

EARLY ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT CRICKET LEAD

JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

DEPARTMENT	Performance Pathway
SALARY	£27,018 per annum
HOURS	37.5 hours per week, full-time (36 months)
REPORTS TO	Head of Junior Pathway
LOCATION	The Devon Cricket Centre, University of Exeter, with regular travel across Devon
WORKING PATTERN	Flexible working across the week, including evening and weekend delivery

ROLE PURPOSE

The Devon Cricket Performance Pathway is designed to support players through every stage of their journey. It begins with the Early Engagement Programme (EEP), progresses through Youth Development Cricket (YDC) and County Age Group (CAG) cricket, and for some players continues into the Emerging Player Programme (EPP) for our junior players.

The Early Engagement and Development Cricket Lead will provide operational leadership for EEP and YDC across the boys' and girls' pathways. Reporting to the Head of Junior Pathway, the post holder will create inclusive, enjoyable and development-led programmes that broaden access, build strong foundations and prepare players for the next stage of the pathway.

The role combines high-quality coaching with programme management, workforce leadership, player and parent communication, administration and evaluation. The post holder will place player welfare, fairness, transparency and long-term development at the heart of every decision.

THE JUNIOR PATHWAY AT A GLANCE

EEP 10-12 years Focusing on enjoyment, skill development and learning in a positive environment.	YDC Under 13-15 Exposing players to higher-level cricket while developing game awareness and core skills.
CAG Under 13-18 Introducing greater competition alongside technical, tactical and personal development.	EPP Under 13+ Providing advanced support through specialist coaching, physical preparation and performance psychology.

This role leads the first two stages. The post holder will be directly accountable for EEP and YDC and will work closely with the Head of Junior Pathway to ensure smooth, well-supported transition into CAG.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Programme strategy and leadership

- Develop and deliver an annual EEP and YDC plan for boys and girls, working with the Head of Junior Pathway.
- Ensure programmes align with Devon Cricket Foundation's pathway philosophy, the Talent Development Framework and ECB Early Engagement principles.
- Produce an annual calendar covering observations, coaching, match play, festivals, staffing and programme reviews.
- Balance quality and scale by providing more opportunities and allowing appropriate movement between groups.

2. Player engagement, observation and progression

- Create accessible entry routes from clubs, schools, youth leagues, community programmes and other cricket environments.
- Lead fair, transparent and inclusive observation processes, ensuring EEP observation remains free of charge.
- Oversee the selection and review of EEP and YDC groups, maintaining accurate records and communicating decisions sensitively.
- Provide regular review points so players can move appropriately into, within or out of programmes.

3. Coaching and player development

- Create positive environments that value enjoyment, confidence, curiosity, learning and long-term development.
- Personally deliver high-quality coaching and match-day experiences while providing visible programme leadership.
- Offer varied match-play opportunities, ensuring EEP winter participants can access the summer programme.
- Provide constructive feedback to players and parents or guardians, including individual development priorities where appropriate.

4. Workforce leadership and coach development

- Recruit, deploy and support the coaches, managers and sessional staff required for EEP and YDC.
- Establish a consistent coaching philosophy and clear standards for behaviour, communication and player care.
- Maintain appropriate coach-to-player ratios and suitable medical and safeguarding cover.

5. Partnerships, communication and inclusion

- Communicate programme expectations, schedules, selection processes and development messages clearly and promptly.
- Strengthen links between recreational cricket and the performance pathway, recognising clubs and schools as key partners.
- Increase the diversity of players entering and progressing through the pathway.
- Reduce barriers relating to cost, travel, equipment and access, including promoting bursary support.
- Respond professionally to questions, concerns and complaints, escalating safeguarding or welfare matters appropriately.

6. Operations and evaluation

- Work with the Pathway and Coaching Operations Lead on registrations, venues, staffing, fixtures, communications, equipment and payments.
- Maintain accurate and secure records covering attendance, observation, selection, consent, medical information, staffing and expenditure.
- Use data and feedback to monitor reach, diversity, retention, player experience, match opportunities and progression.
- Complete an annual programme review, summarising outcomes, learning, financial performance and recommendations.

7. Wider contribution

- Support CAG, EPP and wider pathway activity where this benefits player transition or programme quality.
- Contribute to organisational planning, staff meetings, coach development, events and wider priorities.
- Represent Devon Cricket Foundation positively and undertake other reasonable duties appropriate to the role.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate will combine strong cricket and coaching knowledge with the leadership, organisation and interpersonal skills needed to manage a development programme for young players.

Essential qualifications and experience

- Minimum ECB Level 2 or ECB Core Coach qualification
- Experience of coaching children and young people, particularly those aged 10–15.
- Experience of leading or coordinating a player development
- Knowledge of boys' and girls' pathways and long-term player development.
- Experience of planning winter coaching and summer match-play programmes.
- Experience of player observation, selection, feedback and progression.
- Experience of administration, planning and reporting.
- A current First Aid qualification, safeguarding training appropriate to the role and a clear enhanced ECB DBS check, or the ability to obtain the required checks and training before commencing relevant duties.
- A full UK driving licence and access to a vehicle, or the ability and commitment to travel independently throughout Devon.

Essential skills and attributes

- Strong leadership skills and the confidence to set direction, make balanced decisions and maintain standards.
- An empathetic communicator who can build trust with players, families, coaches, clubs, schools and colleagues.
- Excellent planning and organisational skills, with the ability to manage competing seasonal demands.
- The ability to combine practical coaching with programme management and administration.
- A collaborative approach, together with the ability to work independently and use initiative.
- Good digital skills, including Microsoft 365 and player or programme management systems.
- The ability to travel across Devon and work evenings and weekends when required.
- A commitment to player-centred development, inclusion and fair access to opportunity.

Desirable

- Experience within EEP, YDC, CAG, EPP or a professional academy.
- Experience of engaging players through non-traditional routes or reducing barriers to progression.
- Experience of observation and assessment.
- Knowledge of physical preparation, growth and maturation, performance psychology or holistic player support.
- Experience of using data, feedback and performance indicators to evaluate programme impact.

WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

The role is based at The Devon Cricket Centre, University of Exeter, with regular delivery at venues across Devon.

The post holder will work 37.5 hours per week and, due to the nature of pathway cricket, evening and weekend work will be an integral part of the role. Working time will be planned flexibly across the year.

Objectives and priorities will be agreed with the Head of Junior Pathway and reviewed through regular meetings and the annual appraisal process.

Safeguarding, equality and general requirements

Devon Cricket Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The appointment is subject to an enhanced DBS check, satisfactory references and completion of safer recruitment checks.

Devon Cricket Foundation is an equal opportunities employer; the post holder must promote inclusive practice and support fair access and representation.

This description sets out the principal responsibilities of the post and may reasonably evolve over time in discussion with the post holder.