

# DEVELOPING AN EDUCATION FUNCTION

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A model for national  
associations



ACADEMY

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"Education should be a core activity in any national association, since it supports the development, promotion and protection of the game. When aligned with the association's strategy, education acts both as an enabler and accelerator. It ensures that the association's staff and its stakeholders' staff possess the necessary knowledge and expertise to achieve their objectives."



**Theodore Theodoridis**  
UEFA General Secretary

A stylized white signature of Theodore Theodoridis on a dark blue background.



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# Introduction

In addition to technical education for coaches, referees and medical staff, over the last decade UEFA has promoted the continuous development of football administrators. Since launching its successful Certificate in Football Management (UEFA CFM) and the Executive Master in Global Sport Governance (MESGO), it has developed more than 20 learning initiatives for its member associations, which were all brought under the umbrella of the UEFA Academy in 2019. By establishing this centre of excellence for its education services, UEFA confirmed its commitment to continuous personal development in football, while encouraging its member associations to consider education as an essential pillar of their mission.

In line with these changes, education is integrated into the UEFA Grow model, and national associations are now encouraged to develop an education strategy as part of their strategic development.

The UEFA Academy has developed a 12-step model to help national associations review and enhance their current education function or create one. Here we explain the model and provide a series of questions to help you assess your current education services and needs.

Please contact the UEFA Academy (see the final section of this document) if you have any questions about this model or if you require support to develop or grow your education function.

## Groups

Group of Friends / Casual		Family	
Alessandro	Arturo	Armin	Behaj Charki
Magali	Antonia	Stejn	Sprej
Tej	van F	Sebastian	Permain
Marvin		Richard	Brunt
Domini			Ruff

- POOR FAN ZONE

→ CORRECT CAP

→ CROWD MAN

→ TAILORED E

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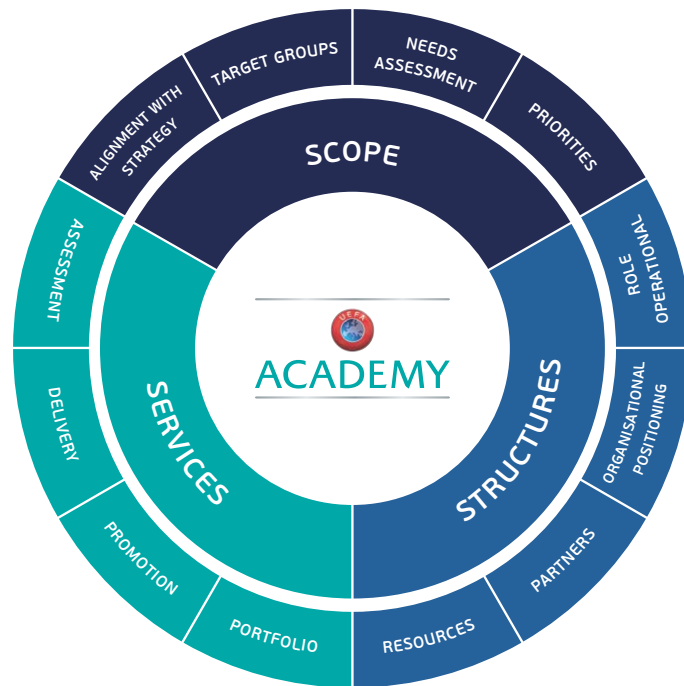


Developing  
an education function

# OUR MODEL

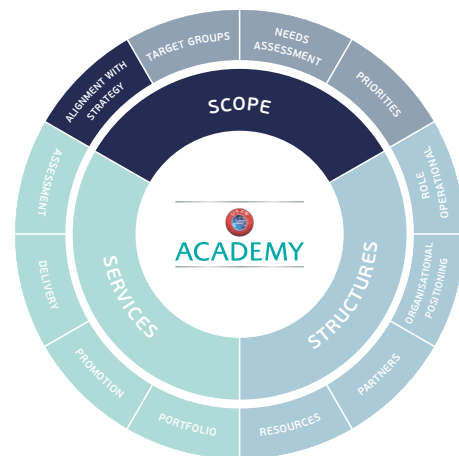


# Our model



# 1. Alignment with strategy

As for any function within your national association, education must have a clear purpose – one that is aligned with your strategy and expressed in a mission statement. It must contribute to achieving your strategic objectives, and should be clear to everyone running the education initiatives.



Since your association probably already provides technical education for coaches, referees and medical staff, one of the first decisions to make will be the scope of the education function – whether it will include technical education or exist separately.

Depending on the size of your association and the importance you give to your educational activities, there may be a department, a unit, a group of individuals or a single specialist in charge of your education function. However it is structured, it must have a clear mandate from top management and the board.

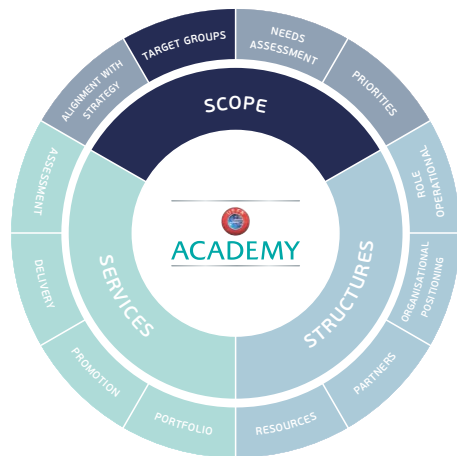
## ASSESSING ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGY

- Is the core purpose of your education function clear and well communicated in a mission statement?
- Is this purpose aligned with your overall strategy? Does the education function contribute to achieving your strategic objectives?
- Is your education function responsible for education services for both administrators and technicians (e.g. coaches, referees, doctors) or is its scope limited to just one of these two categories of specialists?
- Is there a unit in charge of the education function and is its role known to everyone within your organisation and your main stakeholders?
- Does your education function have the full support of top management and the board?
- Is there a reporting process to regularly inform top management and the board about the activities of the education function? Is there a procedure to review and update the education function's services in line with your association's changing priorities?



## 2. Target groups

Your education function's target groups should be clearly defined. You should decide whether your education function will target internal stakeholders (such as staff, board and committee members), close external stakeholders (e.g. regional associations and clubs) and/or an even broader audience (e.g. students, other sports organisations).



Here is a list of potential target groups (from internal to external stakeholders):

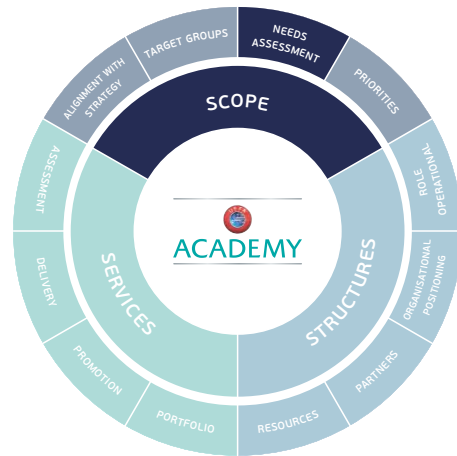
- Internal staff
- Board and committee members
- Volunteers
- Specialists (referees, coaches, football doctors, stewards, etc.)
- Football stakeholders: regional associations, clubs, academies, leagues, players' unions, supporter organisations
- Providers you are working with to deliver activities
- Commercial partners
- Other sports organisations
- Other companies/organisations
- Schools
- Students (people interested in a career in sport management, coaching, etc.)

### DEFINING YOUR TARGET GROUPS

- Have you identified the most suitable Have the target groups been clearly defined?
- Are the target groups and activities firmly aligned with the education function's mission and mandate, and ultimately with your association's strategy?

### 3. Needs assessment

Once you have identified your target groups, you need to work with them to understand what skills and knowledge they need to achieve their mission in the most effective way and contribute to your association's strategic objectives.



You should perform a gap analysis in consultation with your target groups, not only to consider their current needs, but also to understand how their roles and activities are changing and how they are likely to evolve in the future.

You should work closely with your HR function, which is in charge of assessing how well your staff's knowledge and skills match the requirements of their roles and identifying staff development needs.

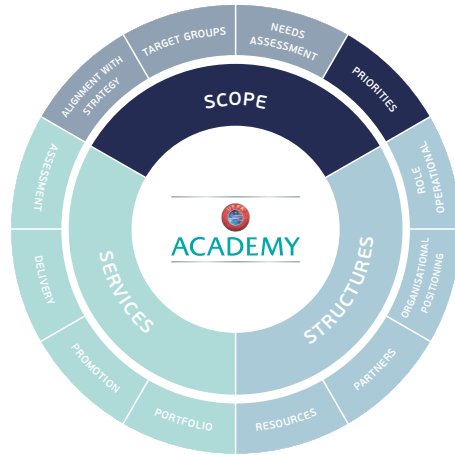
#### ASSESSING YOUR TARGET GROUPS' NEEDS

- Are you working closely with your HR function and your target groups to understand their needs and define the types of services you will provide?
- Have you identified the skills and knowledge your target groups need to achieve their goals most effectively and contribute to your association's strategic objectives?
- Is your analysis future-proof? Have you considered what your target groups will need in the years to come, so they can remain relevant by adapting their structures and services and driving the forthcoming changes?

## 4. Priorities

The educational needs of those who believe it is always possible to learn and improve are, by definition, infinite. However, there will only be a limited budget for your education function and its initiatives, so it needs to be invested wisely. For this reason, it is important to define clear priorities for your education function.

You need to distinguish between essential and non-essential needs and ensure that those you address are fully in line with your education function's mission and will ultimately help to achieve your national association's strategic objectives.

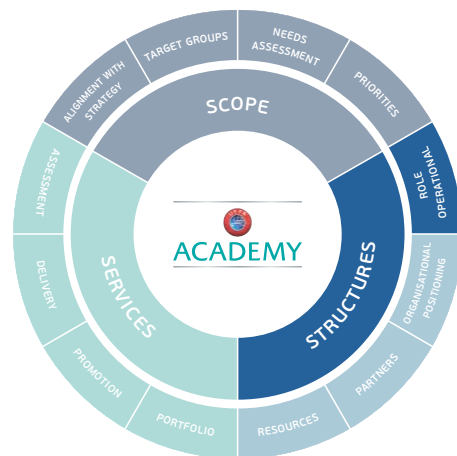


### DEFINING YOUR PRIORITIES

- Of all the needs you have identified, which are critical and must be met and which are merely nice to have?
- Would all the needs you have identified help to achieve your association's strategic objectives?
- Do all the needs correspond to the purpose of your education function?
- Are you clear about what you will not do?

## 5. Operational role

You need to decide on the most appropriate operational role for your education function based on its mission and priorities, the mandate from top management and the board and your target groups. There are four types of operational role:<sup>1</sup>



**Producer** developing, and potentially selling, educational materials for your target groups, which may be produced in conjunction with other departments and/or external providers (e.g. universities, other organisations or individuals).

**Distributor** sourcing, distributing and delivering existing educational content, such as online resources (e.g. off-the-shelf content), courses developed by universities, national editions of UEFA Academy programmes, etc.

**Provider** providing guidance, infrastructure (training facilities, LMS/ LXP<sup>2</sup> etc.) and resources (moderators, templates, etc.), and helping your target groups to create their own educational schemes.

**Broker** matching your target groups with educational service providers; acting as a consultant, helping your target groups diagnose their learning needs then providing appropriate services.

You can select one or several of these, but you need to be very clear about which one(s) you want your education function to play and which one(s) are less in line with its core purpose.

<sup>1</sup> See Ben-Hur (2013). The Business of Corporate Learning, Cambridge University Press

<sup>2</sup> Learning management system/learning experience platform

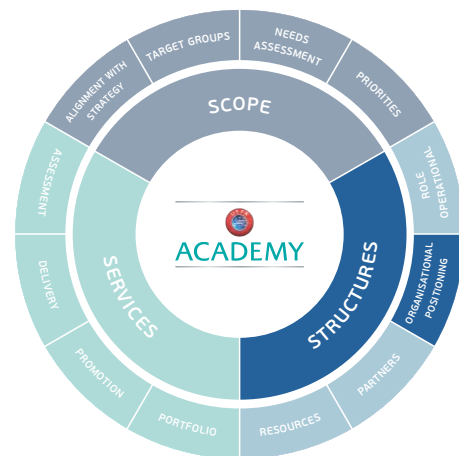
### DEFINING YOUR OPERATIONAL ROLE

- Are you clear about the education function's operational role? Are you acting as a producer, distributor, provider and/or broker?
- What is the value proposition of your education function? Do you communicate it clearly?
- Have you selected the most effective role for your education function? Does it address the priority needs of its target groups?
- Are the education function's roles aligned with its mission and the mandate from top management and board?
- Could your education function create value for your association's commercial partners? Have you considered other potential revenue opportunities?

## 6. Organisational positioning

Once you are clear about your education function's mission, target groups, priority needs and operational roles, you are in a position to decide where the education function should be located within your national association's structure. Many locations are possible and you need to decide where it can best accomplish its mission.

The most common locations for an education function are within or attached to the executive office, HR, member services department or technical department. You may decide to create a dedicated education department or even an independent or semi-independent structure.



### DEFINING YOUR ORGANISATIONAL POSITIONING

- Is your education function's position aligned with its mission, target groups, operational roles and the services it offers?
- What degree of centralisation is required for it to deliver its services?
- Do your association's top executives agree on the degree of centralisation required for your education function?
- Does the education function's position make it easier to service its target groups, including in the planning and budgeting stages?

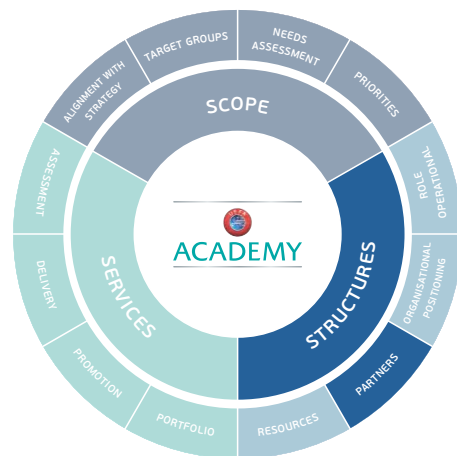


## 7. Partners

If the education function does not already have all the knowledge and expertise required to address its priority needs, partnerships with external entities (universities, business schools, L&D providers or consultants) or other departments will be necessary.

The types and number of partners will depend on the function's operational role and organisational positioning. Do not forget that the UEFA Academy may support educational initiatives by its member associations.

Partnering with the UEFA Academy or a university/business school could also enhance the perceived value of your initiatives by your target groups. Partnerships with education providers recognised by your country's government might also be necessary if you are seeking to deliver formal qualifications. Finally, you should also consider partners that are able to help you reach your specific target groups and increase their perception of your services as legitimate and relevant. For example, if professional clubs are one of your target groups, have you considered a partnership with the professional league(s)? If players are one of your target groups, have you considered partnering with the players' union?

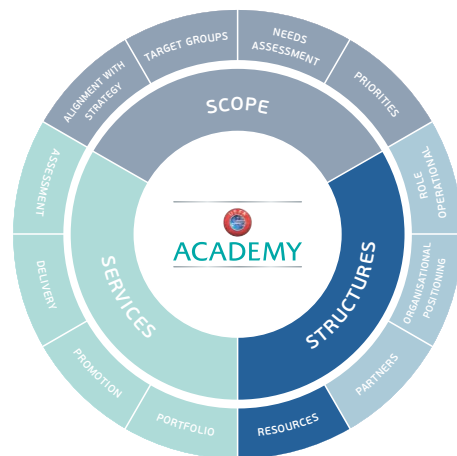


### CHOOSING YOUR PARTNERS

- What in-house education services need to exist and what can be outsourced?
- Is your search for internal and external partners based on the function's priorities, its operational role and its organisational positioning?
- Could some partners help to make the target groups aware of your services and consider them fully legitimate?
- Are you fully aware of the providers that could deliver education services on behalf of your national association? Have you considered partnering with the UEFA Academy?
- Do you have a comprehensive and transparent process for selecting partners? Do you have a contractual agreement that clearly defines the services that each partner needs to provide?
- Do the current or future partners all bring clear added value?

## 8. Resources

To successfully deliver its activities, your education function must have adequate resources in terms of staff, budget and infrastructure.



The number of staff members and profiles needed depends on the education function's operational role and the tasks assigned to its internal and external partners.

When drafting the budget, you must decide whether the beneficiaries, i.e. the people and organisations consuming the services of your education function, should be required to pay a fee to access them. You should also define a policy regarding who will cover the potential associated costs (e.g. accommodation, travel, materials, licences) and consider the introduction of scholarships/grants to support the participation of people or organisations with limited financial means.

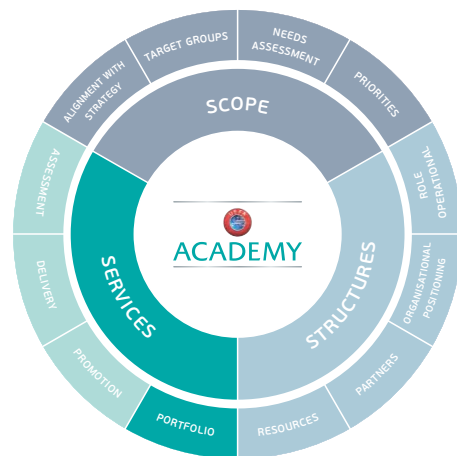
You should also ensure appropriate infrastructure is available, such as classrooms, technical facilities, LMS/LXP, video-communication services, equipment and teaching materials.

### ASSESSING YOUR RESOURCES

- Do the education function staff have adequate skills and knowledge?
- Do the education function staff have comprehensive, up-to-date job descriptions? Is it clear how responsibilities are split between your education function and its partners? Have the services that need to be provided by other departments been accurately defined and have these departments agreed to provide them?
- Does your education function own or have access to the infrastructure it needs, e.g. classrooms, technical facilities, online platforms and video-communication services?

## 9. Portfolio

Your education function's programmes and other services must address its priority needs and be aligned with its operational role. These programmes and services form your education function's portfolio and should all be presented in a catalogue or on a website.



Depending on its core purpose and operational role, there are many sorts of services your education function can provide, such as:

- well-structured education programmes (with or without formal certification);
- off-the-shelf content;
- knowledge-exchange and capacity-building initiatives (workshops, webinars, moderated online forums, brownbag sessions, etc.);
- coaching, mentoring and shadowing schemes;
- assessment, consultancy and guidance for individuals and/or units on their development needs.

On top of providing your target groups with a clear overview of your services, the portfolio will help you to understand what the education function really provides. You will be able to assess whether all the priority needs are covered and if there are any redundant services. It will also help you to ascertain whether other activities elsewhere in your association should be included in the education function's portfolio.

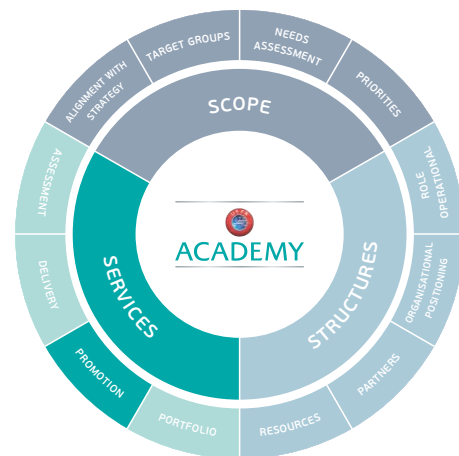
Finally, an explicit portfolio will help your education function structure the services it offers, which is the first step towards promoting them clearly and efficiently.

### DEFINING YOUR PORTFOLIO

- Are you clear about the programmes and other services you offer? Are they all summarised in a well-structured document or website, i.e. a portfolio of services?
- Are the target audience and objectives of each service clearly defined? Do all the services address your target groups' priority needs? Are there any overlaps, gaps or unnecessary services?
- Are the services in line with the education function's operational role?
- Are there other services and initiatives provided by your association that should be included in the portfolio?
- Is the portfolio clearly presented and easily understood by your top management and target groups?

## 10. Promotion

To succeed, your education function must make sure its target groups are aware of its services. The most effective communication channels should be identified for each group.



Education is at the core of each national association's mission to develop and protect the game. So the function's work should be highlighted in all documents presenting your association's activities and be promoted on its website.

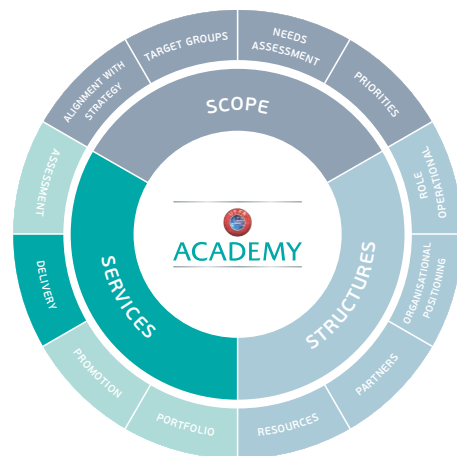
There should be a clear and regular flow of communication between your education and communication functions. Depending on the education function's importance, organisational positioning and number of services in its portfolio, you might consider establishing a brand (similar to the UEFA Academy). This will increase the function's visibility both in-house and externally and be a clear sign of the importance you give to education. It may also trigger further development opportunities, e.g. it may attract interest from new target groups and partners.

### PROMOTING YOUR EDUCATION FUNCTION

- Are all the target groups fully aware of the services on offer?
- Are you using the most effective communication channels: website, social media, print, newsletter, email, other media, word of mouth, etc. to reach each of the target groups?
- Do the former beneficiaries (i.e. consumers of the services) of your education function act as ambassadors?
- Are the function's activities presented in all documents describing your association's main activities and on its website?
- Is it clear who is in charge of communicating the activities? Are there clear channels between your education function and your main communications function?
- Is the way your education function portrays itself and is perceived consistent with its operational role?
- Have you considered creating a specific brand for your education function?

# 11. Delivery

You should ask yourself how the services can be best delivered and what the best format is for your target groups. For example, you should decide whether each education programme should be delivered face-to-face, live online, as e-learning modules available at any time, or through blended learning.



When designing your services, you should adopt the perspective of your target groups. From the way they first hear about your programmes to the moment they use the knowledge they have gained, you should make sure that any pain points are minimised and all gain points are maximised (customer journey approach).

Your education function should also have clear delivery processes to ensure consistency and the highest possible quality, even when services are subcontracted. The expected level of service and the division of tasks among internal and external partners should be as detailed and explicit as possible. When developing or reviewing activities, you should aim to maximise the synergies between them, particularly to reduce costs, save time and increase efficiency.

## DELIVERING YOUR SERVICES

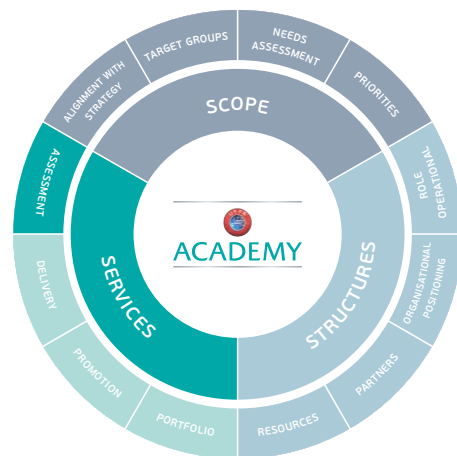
- Have you identified the most suitable delivery format for each service on offer? Will your training be delivered face-to-face, live online, as e-learning modules or through blended learning?
- At the design stage, did you put yourself in the shoes of your target groups – your customers – to make sure you could identify the main pain and gain points and optimise their experience (the customer journey)?
- Do you have clear processes for the way your services should be delivered? Is it clear for everyone involved in the delivery how tasks and responsibilities will be divided up? Is the expected level of service clear from the agreements with your external partners?
- Are you maximising the synergies between the various programmes and other services you offer? Can you adopt an approach to all/most of them that reduces costs, saves time and improves efficiency?



## 12. Assessment

When assessing your education function's services, you should aim to gauge user satisfaction and the impact on your association and its ecosystem.

Satisfaction is relatively easy to measure, either at the end of a workshop or just afterwards, such as in a survey. Assessing impact might be more challenging.



For this, you should define some key performance indicators (KPIs) for the needs these services aim to meet. For example:

- If you are training your staff to use new ERP1 software, one KPI could be the number of staff members who are at ease using it one week later, as measured by a survey.
- If you have a programme to retain the most talented staff, one KPI could be the number of people still working at your national association two years after the programme and the number of these employees who have progressed in their career since then.

In both cases, the KPI will not be influenced solely by the training, demonstrating how difficult it is to measure the impact of an educational initiative. However, there is no doubt that these KPIs will still be largely influenced by the quality of the education provided.

Finally, you should also regularly assess whether the scope, structures and services your education function provides are still aligned with your association's strategy and its objectives. So, you should regularly go through this whole model again to make sure your education function is still playing a central role in the success of your organisation.

### ASSESSING YOUR SERVICES

- Do you have a system that allows you to measure both user satisfaction and the impact of your education function's services on your national association and its ecosystem?
- Have you defined KPIs to measure the impact of your education function's services and their ability to meet the priority needs for which they have been developed?
- Are the services delivered by the education function and their impact presented in your national association's annual report? Should they be presented in greater detail in a specific report produced by the education function?
- Are you regularly reassessing your education function and its services to ensure they are still aligned with your association's strategy and helping it to reach its strategic objectives?
- How are you leveraging the impact of the services delivered by your education function? For example, have you considered creating expert/alumni groups of people who have benefited from them?

Developing an education function

# EXAMPLES FROM NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND BENEFITS



# Examples from national associations



Here are some examples of national associations that have developed a well-defined education function to provide their stakeholders with learning and development services.

- Georgian Football Federation
- German Football Association
- Malta Football Association
- Romanian Football Federation
- Football Union of Russia



# Benefits

National associations equipped with a well-developed education function enjoy many benefits, such as:

- Highlighting the association's role in developing, promoting and protecting the game
- The education function promotes and accelerates the association's strategy
- The association's delivery of learning initiatives is more efficient and synergies are maximised
- The association's education services are improved, with increased visibility and greater consistency
- New knowledge and know-how is developed within the association
- New partnerships can be planned with universities, business schools, companies, etc.
- The education function might become a revenue stream
- means of a detailed business plan.





# Testimonials

"Setting up the Portugal Football School made it possible to improve club management and organisation, providing them with more qualified human resources and consequently contributing to the development of football, futsal and beach football."

## André Seabra

Director of Portugal Football School, Portuguese Football Federation



"We developed a series of educational initiatives that have helped to consolidate the administrative capacity of the Romanian Federation and its stakeholders. We started with FRF employees themselves, young people aiming for a career in sports organisations and volunteers. We will continue with coaches, athletes, professionals and football specialists. The aim is to have an education system that is an example of good practice in sports education in Romania. This is why we launched the National Football Academy – the home of all the FRF's educational programmes. This platform makes the association more efficient in delivering its learning initiatives, especially by maximising synergies."

## Diana Pirciu

Head of Education, Romanian Football Federation





About the UEFA Academy

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# HOW WE SHAPE THE FUTURE



UEFA offers a wide range of education programmes and knowledge-sharing initiatives under the umbrella of the UEFA Academy. These programmes bring together top professionals in the game and forward-thinking academics. One of the strengths of our courses is this balance between theoretical knowledge and professional expertise.



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# The UEFA Academy

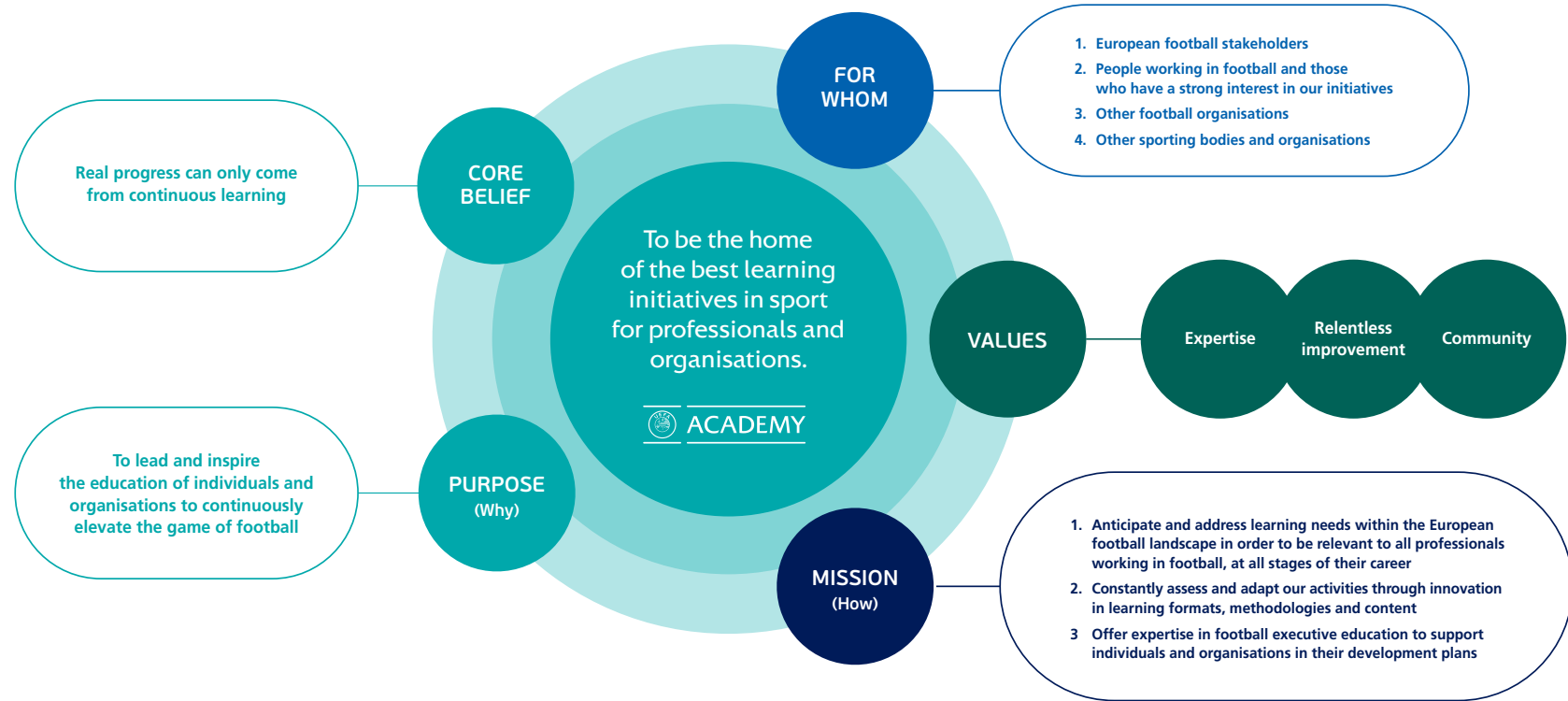
Building on the professional excellence UEFA has developed throughout its history and the learning initiatives created over the last decade, the UEFA Academy seeks to inspire the education of individuals and organisations to continuously elevate the game of football.

Since we believe that real progress comes from lifelong learning, we make sure that all football professionals can find a suitable way to develop at any stage of their careers. This is achieved by:

- anticipating and addressing learning needs in the European football sector;
- working in close cooperation with leading professional and academic experts;
- constantly assessing and adapting our activities through innovation in learning formats, methodologies and content;
- offering expertise in football executive education to support individuals and organisations in their development plans.

In concrete terms, we deliver over twenty learning initiatives for professionals working in sport. We also work with organisations to develop tailor-made programmes and educational activities adapted to their specific needs.

# Our vision



# Overview in numbers



2005

Expertise in executive education since 2005



205

Training days over the 2022/23 season (87 seminars)



3,000

Over 3,000 graduates since 2010



60

Over 60 countries visited by our programmes



170

Graduates of over 170 different nationalities



2,000

Over 2,000 documents available online from UEFA Academy





# Programme catalogue

## MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES

- UEFA Certificate in Football Management (**UEFA CFM**)
- UEFA Diploma in Football Leadership and Management (**UEFA DFLM**)
- Executive Master in Global Sport Governance (**MESGO**)
- Women in Football Leadership Programme (**WFLP**)
- Innovation in Action

## PROGRAMMES FOR SPECIALISTS

- UEFA Football Law Programme (**UEFA FLP**)
- Fight the Fix (**UEFA FTF**)
- UEFA Strategic Communications compact course (**UEFA SCCC**)
- UEFA SLO Education programme
- UEFA Elite Scout Programme (**UEFA ESP**)
- UEFA Player Agent Programme (**UEFA PAP**)
- UEFA EURO Onsite Experience Programme
- UEFA Football Doctor Education Programme (**UEFA FDEP**)

## ON-DEMAND EDUCATION

- Expertise/Support
- UEFA Tailor-made programmes
- UEFA Senior Team Executive Programme (**UEFA STEP**)
- UEFA Financial Management compact course
- Elite Club Programme

## PLAYER EDUCATION

- UEFA Career Transition Programme (**UEFA CTP**)
- UEFA Certificate in Football Management – Players' edition (**UEFA CFM**)
- UEFA Executive Master for International Football Players (**UEFA MIP**)
- UEFA Media Consultant compact course (**UEFA MC3**)
- UEFA Financial Management Training (**UEFA FMT**)
- UEFA For Players

## KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND RESEARCH

- UEFA Academy Online
- UEFA Research Grant Programme (**UEFA RGP**)
- UEFA Medical Research Grant Programme (**MRGP**)
- UEFA Cybersecurity and GDPR course
- UEFA Handbook of Football Association Management (**UEFA HFM**)
- UEFA Toolbox in Football Management (**UEFA TFM**)

# The UEFA Academy Team



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