy role may sit at Level 4 or Level 6 depending on autonomy and responsibility. Level 4 may be appropriate where the practitioner works within a defined curriculum or programme framework. Level 6 may be appropriate where the practitioner independently designs, leads, monitors, and evaluates athletic development provision across a school, academy, or pathway.

12.2 Private-sector roles

Private-sector roles vary considerably. Employers should clearly define whether the practitioner is expected to:

- Deliver sessions only.
- Conduct needs analysis.
- Design programmes.
- Manage client outcomes.
- Work with injured clients.
- Work with youth athletes.
- Support return-to-training.
- Manage other staff.
- Contribute to business development.
- Lead services or systems.

Where a private-sector role combines coaching, assessment, monitoring, client management, return-to-training, and service development, the level of competence and remuneration should reflect that broader scope.

12.3 Consultancy roles

Consultancy roles should define:

- Scope.
- Deliverables.
- Duration.
- Decision authority.
- Reporting arrangements.
- Whether the consultant is advising, implementing, or leading.
- Whether staff mentoring is required.
- Whether athlete contact is involved.

- Whether strategic responsibility is included.

A consultancy role may sit at Level 6, 7, or 8 depending on scope.

SECTION 13

Recommended Certification Wording

13.1 General wording

Relevant IUSCA IQF certification or professional recognition, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

13.2 Level-specific wording

Level 2: IUSCA IQF Level 2 Certified Strength and Conditioning Instructor, or equivalent.

Level 4: IUSCA IQF Level 4 Certified Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Level 6: IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP), or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Level 7: IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP*m), or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Level 8: IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (mISCP), or equivalent recognised senior professional distinction.

13.3 Use of “or equivalent”

IUSCA recommends using “or equivalent recognised professional certification” in job adverts.

This allows employers to recognise appropriate external certifications while still aligning the role to the IQF framework and making the expected level of practice clear.

13.4 Understanding Equivalent Certifications

When an advert uses “or equivalent recognised professional certification” wording, employers may need to judge how another strength and conditioning certification compares with the relevant IUSCA IQF level. The comparison below provides an example of the major certifications that are broadly positioned around IQF Level 6, summarising how each aligns against four core requirements that employers commonly rely on: a relevant degree, a practical coaching assessment, a practical experience requirement, and continuing professional development.

This is intended to support employer judgement, not to rank organisations. Each certification serves a different purpose and operates within a different national and regulatory context. Employers should treat the comparison as a starting point and refer to each awarding body's current published requirements before making a final decision.

Comparison of Major S&C Qualifications

Approximate IQF Level 6 certifications

REQUIREMENT	IUSCA Accredited aISCP · International	NSCA Certified CSCS · United States	UKSCA Accredited ASCC · United Kingdom	ASCA Certified Level 2 · Australia
Relevant degree required	✓ REQUIRED	✓ REQUIRED	✗ NOT REQUIRED	✗ NOT REQUIRED
Practical coaching assessment	✓ REQUIRED	✗ NOT REQUIRED	⦿ PARTIALLY MET <i>Competencies assessment only</i>	✓ REQUIRED
Practical experience hours requirement	✓ REQUIRED	✗ NOT REQUIRED	⦿ PARTIALLY MET <i>No direct hours requirement</i>	✓ REQUIRED
Continuing education requirement (CPD / CEU)	✓ REQUIRED	✓ REQUIRED	✓ REQUIRED	✓ REQUIRED

✓ Required

⦿ Partially met

✗ Not required

Only the IUSCA aISCP meets the full IQF Level 6 specification. The other certifications shown are approximate Level 6 equivalents that each meet part, but not all, of the requirements associated with IQF Level 6 practice.

Where an advert asks for one of these other “Level 6” certifications, employers should also ask for the specific criteria that certification does not meet — for example, a relevant degree, a practical coaching assessment, or a practical experience requirement — so that the successful candidate still demonstrates the full IQF Level 6 standard.

How to read this comparison

Required — the criterion is a stated minimum published requirement for award of the certification.

Partially met — the criterion is addressed in part, but not through a full or direct requirement — for example, a weightlifting or fixed-method competency assessment rather than a separate practical coaching assessment, or professional standards without a defined minimum number of experience hours.

Not required — the criterion was not identified as a stated minimum published requirement.

Comparison based on publicly available minimum published requirements as reviewed in March 2026. Absence of a criterion indicates that it was not identified as a stated minimum published requirement for award of that certification. Awarding bodies update their requirements periodically, so employers should verify current requirements directly with each organisation.

For the purposes of IUSCA IQF alignment, employers are encouraged to focus on whether a candidate's certification, education, and applied experience together demonstrate the level of practice required by the role, rather than relying on the title of any single certification. Where a certification does not meet every criterion, relevant education, supervised experience, or continuing professional development — or the addition of the missing criteria to the advert — may still be used to evidence the full IQF Level 6 standard.

SECTION 14

Common Problems in S&C Job Adverts

Problem	Why it matters	Better approach
Asking for a degree for a supervised assistant role	Over-specifies the role and may exclude suitable early-career practitioners	Use Level 2 or Level 4 criteria and place postgraduate study as desirable only if relevant
Requiring advanced certification for low-paid delivery roles	Misaligns salary and requirements	Match certification to role scope
No salary disclosed	Reduces transparency and applicant trust	Provide salary or salary range
Vague title with broad responsibilities	Makes the level unclear	Define responsibilities, autonomy, and accountability
Assistant title with autonomous responsibility	Under-recognises the role	Reclassify as Level 6 if full accountability is required
Senior role with no leadership description	Makes seniority unclear	Define staff, system, or interdisciplinary responsibility
Internship with full practitioner responsibilities	Risks exploitation and poor professional practice	Provide supervision and limit responsibility
Requiring elite sport experience unnecessarily	Reduces applicant pool without clear reason	List as desirable only where genuinely needed
Mixing coaching, rehab, sport science, and management without clarity	Creates unclear scope and risk	Define boundaries and reporting lines
No supervision details for early-career roles	Increases risk and uncertainty	State supervision and development structure

SECTION 15

Employer Job Advert Checklist

Before publishing a role, employers should confirm:

Role clarity

- ☐ The role title reflects actual responsibility.
- ☐ The role purpose is clear.
- ☐ Key responsibilities are specific.
- ☐ Reporting line is stated.
- ☐ Supervision arrangements are clear.
- ☐ Leadership responsibilities are stated where relevant.

IQF alignment

- ☐ The likely IQF level has been considered.
- ☐ Certification wording matches the role scope.
- ☐ Degree requirements are only essential at Level 6 or above.
- ☐ Master's degree requirements are only essential at Level 7 or above.
- ☐ Essential criteria are proportionate.
- ☐ Desirable criteria are realistic.

Salary and employment terms

- ☐ Salary or salary range is disclosed.
- ☐ FTE or hours are stated.
- ☐ Contract type is clear.
- ☐ Duration is stated.
- ☐ Working pattern is clear.
- ☐ Travel, evening, or weekend expectations are described.
- ☐ Benefits or development opportunities are stated where relevant.

Professional standards

- ☐ Safeguarding and welfare requirements are included where relevant.
- ☐ Professional boundaries are clear.
- ☐ Interdisciplinary responsibilities are defined.
- ☐ Return-to-training responsibilities are within scope.
- ☐ Data, monitoring, and reporting responsibilities are clear.
- ☐ CPD and development expectations are proportionate.

SECTION 16

Suggested Job Advert Template

Copy and adapt the structure below. Replace each bracketed prompt with role-specific detail, keeping criteria proportionate to the IQF level.

JOB TITLE

[Insert title]

EMPLOYER

[Insert organisation]

LOCATION

[Insert location]

SALARY

[Insert salary or salary range]

CONTRACT

[Full-time / part-time / fixed-term / permanent / casual / seasonal / self-employed]

HOURS / FTE

[Insert working hours or FTE]

CLOSING DATE

[Insert date]

ROLE PURPOSE

[Briefly explain why the role exists and what the post holder will be responsible for.]

IUSCA IQF ROLE ALIGNMENT

This role appears to align with: [IQF Level 2 / 4 / 6 / 7 / 8]

RECOMMENDED CERTIFICATION WORDING

[Insert relevant wording]

REPORTING LINE

Reports to: [Insert role]

May supervise: [Insert roles, if applicable]

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The post holder will be expected to:

- *[Responsibility 1]*
- *[Responsibility 2]*
- *[Responsibility 3]*
- *[Responsibility 4]*
- *[Responsibility 5]*

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

Applicants should normally demonstrate:

- *[Essential criterion 1]*
- *[Essential criterion 2]*
- *[Essential criterion 3]*
- *[Essential criterion 4]*

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

Desirable criteria may include:

- *[Desirable criterion 1]*
- *[Desirable criterion 2]*

– *[Desirable criterion 3]*

SUPERVISION AND DEVELOPMENT

[Describe supervision, mentoring, CPD, and development arrangements.]

SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE

[Describe safeguarding, welfare, and professional conduct expectations.]

HOW TO APPLY

[Insert application process.]

SECTION 17

IUSCA Aligned Role Criteria

Employers seeking IUSCA Aligned Role status should ensure that the advert includes:

- ☐ Salary or salary range.
- ☐ FTE, hours, or working pattern.
- ☐ Contract type and duration.
- ☐ Clear role purpose.
- ☐ Clear responsibilities.
- ☐ Appropriate essential criteria.
- ☐ Appropriate desirable criteria.
- ☐ Relevant IUSCA IQF certification wording, or equivalent.
- ☐ Proportionate qualification expectations.
- ☐ Appropriate supervision for developmental roles.
- ☐ Appropriate salary and title for autonomous or senior roles.
- ☐ Clear safeguarding, welfare, and professional conduct expectations.

An **IUSCA Aligned Role** indicates that the role appears appropriately aligned in relation to role scope, salary, qualifications, certification, experience, autonomy, responsibility, and professional expectations.

APPENDIX A

Example Job Description & Criteria Templates

The following templates provide practical examples for common strength and conditioning roles. They are designed to be adapted to the employer's setting, but the qualification and certification expectations should remain proportionate to the role scope.

Template	Typical IQF classification
Strength and Conditioning Intern / Placement Coach	Level 2 to 4 developmental
Graduate Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach	Level 4 developmental
Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner	Level 4
Strength and Conditioning Practitioner / Coach	Level 4 to 6
Autonomous S&C Coach / Lead Sport S&C Coach	Level 6
Senior Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner	Level 6 to 7
Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner	Level 7
Head of Strength and Conditioning	Level 7 to 8
Director of Performance / Athletic Development	Level 8
School / Academy Athletic Development Coach	Level 4 to 6
Private Sector Strength and Conditioning Practitioner	Level 4 to 6
Strength and Conditioning Consultant	Level 6 to 8

TEMPLATE 01

Strength & Conditioning Intern / Placement Coach

IQF Level 2 – 4 · Developmental

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 2 to Level 4 developmental

This role is suitable where the practitioner is developing professional competence through structured delivery, observation, supervised practice, and feedback.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 2 Instructor, or working towards **IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner**, depending on the level of responsibility.

Recommended Advert Wording

Desirable: IUSCA IQF Level 2 Instructor, or equivalent.

Desirable: Working towards IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Suggested Role Title

- **Strength and Conditioning Intern**
- **Strength and Conditioning Placement Coach**
- **Athletic Development Placement Coach**
- **Performance Support Intern**

Role Purpose

The Strength and Conditioning Intern will support the delivery of strength and conditioning services under the supervision of qualified practitioners. The role is intended to provide structured professional development, practical coaching exposure, and experience within an applied performance environment.

The role should support the intern in developing safe coaching practice, basic session delivery, professional behaviours, communication skills, and an understanding of how training activities contribute to athlete development.

Reporting Line**Reports to:**

- Head of Strength and Conditioning
- Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach
- Senior Strength and Conditioning Practitioner
- Placement Supervisor

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Assist with the set-up, delivery, and review of strength and conditioning sessions.

- Support warm-ups, movement preparation, gym-based training, field-based physical development, and recovery sessions under supervision.
- Deliver selected components of sessions where appropriately trained and approved.
- Assist with athlete monitoring, data collection, equipment preparation, and session organisation.
- Observe coaching practice and contribute to reflective review.
- Support the maintenance of a safe, professional, and organised training environment.
- Follow agreed protocols, risk assessments, and safeguarding procedures.
- Communicate professionally with athletes, coaches, staff, and supervisors.
- Attend development meetings, mentoring sessions, and internal education activities.
- Maintain a record of learning, feedback, and professional development.

Essential Criteria

Applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Current enrolment on a relevant undergraduate degree, vocational qualification, or professional development pathway.
- Developing knowledge of strength and conditioning principles.
- Commitment to safe and ethical practice.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Willingness to learn, receive feedback, and reflect on practice.
- Reliability, professionalism, and appropriate conduct in a performance environment.
- Understanding of safeguarding, welfare, and duty of care responsibilities.

Desirable Criteria

- IUSCA IQF Level 2 Instructor, or equivalent.
- Working towards IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent.
- Experience assisting in sport, school, academy, club, or private-sector settings.
- First aid qualification.
- Experience using basic monitoring or testing procedures.
- Evidence of reflective practice or professional development.

Supervision and Development Expectations

This role should include:

- Named supervisor.
- Clear scope of permitted activity.
- Regular feedback.
- Observation opportunities.
- Gradual increase in delivery responsibility where appropriate.
- Clear escalation route for athlete welfare, injury, safeguarding, or professional concerns.

Criteria to Avoid

For this role type, employers should normally avoid requiring:

- A full degree.
- Advanced professional certification.

- Several years of independent coaching experience.
- Responsibility for autonomous programme design.
- Responsibility for athlete outcomes without supervision.
- Unpaid or very low-paid work involving substantial professional responsibility.

TEMPLATE 02

Graduate Assistant Strength & Conditioning Coach

IQF Level 4 · Developmental

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 4 developmental

This role is suitable for a practitioner moving from supervised practice towards defined-scope independent practice.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 4 Certified Strength and Conditioning Practitioner

Recommended Advert Wording

Desirable: IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or working towards this level, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Where the role includes greater independent responsibility, this may be listed as essential.

Suggested Role Title

- Graduate Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach
- Graduate Athletic Development Coach
- Assistant Performance Coach
- Graduate Strength and Conditioning Practitioner

Role Purpose

The Graduate Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach will support the planning, delivery, and evaluation of physical preparation services for assigned athletes or teams. The role is designed to develop early-career practitioner competence through supervised responsibility, structured mentoring, and progressive exposure to programme design and applied decision-making.

The post holder will be expected to contribute to safe and effective training delivery, assist with athlete monitoring, and begin developing the ability to justify coaching decisions based on intended outcomes, athlete needs, and relevant evidence.

Reporting Line**Reports to:**

- Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach
- Head of Strength and Conditioning
- Senior Strength and Conditioning Practitioner

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Assist in the delivery of strength and conditioning sessions for assigned teams, athletes, or groups.

- Plan selected session components under supervision.
- Support programme implementation in line with agreed departmental plans.
- Contribute to athlete testing, monitoring, and data collection.
- Assist with exercise technique coaching and movement competency development.
- Support return-to-training processes under the direction of senior staff.
- Contribute to session review and programme evaluation.
- Maintain accurate training records.
- Communicate with coaches, athletes, and support staff within agreed boundaries.
- Engage in regular mentoring, supervision, and professional development.
- Demonstrate reflective practice and respond constructively to feedback.

Essential Criteria

Applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Current enrolment on a relevant undergraduate degree, vocational qualification, or professional development pathway.
- Developing applied knowledge of strength and conditioning.
- Experience assisting or delivering in a supervised coaching environment.
- Ability to deliver safe and effective coaching sessions.
- Understanding of training principles, movement competency, and athlete development.
- Professional communication skills.
- Commitment to athlete welfare, safeguarding, and ethical practice.
- Ability to work as part of a multidisciplinary or coaching team.

Desirable Criteria

- IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent.
- IUSCA IQF Level 2 Instructor, or equivalent.
- Experience in academy, school, club, institute, or private-sector S&C.
- First aid qualification.
- Experience with basic performance testing and monitoring.
- Evidence of reflective practice, CPD, or supervised professional development.

Supervision and Development Expectations

This role should include:

- Regular supervision from a qualified practitioner.
- Support with programme planning and review.
- Opportunities to progress towards greater autonomy.
- Feedback on coaching delivery, communication, and decision-making.
- Defined boundaries for independent practice.
- A development pathway towards IQF Level 4 Practitioner capability.

Criteria to Avoid

For this role type, employers should normally avoid requiring:

- A full degree as essential unless the salary and responsibilities justify this.

- Advanced certification as essential.
- Extensive independent practitioner experience.
- Responsibility for full programme design without appropriate support.
- Management responsibility for other staff.

TEMPLATE 03

Assistant Strength & Conditioning Coach / Practitioner

IQF Level 4 · Practitioner

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 4 Practitioner

This role is suitable where the practitioner is expected to make independent decisions within a defined scope, with access to senior support.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 4 Certified Strength and Conditioning Practitioner

Recommended Advert Wording

Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Desirable: Working towards IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent, where the role includes increasing autonomy, programme design responsibility, or interdisciplinary working.

Suggested Role Title

- Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner
- Assistant Athletic Development Coach
- Strength and Conditioning Practitioner
- Academy Strength and Conditioning Coach
- Assistant Physical Performance Coach

Role Purpose

The Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach will contribute to the planning, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of strength and conditioning services for assigned athletes, teams, or groups.

The post holder will operate with defined responsibility and will be expected to make appropriate decisions within their scope of practice. They will be able to justify training decisions in relation to intended outcomes, athlete needs, programme objectives, and relevant evidence.

Reporting Line**Reports to:**

- Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner
- Senior Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner
- Head of Strength and Conditioning
- Performance Manager

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Deliver strength and conditioning sessions for assigned athletes, teams, or groups.
- Plan and adapt training sessions within an agreed programme framework.
- Contribute to the design of individual and group training programmes.
- Coach safe and effective exercise technique across relevant training methods.
- Monitor athlete response to training and adjust sessions within agreed parameters.
- Assist with physical testing, profiling, and athlete monitoring.
- Maintain accurate records of training, attendance, testing, and athlete progress.
- Communicate with coaches, athletes, medical staff, sport scientists, and other relevant professionals.
- Contribute to return-to-training and return-to-performance processes under appropriate guidance.
- Support interns, placement students, or junior assistants where appropriate.
- Participate in departmental review, CPD, and quality improvement processes.
- Uphold safeguarding, welfare, equality, and professional conduct standards.

Essential Criteria

Applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Current enrolment on a relevant undergraduate degree, vocational qualification, or professional development pathway.
- IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Applied experience delivering strength and conditioning in a relevant setting.
- Ability to plan and deliver safe, effective, and outcome-focused training sessions.
- Understanding of training principles, adaptation, movement competency, and athlete development.
- Ability to interpret basic athlete monitoring and testing information.
- Clear communication and professional interpersonal skills.
- Commitment to ethical practice, athlete welfare, safeguarding, and continuing professional development.

Desirable Criteria

- Progression towards IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent.
- Experience working with the relevant sport, population, or performance level.
- Experience supporting interdisciplinary practice.
- Experience mentoring interns or placement students.
- First aid qualification.
- Postgraduate study, where relevant to the role scope.
- Experience with performance technology, monitoring systems, or data management.

Supervision and Autonomy

The post holder should be able to operate independently within agreed role boundaries. They should have access to senior practitioner support for complex cases, interdisciplinary decisions, injury-related decisions, and situations outside their scope of practice.

Criteria to Avoid

For this role type, employers should normally avoid requiring:

- A full degree as essential unless the role includes responsibilities beyond defined-scope practice.

- Advanced certification where the role is not sufficiently autonomous or complex.
- High-level interdisciplinary or strategic responsibility without appropriate seniority and salary.
- Several years of experience if the role is presented as an entry or assistant-level post.

TEMPLATE 04

Strength & Conditioning Practitioner / Coach

IQF Level 4 – 6

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION**IQF Level 4 to Level 6**

This role may sit at Level 4 where the practitioner operates independently within a defined scope. It may sit at Level 6 where the practitioner holds full professional accountability for programme design, evaluation, athlete outcomes, and applied decision-making across a more complex caseload.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 4 Certified Strength and Conditioning Practitioner for defined-scope practitioner roles.

IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP for autonomous practitioner roles requiring degree-level knowledge, independent programme design, and full professional accountability.

Recommended Advert Wording

For Level 4-aligned roles — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

For Level 6-aligned roles — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Suggested Role Title

- Strength and Conditioning Coach
- Strength and Conditioning Practitioner
- Athletic Development Coach
- Physical Preparation Coach
- Performance Coach

Role Purpose

The Strength and Conditioning Practitioner will design, deliver, monitor, and evaluate evidence-informed physical preparation programmes for assigned athletes, teams, or clients.

The post holder will be responsible for translating performance needs, athlete profiles, and contextual demands into appropriate training interventions. They will be expected to make defensible decisions, adapt practice in response to feedback, and contribute to the ongoing development of the performance environment.

Reporting Line**Reports to:**

- Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner
- Head of Strength and Conditioning
- Performance Director

- Head Coach or Programme Director, depending on organisational structure

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Design and deliver strength and conditioning programmes for assigned athletes, teams, or clients.
- Conduct needs analysis and physical profiling.
- Interpret relevant testing, monitoring, and performance data.
- Adapt training plans in response to athlete response, competition demands, injury status, training phase, and wider contextual factors.
- Coach strength, power, speed, agility, conditioning, mobility, and movement development as appropriate to the population.
- Collaborate with coaches, medical staff, sport scientists, nutritionists, psychologists, and other professionals.
- Support return-to-training and return-to-performance processes within scope and in collaboration with medical staff.
- Maintain clear records of training plans, testing outcomes, athlete progression, and programme review.
- Contribute to departmental planning, review, CPD, and service improvement.
- Support interns, assistants, or junior staff where appropriate.
- Uphold safeguarding, welfare, ethics, equality, and professional conduct standards.

Essential Criteria

For Level 4-aligned roles, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Holds a vocational qualification, or equivalent professional experience appropriate to the role, and working towards a relevant degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Applied experience designing and delivering S&C programmes within a defined scope.
- Ability to justify training decisions using principles, evidence, and intended outcomes.
- Understanding of athlete monitoring, testing, adaptation, and programme review.
- Ability to work collaboratively with coaches and support staff.

For Level 6-aligned roles, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Relevant undergraduate degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Evidence of autonomous programme design and evaluation.
- Ability to integrate multiple sources of evidence and act under incomplete information.
- Experience managing a defined caseload, sport programme, or athlete cohort.
- Ability to adapt decisions under complexity and uncertainty.

Desirable Criteria

- Relevant master's degree, particularly where the role approaches IQF Level 7 responsibilities.
- Experience in the relevant sport, sector, or population.
- Experience contributing to interdisciplinary case reviews.
- Experience mentoring junior staff.
- Research literacy and ability to translate evidence into practice.
- Specialist knowledge relevant to the population, such as youth development, para sport, female athlete support, tactical populations, rehabilitation, or elite performance.

Autonomy and Accountability

This role should clearly state whether the practitioner is operating within a defined programme framework or whether they hold full professional accountability for programme design, monitoring, and outcomes.

This distinction is important because it may determine whether the role is classified at IQF Level 4 or IQF Level 6.

Criteria to Avoid

Employers should avoid combining Level 6 responsibilities with Level 4 salary, status, or support. For example, a role requiring autonomous programme design, interdisciplinary decision-making, and responsibility for athlete outcomes should not be advertised as a low-paid assistant post.

TEMPLATE 05

Autonomous S&C Coach / Lead Sport S&C Coach

IQF Level 6 · Scientific Practitioner

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 6 Scientific Practitioner

This role is suitable where the practitioner holds full professional accountability for a defined sport, team, cohort, academy group, school programme, or client population.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP

Recommended Advert Wording

Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Desirable: Working towards IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*m, or equivalent, where the role includes senior, lead, or interdisciplinary responsibility.

Suggested Role Title

- **Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner**
- **Lead Sport Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner**
- **Strength and Conditioning Coach, Assigned Sport**
- **Performance Support Practitioner**
- **Academy Physical Performance Coach**

Role Purpose

The Autonomous Strength and Conditioning Coach will lead the design, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of strength and conditioning provision for an assigned athlete group, team, sport, or programme.

The post holder will be expected to operate as a scientific practitioner, using evidence, first principles, athlete data, coach feedback, and contextual understanding to develop and refine training interventions. The role requires independent judgement, professional accountability, and the ability to act effectively under uncertainty.

Reporting Line**Reports to:**

- Head of Strength and Conditioning
- Lead Performance Coach
- Performance Director
- Head of Performance Services
- Director of Sport
- Performance Manager

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Lead strength and conditioning provision for assigned athletes, teams, or programmes.
- Conduct needs analysis and develop annual, termly, seasonal, or phase-based physical preparation plans.
- Design, deliver, monitor, and adapt training programmes.
- Integrate strength, power, speed, conditioning, movement, recovery, and return-to-performance considerations.
- Interpret athlete monitoring, testing, screening, wellness, workload, and performance data.
- Make programme decisions under conditions of incomplete information.
- Collaborate with coaches, medical staff, sport scientists, analysts, nutritionists, psychologists, and other specialists.
- Contribute to interdisciplinary case management and return-to-performance planning.
- Evaluate programme effectiveness and revise practice based on outcomes.
- Support the education of athletes, coaches, interns, and junior staff.
- Maintain professional records and contribute to departmental reporting.
- Contribute to the development of internal systems, resources, and service standards.
- Uphold athlete welfare, safeguarding, professional ethics, and evidence-informed practice.

Essential Criteria

Applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Relevant undergraduate degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Applied experience in autonomous strength and conditioning practice.
- Evidence of independent programme design, delivery, evaluation, and adaptation.
- Ability to interpret and integrate multiple sources of evidence.
- Experience working with athletes, teams, or populations relevant to the role.
- Ability to make defensible decisions under complexity and uncertainty.
- Strong communication skills and ability to work within an interdisciplinary environment.
- Commitment to continuing professional development, athlete welfare, safeguarding, and ethical practice.

Desirable Criteria

- Relevant master's degree.
- Working towards IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*m, or equivalent.
- Experience leading provision for a sport, cohort, academy group, or performance programme.
- Experience mentoring interns, assistants, or junior practitioners.
- Experience contributing to research, innovation, or applied performance projects.
- Specialist knowledge relevant to the role population.

Autonomy and Accountability

This role carries full professional accountability for the assigned area of practice. The practitioner should have access to senior support, but should not rely on constant supervision for routine programme design, athlete monitoring, or applied decision-making.

Criteria to Avoid

For this role type, employers should avoid:

- Advertising the role as assistant-level if the practitioner holds autonomous responsibility.
- Failing to recognise degree-level professional capability.
- Requiring advanced certification without providing appropriate salary, status, or responsibility.
- Omitting salary or FTE information.

TEMPLATE 06

Senior Strength & Conditioning Coach / Practitioner

IQF Level 6 – 7

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 6 to Level 7

This role may sit at Level 6 where the seniority relates to experience and autonomous practice within a defined area. It may sit at Level 7 where the practitioner is responsible for leading other practitioners, shaping systems, managing interdisciplinary complexity, or influencing decision quality across a department.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP for senior autonomous practitioner roles.

IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*m for advanced senior roles involving master's-level knowledge, staff development, interdisciplinary responsibility, system development, or responsibility for others' decision quality.

Recommended Advert Wording

Level 6-aligned senior roles — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Level 7-aligned senior roles — Essential or desirable depending on role scope: IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*m, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Suggested Role Title

- Senior Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner
- Senior Athletic Development Coach
- Senior Physical Performance Coach
- Senior Performance Support Practitioner

Role Purpose

The Senior Strength and Conditioning Coach will provide advanced strength and conditioning support to athletes, teams, or programmes, while contributing to the leadership, development, and quality assurance of the wider service.

The post holder will be expected to demonstrate advanced professional judgement, support the development of other practitioners, contribute to interdisciplinary decision-making, and improve the systems through which strength and conditioning provision is delivered.

Reporting Line**Reports to:**

- Head of Strength and Conditioning
- Performance Director

- Head of Performance Services
- Director of Sport
- Director of Athletic Development

May supervise:

- Assistant S&C Coaches
- Graduate Assistants
- Interns
- Placement Coaches
- Assigned practitioners

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Lead S&C provision for assigned high-performance athletes, teams, or programmes.
- Design and evaluate complex physical preparation programmes.
- Manage competing short-term and long-term performance priorities.
- Contribute to interdisciplinary planning and case review.
- Support return-to-training and return-to-performance decisions.
- Mentor, supervise, and develop junior practitioners.
- Review coaching quality, programme quality, and practitioner decision-making.
- Contribute to departmental planning, professional standards, and service development.
- Develop resources, processes, and systems that improve practice quality.
- Interpret and integrate performance, monitoring, medical, coaching, and contextual information.
- Contribute to recruitment, induction, supervision, and development of interns or assistants where appropriate.
- Promote a professional culture of reflection, review, evidence-informed practice, and athlete-centred decision-making.
- Uphold safeguarding, welfare, ethics, and professional standards.

Essential Criteria

For Level 6-aligned senior roles, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Relevant undergraduate degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Significant applied experience in autonomous S&C practice.
- Evidence of programme leadership for athletes, teams, or cohorts.
- Ability to interpret evidence and data in complex applied contexts.
- Experience contributing to interdisciplinary practice.
- Ability to mentor or support junior staff.

For Level 7-aligned senior roles, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Relevant master's degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*^m, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Evidence of advanced practice, leadership, and system-level contribution.
- Experience shaping practice across teams, disciplines, or departments.
- Ability to review, challenge, and improve decision-making processes.

- Ability to manage complex trade-offs and second-order consequences.

Desirable Criteria

- Experience in elite, professional, national, academy, institute, or high-performance environments.
- Experience managing staff or leading practitioner development.
- Experience developing departmental standards, frameworks, or review processes.
- Evidence of applied research, publication, conference presentation, or professional contribution.
- Experience working across multiple sports or interdisciplinary teams.

Leadership Expectations

This role should clearly state whether the post holder is expected to:

- Mentor others.
- Supervise staff.
- Lead an area of service delivery.
- Shape systems or processes.
- Hold responsibility for the quality of others' practice.

Where these expectations are present, the role should be graded and remunerated accordingly.

Criteria to Avoid

Employers should avoid advertising a senior role that includes leadership, mentoring, interdisciplinary responsibility, and system development while offering a salary or status equivalent to an early-career practitioner role.

TEMPLATE 07

Lead Strength & Conditioning Coach / Practitioner

IQF Level 7 · Advanced Scientific Practitioner

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 7 Advanced Scientific Practitioner

This role is suitable where the practitioner leads S&C provision across a team, department, academy, club, institute, or multi-sport environment.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*m

Recommended Advert Wording

Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*m, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Desirable: IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP, or equivalent recognised senior professional distinction, where the role includes strategic leadership, governance, professional standards, or wider organisational influence.

Suggested Role Title

- Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach / Practitioner
- Lead Athletic Development Coach
- Lead Physical Performance Coach
- Head of Athletic Development
- Lead Performance Practitioner

Role Purpose

The Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach will lead the planning, delivery, evaluation, and development of strength and conditioning provision across a defined performance environment.

The post holder will be responsible for ensuring that S&C practice is coherent, evidence-informed, athlete-centred, and aligned with organisational objectives. The role requires advanced professional judgement, leadership of practitioners, management of complexity, and responsibility for the quality of decision-making across the service.

Reporting Line**Reports to:**

- Head of Performance
- Director of Performance
- Director of Sport
- Head of Performance Services
- Athletic Director
- Senior Leadership Team member

May supervise:

- Senior S&C Coaches
- S&C Practitioners
- Assistant Coaches
- Graduate Assistants
- Interns
- Placement Students

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Lead S&C strategy for the assigned department, programme, sport, academy, or organisation.
- Establish and review S&C standards, systems, and operating procedures.
- Lead the design, implementation, and evaluation of physical preparation programmes.
- Manage staff allocation, supervision, mentoring, and professional development.
- Ensure quality assurance across coaching delivery and programme design.
- Lead interdisciplinary collaboration with coaching, medical, sport science, nutrition, psychology, analysis, and welfare staff.
- Contribute to long-term athlete development, performance planning, and return-to-performance strategy.
- Review programme effectiveness using evidence, data, feedback, and applied outcomes.
- Manage complex trade-offs between performance, availability, development, health, and competition demands.
- Develop systems that support reflection, review, learning, and error correction.
- Contribute to recruitment, induction, appraisal, and continuing professional development.
- Represent the S&C function in performance meetings, planning processes, and organisational reviews.
- Uphold safeguarding, welfare, professional ethics, and evidence-informed practice.

Essential Criteria

Applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Relevant master's degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*^m, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Significant experience in autonomous and senior S&C practice.
- Evidence of leading S&C provision across a team, department, or programme.
- Experience supervising, mentoring, or developing other practitioners.
- Ability to manage complex interdisciplinary environments.
- Ability to use evidence, data, and professional judgement to shape practice.
- Experience designing and evaluating systems, processes, or standards.
- Strong communication, leadership, and stakeholder management skills.
- Commitment to athlete welfare, safeguarding, ethical practice, and continuing professional development.

Desirable Criteria

- Progression towards IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP, or equivalent.
- Experience in professional sport, elite sport, national governing bodies, institutes, academies, or high-performance environments.

- Evidence of contribution to professional practice through education, research, publication, conference delivery, mentoring, or sector leadership.
- Experience managing budgets, staff workloads, or service planning.
- Experience contributing to organisational strategy.

Strategic and Leadership Expectations

This role should include recognition of:

- Staff leadership.
- Departmental planning.
- Interdisciplinary responsibility.
- Quality assurance.
- Professional standards.
- System-level decision-making.
- Responsibility for the decision quality of others.

Criteria to Avoid

Employers should avoid listing this role as a mid-level coach position if it includes department-wide leadership, staff supervision, or responsibility for systems and standards.

TEMPLATE 08

Head of Strength & Conditioning

IQF Level 7 – 8

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 7 to Level 8

This role may sit at Level 7 where the post holder leads S&C provision within an organisation or department. It may sit at Level 8 where the role includes strategic leadership, governance, policy influence, field-level contribution, or responsibility for long-term organisational standards.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*^m for head of department roles involving advanced practice, master's-level knowledge, staff leadership, and system responsibility.

IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP for roles involving strategic leadership, governance, standards, professional influence, or organisation-level responsibility.

Recommended Advert Wording

Level 7-aligned roles — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*^m, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Level 8-aligned roles — Essential or desirable depending on role scope: IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP, or equivalent recognised senior professional distinction.

Suggested Role Title

- Head of Strength and Conditioning
- Head of Athletic Development
- Head of Physical Performance
- Head of Performance Support
- Head of Strength and Conditioning Services

Role Purpose

The Head of Strength and Conditioning will provide strategic and operational leadership for strength and conditioning provision across the organisation.

The post holder will be responsible for setting direction, leading staff, establishing standards, ensuring service quality, supporting interdisciplinary integration, and contributing to long-term athlete development and performance outcomes.

The role requires advanced or master-level professional judgement, the ability to lead systems and people, and responsibility for shaping the conditions in which high-quality practice occurs.

Reporting Line**Reports to:**

- Director of Performance

- Director of Sport
- Athletic Director
- Chief Operating Officer
- Senior Leadership Team
- National Performance Director

May supervise:

- Lead S&C Coaches
- Senior S&C Coaches
- S&C Practitioners
- Graduate Assistants
- Interns
- Performance support staff, depending on organisational structure

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Set the strategic direction for S&C provision.
- Lead and manage the S&C department or service.
- Establish professional standards, systems, policies, and review processes.
- Ensure quality and consistency of S&C practice across athletes, teams, or programmes.
- Lead staff recruitment, induction, supervision, appraisal, and development.
- Support senior practitioners in complex decision-making.
- Contribute to interdisciplinary performance strategy.
- Align S&C provision with organisational objectives, coaching philosophy, medical provision, athlete development, and performance planning.
- Develop systems for athlete monitoring, programme review, risk management, and professional learning.
- Manage departmental resources, equipment, budgets, and operational planning where applicable.
- Contribute to organisational governance, welfare, safeguarding, and duty of care.
- Represent the S&C department in senior planning and performance review meetings.
- Lead innovation, CPD, and continuous improvement.
- Ensure that practice remains evidence-informed, open to review, and professionally accountable.

Essential Criteria

For Level 7-aligned roles, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Relevant master's degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*^m, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Extensive experience in senior strength and conditioning practice.
- Evidence of leading practitioners, programmes, or departments.
- Experience managing interdisciplinary complexity.
- Ability to develop systems, standards, and quality assurance processes.
- Strong leadership, communication, and stakeholder management skills.

For Level 8-aligned roles, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP, or equivalent recognised senior professional distinction.

- Evidence of strategic leadership in S&C, performance, education, governance, or professional standards.
- Significant contribution to the development of practitioners, systems, organisations, or the wider profession.
- Ability to shape policy, standards, governance, or long-term organisational direction.
- Evidence of field-level influence, such as professional leadership, education, publications, conference delivery, standards work, or sector contribution.

Desirable Criteria

- Doctoral qualification or advanced professional study.
- Experience in elite, professional, national, Olympic, institute, academy, or high-performance environments.
- Experience managing multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary performance teams.
- Experience managing budgets and departmental planning.
- Evidence of research translation, applied innovation, education, mentoring, or professional contribution.
- Experience contributing to policy, governance, or professional standards.

Strategic Expectations

This role should include explicit recognition of:

- Departmental or organisational leadership.
- Staff management.
- Professional standards.
- Quality assurance.
- Interdisciplinary integration.
- Strategic planning.
- Resource management.
- Long-term athlete development.
- Governance or policy responsibility where applicable.

Criteria to Avoid

Employers should avoid requiring Level 8-type contribution while offering only operational-level salary, authority, or status.

A Head of S&C role with responsibility for staff, systems, standards, and organisational performance should be recognised as a senior professional leadership role.

TEMPLATE 09

Director of Performance / Athletic Development

IQF Level 8 · Master Practitioner / Thought Leader

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 8 Master Practitioner / Thought Leader

This role is suitable for the highest professional leadership positions where the post holder shapes performance strategy, systems, governance, professional standards, and organisational direction.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP

Recommended Advert Wording

Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP, or equivalent recognised senior professional distinction.

Where the role is broader than S&C — Essential: Senior professional recognition appropriate to the role scope, such as IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP, or equivalent recognised distinction in strength and conditioning, performance sport, sport science, or related professional practice.

Suggested Role Title

- Director of Performance
- Director of Athletic Development
- Director of Physical Performance
- Director of Performance Services
- High Performance Director
- National Performance Lead
- Performance Strategy Director

Role Purpose

The Director of Performance will provide senior strategic leadership for performance systems, people, practice, and organisational direction.

The post holder will be responsible for creating the conditions in which high-quality, evidence-informed, ethical, and effective performance practice can occur. The role requires advanced strategic judgement, governance awareness, leadership of complex systems, and responsibility for long-term professional and organisational consequences.

The post holder may lead multiple departments or functions, including strength and conditioning, sport science, medical services, performance analysis, nutrition, psychology, recovery, athlete development, education, or welfare, depending on the organisation.

Reporting Line

Reports to:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Athletic Director
- Director of Sport
- Board or Executive Team
- National Governing Body Leadership
- Club Executive Leadership

May supervise:

- Head of S&C
- Head of Sport Science
- Head of Medical
- Head of Performance Analysis
- Head of Nutrition
- Head of Psychology
- Performance Managers
- Senior practitioners and department leads

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Set and lead the organisation's performance strategy.
- Align performance services with organisational mission, athlete development, competition demands, and long-term outcomes.
- Lead and develop senior performance staff.
- Establish standards, systems, governance processes, and accountability structures.
- Ensure high-quality interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Oversee performance planning, athlete development, practitioner development, and departmental integration.
- Manage complex organisational trade-offs involving performance, welfare, resource allocation, risk, availability, and long-term development.
- Lead strategic review of performance systems and outcomes.
- Ensure that performance practice is evidence-informed, ethically grounded, and open to scrutiny.
- Support a culture of learning, reflection, error correction, and professional accountability.
- Represent the organisation externally in performance, professional, academic, or governance contexts.
- Contribute to policy, standards, education, or sector development where appropriate.
- Manage budgets, resources, staffing structures, and strategic partnerships.
- Advise senior leadership or governing bodies on performance-related decisions.

Essential Criteria

Applicants should normally demonstrate:

- IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP, or equivalent recognised senior professional distinction.
- Extensive senior leadership experience in strength and conditioning, performance sport, athletic development, sport science, or high-performance environments.
- Evidence of strategic leadership across teams, departments, organisations, or systems.
- Evidence of contribution to professional standards, education, mentoring, governance, research translation, or sector development.
- Ability to lead complex interdisciplinary systems.

- Ability to manage uncertainty, competing values, and long-term consequences.
- Strong governance, communication, and senior stakeholder management skills.
- Commitment to athlete welfare, ethical practice, scientific integrity, and professional accountability.

Desirable Criteria

- Relevant master's degree, doctoral qualification, or senior professional qualification.
- Previous experience as Head of S&C, Head of Performance, Director of Performance, or equivalent.
- Experience in professional sport, Olympic or Paralympic sport, national governing bodies, institutes, clubs, academies, or international performance environments.
- Evidence of publication, conference contribution, standards development, policy development, or professional leadership.
- Experience managing significant budgets, teams, facilities, or multi-site services.
- Experience in organisational change, governance, or strategic transformation.

Strategic Expectations

This role should recognise:

- Executive-level responsibility.
- Multi-system leadership.
- Governance.
- Standards.
- Long-term organisational impact.
- Senior staff development.
- Professional contribution.
- Scientific integrity.
- Policy or strategy influence.

Criteria to Avoid

Employers should avoid presenting this role as a purely operational coaching position.

A Director of Performance role should recognise leadership, governance, strategic judgement, system design, and long-term responsibility.

TEMPLATE 10

School / Academy Athletic Development Coach

IQF Level 4 – 6

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 4 to Level 6

This role may sit at Level 4 where the practitioner works within a defined curriculum or programme framework. It may sit at Level 6 where the practitioner independently designs, evaluates, and leads athletic development provision across a school, academy, or youth pathway.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner for defined-scope delivery and programme support roles.

IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP for autonomous youth athletic development roles requiring degree-level knowledge, independent programme design, monitoring, and responsibility for athlete development outcomes.

Recommended Advert Wording

For defined-scope roles — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

For autonomous programme leadership roles — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Suggested Role Title

- School Athletic Development Coach
- Academy Strength and Conditioning Coach
- Youth Athletic Development Coach
- Physical Development Coach
- School Strength and Conditioning Practitioner

Role Purpose

The School or Academy Athletic Development Coach will support the physical development, movement competency, training literacy, and long-term athletic development of young athletes or students.

The role should prioritise safe, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, and educationally sound practice. It should integrate physical development with welfare, safeguarding, coaching, and broader student or athlete development.

Reporting Line**Reports to:**

- Head of Athletic Development
- Director of Sport
- Head of Performance

- Academy Manager
- Head of Physical Education
- Lead S&C Coach

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Deliver age-appropriate strength and conditioning or athletic development sessions.
- Design or support physical development programmes aligned to maturation, training age, sport demands, and educational context.
- Coach movement competency, strength, speed, power, conditioning, mobility, and injury risk reduction activities.
- Support physical literacy and positive training habits.
- Monitor student or athlete development using appropriate methods.
- Communicate with coaches, teachers, parents, medical staff, and welfare staff where appropriate.
- Support return-to-training processes in collaboration with medical or welfare professionals.
- Promote safe training environments and positive athlete development.
- Contribute to curriculum, academy pathway, or long-term athlete development planning.
- Maintain accurate records and comply with safeguarding requirements.
- Educate students or athletes on training principles, recovery, and self-management.

Essential Criteria

For Level 4-aligned roles, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Vocational qualification, or equivalent experience appropriate to the role.
- IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Experience delivering physical development sessions to youth, school, academy, or developing athletes.
- Understanding of growth, maturation, movement development, and safe coaching practice.
- Strong communication skills with young people and staff.
- Safeguarding knowledge and commitment to welfare.

For Level 6-aligned roles, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Relevant undergraduate degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Experience designing, leading, and evaluating youth athletic development programmes.
- Ability to integrate evidence, development principles, context, and athlete needs.
- Experience working with coaches, teachers, parents, and interdisciplinary staff.

Desirable Criteria

- Relevant master's degree for senior or pathway leadership roles.
- Experience in school, academy, club, or talent pathway environments.
- Experience with maturation monitoring or youth development frameworks.
- Teaching, coaching, or education qualification.
- First aid qualification.
- Experience mentoring assistants, interns, or coaches.

Safeguarding and Welfare Expectations

This role should explicitly include safeguarding, duty of care, youth development, and age-appropriate practice.

Where the role involves children or young people, professional competence must include welfare, communication, ethical practice, and developmental appropriateness.

Criteria to Avoid

Employers should avoid requiring high-level qualifications while offering a low-paid or casual role with broad responsibility for youth athlete development.

TEMPLATE 11

Private Sector Strength & Conditioning Practitioner

IQF Level 4 – 6

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 4 to Level 6

This role may sit at Level 4 where the practitioner delivers defined-scope coaching within an established service. It may sit at Level 6 where the practitioner independently assesses, programmes, monitors, and manages client outcomes.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner for defined-scope coaching roles.

IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP for autonomous practitioner roles requiring degree-level knowledge, independent needs analysis, programme design, monitoring, and responsibility for client or athlete outcomes.

Recommended Advert Wording

For defined-scope delivery roles — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

For autonomous practitioner roles — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

Suggested Role Title

- Strength and Conditioning Practitioner
- Performance Coach
- Athletic Development Coach
- Physical Preparation Coach
- Private Sector S&C Coach
- Training Facility Performance Coach

Role Purpose

The Private Sector Strength and Conditioning Practitioner will deliver high-quality physical preparation services to athletes, teams, clients, or members within a private facility or consultancy environment.

The role may include assessment, programme design, coaching, monitoring, client communication, education, and contribution to the development of facility standards and services.

Reporting Line

Reports to:

- Facility Director
- Head of Performance
- Lead Strength and Conditioning Coach

- Clinic Director
- Business Owner

Key Responsibilities

The post holder may be expected to:

- Assess client or athlete needs and develop appropriate training plans.
- Deliver individual, small-group, or team-based S&C sessions.
- Coach movement competency, strength, power, speed, conditioning, mobility, and return-to-training progressions within scope.
- Monitor progress and adjust programmes based on client response.
- Maintain accurate client records.
- Communicate professionally with clients, parents, coaches, medical professionals, or external stakeholders.
- Contribute to service quality, facility standards, and client education.
- Support marketing, workshops, education, or community activities where appropriate and agreed.
- Work within professional boundaries and refer to appropriate professionals where required.
- Uphold safeguarding, welfare, confidentiality, and professional conduct standards.

Essential Criteria

For Level 4-aligned roles, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- IUSCA IQF Level 4 Practitioner, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Relevant applied coaching experience.
- Ability to deliver safe and effective sessions.
- Understanding of needs analysis, training principles, and programme adaptation.
- Professional communication and client care skills.

For Level 6-aligned roles, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Relevant undergraduate degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Experience independently assessing, programming, monitoring, and managing athlete or client outcomes.
- Ability to make evidence-informed decisions under uncertainty.
- Ability to manage a diverse caseload.

Desirable Criteria

- Relevant master's degree.
- Experience with the target population, such as youth athletes, team sport athletes, endurance athletes, combat athletes, tactical populations, or general population clients.
- Business, communication, or client management experience.
- First aid qualification.
- Experience collaborating with physiotherapists, sports therapists, nutritionists, or coaches.
- Evidence of CPD, mentoring, or professional contribution.

Professional Boundaries

This role should clearly define whether the practitioner is expected to work with injured clients, return-to-training cases, youth athletes, or specialist populations.

Where additional risk or complexity is present, the role should require appropriate competence, support, and referral systems.

Criteria to Avoid

Employers should avoid combining sales, coaching, rehabilitation, management, and programme leadership responsibilities without clearly recognising the required level of competence, support, and remuneration.

TEMPLATE 12

Strength & Conditioning Consultant

IQF Level 6 – 8

TYPICAL IQF CLASSIFICATION

IQF Level 6 to Level 8

This role may vary significantly depending on scope. It may sit at Level 6 where the consultant provides specialist support to a defined athlete group or organisation. It may sit at Level 7 or 8 where the consultant shapes systems, advises leaders, develops frameworks, or influences organisational or professional standards.

Associated IUSCA IQF Certification

IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP for applied consultancy within a defined area of practice.

****IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*m**** for advanced consultancy involving master's-level knowledge, system review, interdisciplinary work, practitioner development, or complex organisational practice.

IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP for strategic consultancy involving governance, standards, policy, professional frameworks, organisation-level leadership, or field-level influence.

Recommended Advert Wording

For applied consultancy — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

For advanced consultancy — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*m, or equivalent recognised professional certification.

For strategic consultancy — Essential: IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP, or equivalent recognised senior professional distinction.

Suggested Role Title

- Strength and Conditioning Consultant
- Performance Consultant
- Athletic Development Consultant
- Physical Performance Consultant
- High Performance Consultant
- Strategic Performance Consultant

Role Purpose

The Strength and Conditioning Consultant will provide expert advice, applied support, review, education, or strategic guidance to athletes, teams, organisations, departments, or performance systems.

The role may include programme review, coach education, system design, practitioner mentoring, strategic planning, performance problem-solving, or specialist technical support.

Reporting Line

Reports to or works with:

- Director of Performance
- Head of S&C
- Head Coach
- Senior Leadership Team
- National Governing Body
- Club or organisational leadership
- External client

Key Responsibilities

The consultant may be expected to:

- Assess current practice, systems, structures, or performance needs.
- Provide evidence-informed recommendations.
- Support programme design, review, or refinement.
- Mentor practitioners or coaches.
- Deliver education, workshops, or professional development.
- Advise on performance strategy, staffing, systems, or standards.
- Support complex case review or interdisciplinary decision-making.
- Develop frameworks, resources, policies, or implementation plans.
- Evaluate outcomes and revise recommendations based on feedback.
- Communicate clearly with stakeholders at different levels.
- Work within clear ethical, contractual, and professional boundaries.

Essential Criteria

For Level 6-aligned consultancy, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Relevant undergraduate degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Evidence of autonomous practitioner expertise.
- Ability to assess needs, design interventions, and evaluate outcomes.

For Level 7-aligned consultancy, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- Relevant master's degree.
- IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, aISCP*m, or equivalent recognised professional certification.
- Evidence of advanced practice, interdisciplinary work, system review, and practitioner development.

For Level 8-aligned consultancy, applicants should normally demonstrate:

- IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, mISCP, or equivalent senior distinction.
- Evidence of strategic leadership, field-level contribution, governance, standards work, or profession-level influence.
- Ability to advise at organisational, policy, or system level.

Desirable Criteria

- Experience across multiple organisations, countries, sectors, or sports.
- Evidence of publication, conference delivery, education, mentoring, or standards development.
- Experience leading organisational change or service review.
- Experience with governance, policy, accreditation, or professional frameworks.
- Specialist expertise relevant to the consultancy brief.

Scope Clarity

Consultancy roles should define:

- Deliverables.
- Duration.
- Reporting arrangements.
- Decision authority.
- Professional boundaries.
- Whether the consultant is advising, implementing, reviewing, or leading.
- Whether the role includes staff supervision, athlete contact, or strategic responsibility.

Criteria to Avoid

Employers should avoid vague consultancy roles that require expert-level advice without clearly defining scope, authority, fee, duration, deliverables, and accountability.

APPENDIX B

Quick Reference – Qualification & Certification

A one-page summary of degree expectations and certification wording across the five employer-facing IQF levels.

Role level	Degree requirement	Certification wording
Level 2	No degree requirement	IUSCA IQF Level 2 Certified Strength and Conditioning Instructor, or equivalent
Level 4	No completed degree requirement	IUSCA IQF Level 4 Certified Strength and Conditioning Practitioner, or equivalent
Level 6	Relevant undergraduate degree essential	IUSCA IQF Level 6 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP), or equivalent
Level 7	Relevant master's degree essential	IUSCA IQF Level 7 Accredited International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (aISCP*m), or equivalent
Level 8	Senior professional recognition	IUSCA IQF Level 8 Master International Strength and Conditioning Practitioner (mISCP), or equivalent senior professional distinction

APPENDIX C

Example Wording Bank

Ready-to-adapt role-purpose wording for each level. Employers should tailor these to their setting while keeping the level of practice clear.

For developmental roles — This role is designed as a developmental position. The post holder will work under supervision, receive regular feedback, and progressively develop confidence in safe delivery, professional communication, and defined-scope practice.

For Level 4 roles — The post holder will operate independently within defined role boundaries and will be expected to deliver and adapt strength and conditioning practice in line with agreed outcomes, supervision arrangements, and professional standards.

For Level 6 roles — The post holder will hold full professional accountability for the design, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of strength and conditioning provision for an assigned athlete group, team, or client population.

For Level 7 roles — The post holder will provide advanced professional leadership, support the development of other practitioners, contribute to interdisciplinary decision-making, and help shape systems that improve the quality and consistency of practice.

For Level 8 roles — The post holder will provide strategic leadership, shape professional standards and systems, support governance and long-term organisational direction, and contribute to the wider development of performance practice.

CLOSING

Closing Statement

Effective recruitment in strength and conditioning depends on clear role definition, proportionate criteria, appropriate professional recognition, and fair alignment between responsibility, autonomy, qualifications, certification, and salary.

The IUSCA IQF framework provides employers with a practical structure for making these decisions. By aligning job adverts to the IQF Level Descriptors and associated IUSCA IQF certifications, employers can improve role clarity, attract more suitable candidates, support career progression, and contribute to a stronger international strength and conditioning profession.

Classification follows practice. The appropriate IQF level should be based on what the practitioner is expected to do, decide, lead, and be accountable for in practice.